

Philippians

A Personal Letter from Your Rabbi, the “Prisoner”

I. Paul’s *Introduction* to the Philippians (1:1-11)

II. Paul’s *Imprisonment* Perspective (1:12-26)

A. His *Explanation* on how his *Prison Circumstances* have Advanced the **Ministry** of the **Gospel** (1:12-18)

¹² Now I want you to know, brethren, that **my circumstances** have turned out for the **greater progress of the gospel**, ¹³ so that my **imprisonment** in the **cause of Messiah** has become **well known** throughout the **whole praetorian guard** and to **everyone else**,

¹⁴ and that **most of the brethren**, **trusting in the Lord** *because* of my imprisonment, have far more **courage** to **speak the word of God** without fear.

¹⁵ **Some**, to be sure, are **preaching Messiah** even from **envy** and **strife**, but some also from **good will**; ¹⁶ the latter *do it* out of **love**, knowing that **I am appointed** for the **defense** of the **gospel**;

¹⁷ the **former** proclaim **Messiah** out of **selfish ambition** rather than from **pure motives**, thinking to cause me **distress** in my imprisonment.

¹⁸ What then? Only that in **every way**, whether in **pretense** or in **truth**, **Messiah is proclaimed**; and in this I **rejoice**.

B. His *Expectation* of Deliverance (1:19)

Yes, and I will **rejoice**,

¹⁹ for I know that **this** will turn out for my **deliverance** through your **prayers** and the **provision** of the **Spirit of Jesus the Messiah**,

C. His *Essential Priority*—the Exaltation of the Messiah (1:20-21)

²⁰ according to my **earnest expectation** and **hope**, that I will **not** be put to **shame** in anything, but *that* with all **boldness**, **Messiah** will even **now**, as **always**, be **exalted** in my **body**, whether by **life** or by **death**.

²¹ For to me, to **live is Messiah** and to **die is gain**.

D. His *Earnest* inward Struggle on whether to “**Depart**” this **world**, or “**Remain**” for **their sake** (1:22-26)

²² But if *I am* to **live on in the flesh**,
this *will mean fruitful labor* for me; and I do **not** know *which* to choose.

²³ But I am **hard-pressed** from *both directions*,
having the **desire to depart** and **be with Messiah**,
for *that is very much better*;

²⁴ yet to **remain on in the flesh** is **more necessary** for **your sake**.

²⁵ **Convinced** of this, I know that I will **remain** and continue **with you**
all for **your progress** and **joy in the faith**,

²⁶ so that your **proud confidence** in me may **abound** in Messiah Jesus
through my coming to you again.

Chapter Summary A Closer Look at Rabbi Paul's *Perspective and Priorities*

A. Paul's Divine Perspective

1. *Recognizing* that his **imprisonment** has actually **worked** to **advance** the **ministry** of the **gospel** (1:12-18)
 - a. *Because* of his **testimony** among the **elite Roman guard** (1:13)
 - b. *Because* his **imprisonment** has **emboldened** the **brethren** to **preach** without **fear** (1:14)
 - c. *Because* in **every way**, whether from **envy** and **strife**, or **good will**, whether from **selfish ambition**, or **pure motives**, whether in **pretense**, or in **truth**, **Messiah is proclaimed** (1:15-18)
2. *Remaining* ready, at **any time** to **“depart”** and be *with* his Messiah (1:21-23)

B. Paul's Messiah-centered Life

1. *Praying* that the **Philippians** be **“filled with the fruit of righteousness,”** which comes **through Jesus the Messiah** (1:11a)
2. *Pronouncing* his **imprisonment** to be for the **cause of Messiah** (1:13a)
3. *Professing* his **joy**, that regardless of *motive*, **Messiah** is being **proclaimed** (1:18)
4. *Pronouncing* his anticipation of **deliverance through prayer** and the **provision** of the **“Spirit of Jesus the Messiah”**
5. *Proclaiming* His **earnest desire** to **exalt the Messiah** (in his body) whether by **“life or by death”** (1:20)
6. *Proclaiming* that for **him**, **“to live is Messiah** and to **die is gain”** (1:21)

7. *Preferring* to “depart” and “be with Messiah,” which would be very much better (1:23)
8. *Predicting* that his release (from prison), and his coming to them, would result in a proud, abounding confidence in him – in Messiah Jesus (1:26)

C. Paul’s Discipleship Priority

1. His *Passion* to spread the Gospel Message

“Now I want you to know..., that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel.” (1:12)

“...and that most of the brethren,.. have far more **courage** to speak the word of God without fear.” (1:14)

“What then? Only that in *every way*,.. Messiah is proclaimed; and *in this* I rejoice.” (1:18)

2. His *Priority* for the Growth and Well-being of the Believers

But I am **hard-pressed** from both *directions*,
having the *desire* to depart and be with Messiah,
for *that* is very much better;
yet to remain on in the **flesh** is more necessary **for your sake**.

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you
all for **your progress** and **joy in the faith**,...(1:23-25)

Personal Challenge Following the Rabbi’s Example→

- By *looking* at our **difficult circumstances** and **trials** from a “divine perspective,” and *recognizing* that **God** often **works His purposes**, even in the **midst of adversity**. (1:12-14) (Romans 8:28)
- By *recognizing* that the indwelling Presence of **Jesus**, and our **personal relationship** with **Him**, is central to our **spiritual life** and walk with God.

Because **you are sons**,
God has **sent forth** the Spirit of His Son **into** our hearts,
crying, “**Abba! Father!**” (Galatians 4:6)

- By *recognizing* that until **God** calls **us** to “depart,” *we too* are to **commit fully** to the growth and well-being of fellow believers.

Like **Paul**, we also are to **fully embrace** the **eternal priorities** of **sharing the gospel**, and **making disciples** of **men**. (1:12-18, 23-25) (Matthew 28: 18-20)