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I am Eager to Proclaim the Good News 1: 8-15

I am eager to proclaim the Good News DIG: Note all the "I" statements. What do these show about Paul? Why would such a highly educated Jewish rabbi write verse 14? How would he rewrite that if he were addressing your community? Provide interesting insights into Paul's character and motives, as well as the kind of behavior that should mark all spiritual leaders. What admirable qualities are described here?

REFLECT: To what mission or task do you sense ADONAI is nudging you towards. How is that reflected in your prayers? Your actions? Can you wait on God's will? Or do you find yourself charging ahead just because you think it's a great idea? Or do you ask YHVH to shut the door if it is not of Him? Praying is merely aligning our will to His will. Are you using your spiritual gift(s)? What can you do to change that? How do you proclaim the gospel?

Paul's words suggest nine marks of true spiritual service.

The key that unlocks the intent in this section is: **God, whom I serve in my spirit. Paul** had been raised and educated in **Judaism**. **He** had **himself** been a Pharisee and was well acquainted with the other **Jewish** religious sects, the Sadducees, the scribes, the priests and the elders. **He** knew that, with few exceptions, those leaders served **YHVH** in the flesh and were motivated by self-interest. Their worship and service were mechanical, routine, external, and superficial. **Paul** was also well acquainted with the **Gentile** world and knew that pagan religious worship and service were likewise external, superficial, and completely motivated by self-interest.

During the years before **his** salvation, **Paul himself** had worshiped and served **Ha'Shem** in an external, self-interested way **(Philippians 3:4-7)**. But now that **he** belonged to **Messiah** and had **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** dwelling in **him**, **he** worshiped and served **Him** in spirit and truth, with **his** whole being. **Paul** was then

motivated by a genuine, inner desire to serve **God** for **God's** sake, rather than **his** own, in **God's** revealed way rather than **his** own, and in **God's** power rather than **his** own. **He** was no longer motivated by self-interest or by peer pressure, and no longer focused on **the Oral Law** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Ei – The Oral Law**) or even on self-effort to be Torah observant. **He** was not interested in trying to please anyone, not even **himself**, but only **ADONAI (First Corinthians 4:1-5)**.[14]

A thankful spirit: The first mark of true spiritual service, which **Paul** had in abundance, is thankfulness. **He** was grateful for what **God** had done for and through **him**, but **he** was equally grateful for what **God** had done in and through other believers. **First, I thank my God through Yeshua the Messiah for all of you, because the report of your trust** (Greek: *pistis*, meaning *faith, trust, belief*) **is spreading throughout the whole** known **world (1:8).** By **trust**, **Paul** was not referring to the initial **trust** in **Messiah** that brings salvation (justification), but to persevering **trust** that brings spiritual strength and growth (sanctification). Some churches are famous because of their pastor, their architecture, their stained-glass windows, or their size or wealth. But the church in **Rome** was famous for their **trust** in **Messiah**. So much so, that **it** disturbed the Roman emperors. As a result, persecution began. **Paul** mentions here that **their trust** was spoken of **throughout the whole** known **world**. What is your place of worship known for? Has anybody heard your personal testimony?[15]

A concerned spirit: The second mark of true spiritual service, and that **Paul** exemplified in **his** own life, is that of a concerned spirit. **For God, whom I serve in my spirit by spreading the Good News about His Son.** It is here that **Paul** presents the key phrase in this section: **God, whom I serve in my spirit.** The Greek word *latreuo,* meaning *to serve,* is always used in the B'rit Chadashah of religious service, and is therefore sometimes translated *worship*. **Paul's** primary service to **God** was **spreading the Good News about His Son,** the ministry to which **he** had been called and to which **he** had dedicated **his** life.[16]

*Dear Wise, Powerful and Loving Heavenly **Father**, Praise for the eternal home that **Yeshua** is preparing **(John 14:1-3)** for all who love and follow **Him (Romans 10:9-10)**. Life gets so busy here on earth that we forget about the eternal destiny of friends and family who do not know you as their **Savior**. Right before **You** went back up to heaven, **You** told your followers: **Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and***

the Ruach Ha'Kodesh, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19-20a). *All who love **You**, will obey **You** and so right now we lift them up in prayer.*

*Dear Holy, Loving **Daddy**, We love **You**! Please open the hearts to love you, of our friends and family. **You** have promised that whatever we ask in **Your** name, according to **Your** will, **You** will do it!* ***Now this is the confidence we have before Him – that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have the requests we have asked from Him (John 5:14-15).*** *Please bring into their lives things and people that cause them to seek for and to find **You**. May **You** continue to water **Your** seed planted in their lives so they have peace and joy and fellowship with others who join them in following **You**. Please let **Your** peace replace any fear that the media is pushing. May our friends and family be a tower of peace and strength, as they feel secure because of **Your** love for them, and **Your** holding their future in **Your** hands. May they dream of the wonderful eternal home in heaven that **You** have for them! In the holy name of **Your Son Yeshua** and **His** power of resurrection.* ***And remember! I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).*** *Amen*

