

## Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 154

### Sha'ul's Third Missionary Journey ~ Part 5

**Note:** To examine the graphics in this series, click on them for a pop-up version.

We continue in the **Book of Acts**. **Sha'ul** continues his **Third Missionary Journey** in Acts 20:17 in this post.

In public life, particularly in workplace settings, embrace **Sha'ul's** servant leadership model by actively looking for ways to assist others rather than only fulfilling your own roles. This could mean volunteering to help a co-worker struggling with a project or offering to mentor someone. Demonstrating humility and selflessness in your dealings with others will reflect **Yeshua's** love and potentially open doors for spiritual conversations, paving the way for a more significant impact.

#### Discourse to Ephesian Elders

*<sup>17</sup> But he (Sha'ul) did send from Miletus to Ephesus, summoning the elders of the Messianic community. <sup>18</sup> When they arrived, he said to them, "You yourselves know-how, from the first day I set foot in the province of Asia, I was with you the whole time, <sup>19</sup> serving the Lord with much humility and with tears, in spite of the tests I had to undergo because of the plots of the unbelieving Jews.*

**You yourselves know-how ... I was with you ... serving ... with much humility.** Sha'ul does not indulge in self-praise but appeals to the judgment of the **Ephesian** congregation's elders, who had known and experienced him for three years (v. 31). While often accused, even in the **Brit Hadashah** itself (2 Corinthians 10:1–13:10), of pride in his accomplishments, nevertheless, like **Moshe**, who could write that he was "**the meekest of all men on the face of the earth**" (Numbers 12:3, Mattityahu 11:28–30), **Sha'ul** had reached a point where he could speak of himself without either undue praise or undue modesty. (He had also learned not to be unduly affected by physical circumstances and possessions, Philippians 4:12.)

*<sup>20</sup> You know that I held back nothing that could be helpful to you and that I taught you both in public and from house to house, <sup>21</sup> declaring with utmost seriousness the same message to Jews and Greeks alike: turn from sin to God; and put your trust in our Lord, Yeshua the Messiah.*

The **Gospel** is the same for **Jews** as for **non-Jews**: repentance and trust in **God** through **Yeshua**, the **Messiah**. The **Two-Covenant** theory (see Yochanan 14:6) is wrong.

*<sup>22</sup> And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Yerushalayim. I don't know what will happen to me there, <sup>23</sup> other than that in every city the Ruach HaKodesh keeps warning me that imprisonment and persecution await me.*

See Acts 19:21 for **Sha'ul's** first statement of this intention and Acts 21:4, 10–14 for further interaction with the **Ruach** on the matter. The rest of the book of **Acts** deals with the dramatic outworking of this plan and premonition.

*<sup>24</sup> But I consider my own life of no importance to me whatsoever, as long as I can finish the course ahead of me, the task I received from the Lord Yeshua—to declare in depth the Good News of God's love and kindness.*

<sup>25</sup> "Now, listen! I know that none of you people among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom will ever see me again. <sup>26</sup> Therefore, I testify on this day that I am innocent of the blood of all. <sup>27</sup> For I did not shrink from proclaiming to you the whole plan of God.

**I am innocent of the blood of all.** To the unbelieving **Jews** of **Corinth**, **Sha'ul** had said, "**Your blood be on your own heads; for my part, I am clean**" (Acts 18:6). At the outset, the **Corinthians** had refused to hear him; these **Ephesian elders**, attentive till now, still risk falling away and having **blood** guilt on their heads. The serious problems that will arise in **Ephesus** after he leaves (vv. 28–31 below) he has tried to avert by proclaiming **the whole plan of God**; their responsibility is to remain in "**the care of the Lord and the message of his love and kindness**" (v. 32).

<sup>28</sup> "Watch out for yourselves, and for all the flock in which the Ruach HaKodesh has placed you as leaders, to shepherd God's Messianic community, which he won for himself at the cost of his own Son's blood. <sup>29</sup> I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you, and they won't spare the flock. <sup>30</sup> Even from among your own number, men will arise and teach perversions of the truth in order to drag away the talmidim after themselves. <sup>31</sup> So stay alert! Remember that for three years, night and day, with tears in my eyes, I never stopped warning you! <sup>32</sup> "And now I entrust you to the care of the Lord and to the message of his love and kindness, for it can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who have been set apart for God.

<sup>33</sup> "I have not wanted for myself anyone's silver or gold or clothing. <sup>34</sup> You yourselves know that these hands of mine have provided not only for my own needs, but for the needs of my co-workers as well. <sup>35</sup> In everything, I have given you an example of how, by working hard like this, you must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Yeshua himself, 'There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.'"

H

**Sha'ul** earned his living and did not become a burden to the **Ephesians** (see Acts 18:3). "**The words of the Lord Yeshua himself, 'There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.'**" These words of **Yeshua** appear nowhere else in the **Brit Hadashah**; they are not found in the **Gospels**. Many apocryphal **Brit Hadashah** books purported other sayings of **Yeshua**.

## Sad Farewell

<sup>36</sup> When he had finished speaking, **Sha'ul** knelt down with them all and prayed. <sup>37</sup> They were all in tears as they threw their arms around his neck and kissed him farewell. <sup>38</sup> What saddened them the most was his remark that they would never see him again. Then, they accompanied him to the ship. <sup>1</sup>

**Saddened.** The Greek word used here, **odynāō**, connotes severe pain or agony. Here, it emphasizes their difficulty and shows they are convinced they will not see **Sha'ul** again.

In our next post, we will continue to explore **Sha'ul's Third Missionary Journey**.

---

<sup>1</sup> Acts 20:17–38.