

Philippians

A Personal Letter from Your Rabbi, the “Prisoner”

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

A. He *Expresses Personal Greetings* (1:1-2)

¹ Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Messiah Jesus,
to all the **saints** *in* Messiah Jesus who are in **Philippi**,
including the **overseers** and **deacons**:

² **Grace** to you and **peace** from **God our Father** and the **Lord Jesus the Messiah**.

B. He *Expresses Personal Appreciation* and Love for them (1:3-8)

³ I **thank** my God in all my remembrance of **you**,
⁴ always offering **prayer with joy** in my every **prayer** for you all,
⁵ in view of **your participation** in the **gospel** from the first day until now.

⁶ *For I am confident* of this very thing, that **He** who began a **good work in you** will **perfect it** until the **day of Messiah Jesus**.

⁷ For it is only right for me to **feel this way** about **you all**,
because I have **you in my heart**, since both in my **imprisonment**
and in the **defense** and **confirmation** of the **gospel**,
you all are **partakers of grace with me**.

⁸ For **God** is my witness,
how I **long** for **you all** with the **affection** of **Messiah Jesus**.

C. He *Expresses a Personal Prayer* for them (1:9-11)

⁹ And this I **pray**, that your **love** may **abound** still more and more
in **real knowledge** and all **discernment**,

¹⁰ so that **you** may **approve** the things that are **excellent**,
in **order** to be **sincere** and **blameless** until the **day of Messiah**;

¹¹ having been **filled** with the **fruit of righteousness**
which **comes through Jesus the Messiah**,
to the **glory** and **praise of God**.

Personal Application
Paul’s **personal introduction**—
is written **personally to us** as well

1. **Rabbi Paul** begins his letter by **greeting** all the “**saints**” **in** Messiah Jesus who are **in Philippi**, and expressing his **desire** for them to **receive God’s grace and peace**. (1:1-2)

As *believers*, we too are “**saints**” in Messiah, for we also have been “**set apart**” as the people of God, and **called** to accomplish **His purposes** in this generation.

But now in Messiah Jesus you (**Gentiles**) who formerly were **far off** have been **brought near** by the **blood of Messiah**...

So then **you** are no longer **strangers** and **aliens**,
but you are **fellow citizens** with the **saints**,
and are of **God's household**,...(Ephesians 2:13, 19)

2. **Rabbi Paul** was **thankful** and **joyful** for the active “**participation**” of the Philippian **believers** in the **work of the gospel**. (1:3-5)

As *believers* who are **actively serving the Lord**, I believe **Paul** would be *also* be **thankful** for our “**participation**” in the **ministry** of the **gospel**.

He (God) does **not delight** in the **strength** of the **horse**;
He does **not** take **pleasure** in the **legs** of a **man**.
The **LORD** **favors** those who **fear Him**,
Those who **wait** for **His lovingkindness**. (Psalm 147:10-11)

For this reason we also **constantly thank God** that when **you** received the **word of God** which you heard from **us**, you **accepted it** not as the **word of men**, but *for* what it really is, the **word of God**, which also performs **its work in you** who **believe**.
(I Thessalonians 2:13)

Therefore, **my beloved brethren**, be steadfast, immovable, always **abounding** in the **work of the Lord**, knowing that **your toil** is **not in vain in the Lord**. (I Corinthians 15:58)

3. **Paul** declared to the Philippians that he was **confident** that **God** would **complete** the **good work** that **He** had **begun in them**. (1:6)

As *individual believers* and as a *congregation*, we too can be **confident** that **God** will also **complete** the **work He** has **begun in us**.

...for it is **God** who is **at work in you**,
both to **will** and to **work** for **His good pleasure**. (2:13)

For **we** are **His workmanship**, created *in* **Messiah Jesus** for **good works**, which **God** **prepared beforehand** so that **we** would **walk in them**.
(Ephesians 2:10)

4. **Paul** expressed a strong **personal affection** for these **believers** at **Philippi** because they **shared in**, and were **partakers** along **with him** in **his imprisonment**, and in the “**defense** and **confirmation**” of the **gospel**. (1:7-8)

Like the **Philippians**, we too should be **committed** to **pray for** and **support** those that are *now* **experiencing suffering** on account of their *defense* and *ministry* of the **gospel**.

Let **love** of the **brethren** continue.
Do **not** neglect to show **hospitality** to **strangers**,
for by this some have entertained **angels** without knowing it.

Remember the **prisoners**, as though **in prison with them**,
and those who are **ill-treated**, since **you yourselves** also are in the **body**.
(Hebrews 13:1-3)

5. In our final verses for tonight, **Rabbi Paul** expresses a **personal prayer** for the Philippian believers. Since the **Philippian letter** is *inspired by God*, **this prayer** is expressed to **all believers**, and thus, is written for **our sake** as well.

In closing, let's go through this **wonderful prayer**, that seems to lay out a **pattern** of **growth** in our **spiritual life** and **walk** that **pleases** and **glorifies God**. (1:9-11)

Paul prays that our→

“**love** may **abound** still **more** and **more** (1:9a).”

The Greek word for **love** that is used here is “**agape**,” which describes an **active love** that seeks the **welfare of all**, and **desires to do good to all**, especially **fellow believers**.

Paul also **prays** that their **love** may **abound** in

“**real knowledge** and **all discernment** (1:9b).”

He desires that as our **love abounds**, that we gain a **deeper knowledge** (of the **Person** and **Purposes of God**), and that we **grow** in our ability to **discern** (to **distinguish** and **judge**).

Paul prays that as our **love abounds** in **real knowledge** and **discernment**, that we then→

“**approve** the **things** that are **excellent** (1:10b).”

—that **we** might **approve** (**test**) the things that **stand out** as **excellent**.

This **we do** that our **walk** as **believers** might then be→

“**sincere**” (pure/unsullied) and “**blameless**” (without **offense**)”
“until the **day of Messiah** (**His coming**) (1:10b).”

—having been→

“**filled** with the **fruit** (**works** or **deeds**)
of **righteousness** (that which is **just** and **right**)” (1:11a),

A **righteousness**→

“which *comes* **through Jesus the Messiah** (1:11b),”
(**through His abiding life** and **transforming presence**),

“to the **glory** and **praise of God** (1:11c).”

A **righteousness** that **results** in the **glory** and **praise of God**

Closing Comments