As **Paul** mentions several times in the opening of **his** letter **(1:10-11, 15)**, and reiterates near the end **(15:14, 22), he** was writing to the church at **Rome** somewhat as an outsider and stranger, humanly speaking. Perhaps because most of **them** did not know **him** personally, and from a distance, **Paul** could not directly prove **his** love, **he** appealed to **God**, who heard **his** ceaseless prayers on their behalf, as a **witness** of it, saying, **"**As **Messiah** is **my witness, I regularly remember you in my prayers" (1:9-10a).** The depth and passion of **his prayers** demonstrated the depth and passion of **his** concern. **ADONAI** wants you to serve **Him** passionately, not dutifully. People rarely excel at tasks they don't enjoy doing or feel passionate about. **God** wants you to use your natural abilities and interests to serve **Him** and others. Listening to **the still small voice (First Kings 19:11-13)** can point to the ministry **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** intends for you to have.[17]

A willing and submissive spirit: And I always pray that somehow, now or in the future, I might, by God's will, succeed in coming to visit you (1:10b). **Paul** not only prayed for the spiritual well-being of the church at **Rome**, but was eager to be used by **God** as an instrument to help answer that prayer according to **His** divine **will**. That was always **Paul's** desire, to be directed by **God's will**. When

the prophet **Agabus** dramatically predicted the danger that awaited **Paul** in Jerusalem, **the apostle's** friends begged **him** not to go. But **he responded, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart?** The prophecy from **Agabus** was divine, while the urging of **his** friends was merely human. **For I am ready not only to be bound but to die** in **Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Yeshua!" Since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, saying only, "May the Lord's will be done" (21:12-14).**

The popular practice of demanding things from **ADONAI** and expecting **Him** to meet those demands is a perverted and heretical attempt to play **God**. **Paul** was praying for a **successful** journey to come to **Rome**. When we read about his journey in the book of **Acts**, it doesn't look like it was **successful**. He was a prisoner, he got into a terrific storm at sea, the ship was lost, **he** was bitten by a snake when **he** made it to land, and **he** showed up to **Rome** as a prisoner. Nevertheless, it was a **successful** journey.[18]

A loving spirit: For I long to see you, so that I might share with you some spiritual gift that can make you stronger (1:11). According to **Ephesians** one of the primary gifts of **an emissary** was to lay the foundation of the church: **You have been built on the foundation of the emissaries and the prophets, with the cornerstone being Yeshua the Messiah Himself (Ephesians 2:20).** Since this church had not been founded by **an emissary**, **he** wanted to **share** the gift of **an emissary so** that **they** might be **made stronger**. Evidently, there was something lacking in the church at **Rome**, and by **his** coming and exercising the spiritual gift of **an emissary, they** might receive **the fullness of the blessing of Messiah (15:29)**. **He** keeps on implying that as strong and as great as **their faith** was, that there was something lacking that he could fulfill. A need that only **he** could meet. **He** ends **his** letter by saying: **Now to God, who can strengthen you, according to my Good News in harmony with the revelation of the mystery which is the proclamation of Yeshua the Messiah, kept hidden in silence for ages and ages, but manifested now through the prophetic writings, in keeping with the command of God the Eternal, and communicated to all the Gentiles to promote in them trust-grounded obedience – to the only wise God, through Yeshua the Messiah, be the glory forever and ever! Amen (16:25-27).**

When you combine **15:29** and **16:25-27** we can get a hint at what **Paul** wanted to do at **Rome**, and how **he** could establish **them**. There were two things that were revealed to **Paul** that were not revealed to the other emissaries. That's what **he**

means when **he** says my **Good News** (see **As – Paul's Gospel**). One was this new unity of **Jews** and **Gentiles** into one Body **(Ephesians 2:14)**. So, this was one thing that **Paul** could teach more fully than the other emissaries, which would have been critical, given the makeup of the church in Rome. The second thing that was very unique to **Paul** was **his** positional truth that we are **in Messiah (Ephesians 1)**. It has variations: **in Yeshua, in Yeshua Messiah, in Messiah Yeshua, in Him, in Whom. Paul** is the only **emissary** that uses these terms, and he uses them in a very technical sense. What he is saying is that being **in Yeshua Messiah** we have a new position. That **ADONAI** is not seeing us as we really are, but as we are **in Yeshua Messiah**. We are in a new standing with **YHVH** altogether. As a result, a great amount of authority comes with their new position.[19] **They** would need this assurance as **they** faced the lions in the coliseum.

A humble spirit: Or, to put it another way, so that by my being with you, we might, through the faith we share, encourage one another (1:12). This teaching would be mutually beneficial. **Paul** guards against the concept that **he** was, in any way, superior to **them** just because **he** was **an emissary**. **Paul, himself,** would be encouraged by seeing **them** grow in **the faith**. And **Paul** would learn things from **them** concerning **their faith**. If **Paul** were to gain a sympathetic ear for **his gospel** from the **believers** in **Rome**, and enlist **their** support for **his** possible mission in **Spain (15:24), he** needed to exercise tact in asserting **his** authority.[20] All of us are more consistent in our **faith** when others walk with us and encourage us. The Bible commands mutual accountability, mutual encouragement, mutual serving, and mutual honoring. Over fifty times we are commanded to do different tasks for **one another** (see **Af – The List of "one another" Commands**).[21]



A fruitful spirit: Brothers, I want you to know, although I have been prevented from visiting you until now, I have often planned to do so, in order that I might have some fruitful work (Philippians 1:22) among you, just as I have among the other Gentiles (11:13). Sometimes Paul was

hindered because of the work of **the Adversary (First Thessalonians 2:17-20)**, but in this case **he** was hindered because of the work of **YHVH**. There was so much ministry to do in Asia Minor and Greece that **he** could not immediately spare time for **Rome**. But **Paul** was ready to pay **his debt**; **he** was under orders from **the Lord**.[22] **The apostle** wanted to be used to help the church at **Rome** grow through new converts and grow in sanctification, which includes growth in the service of **Messiah**. Some years later, when **Paul** wrote to the **Philippian** church from **Rome, he** was able to give greetings even from believers in **Caesar's own household (Philippians 4:22)**, believers he may have been instrumental in bringing to Messiah.[23]

An obedient spirit: Paul was deeply conscious of **his calling**, of being **set apart (1:1c) for the Good News of God**. This is what motivated **Paul**, as **he himself** said: **Woe is me if I don't proclaim the Good News (First Corinthians 9:16b)**, because **I owe a debt** (Greek: *opheiletes*, meaning *one held some obligation, bound by some duty*) **to both civilized Greeks and uncivilized people** (Greek: *barbarous*, meaning *one whose speech is rough, as if repeating the syllables barbar*)**, to both the educated and the ignorant (1:14). Paul** expressed **his** responsibility to the educated and the uneducated, the sophisticated and the simple, the privileged and the underprivileged. Like **the Lord he** served **(First Peter 1:17), Paul** was no respecter of persons.

The first person to whom **Yeshua** revealed **Himself** to as **Messiah** was an adulterous woman who had a number of husbands and was living with a man who was not her husband. Not only that, but she was **a Samaritan**, a member of a race greatly despised by **the Jews**. Yet, **Yeshua** drew her to **Himself** in loving compassion, and she was used to bring many of her fellow **Samaritans** to **faith** in **the Messiah (John 4:7-42)**.[23] The Gospel is the great equalizer, because everyone is equally lost without it, and equally saved with it.

An eager spirit: Therefore, as far as **I** am concerned, **I am eager to proclaim the Good News to you who live in Rome (1:15).** The contrast implied is that between *willing* (which **Paul** was **eager to do**), and *carrying out* the will of **YHVH** (which depends on **God**). No doubt the false teachers (see the commentary on **Galatians Ag – Who Were the Judaizers?**) had already gotten to **Rome** and were seeking to poison the believers in **Rome** against **Paul**. Some would accuse **him** of not following **the Oral Law** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ei – The Oral Law**), others would say **he** was a traitor to the Jewish nation. Still others would

twist **his** teaching about grace and try to prove that **he** taught loose living **(3:8)**. No wonder **Paul** was eager to get to **Rome**. **He** wanted to share with **them the Good News** of **Yeshua Messiah**.[24]

Why was **Paul in debt** to do this? Let us look at three passages: **Furthermore, let me make clear to you, brothers, that the Good News as I proclaim it is not a human product; because neither did I receive it from someone else nor was I taught it – it came through a direct revelation from Yeshua the Messiah (Galatians 1:11-12).**

It is a consequence of this that I, Sha'ul, am a prisoner of the Messiah Yeshua on behalf of the Gentiles. I assume that you have heard of the work God in his grace has given me to do for your benefit, and that it was by a revelation that this secret plan was made known to me. I have already written about it briefly, and if you read what I have written, you will grasp how I understand this secret plan concerning the Messiah. In past generations it was not made known to mankind, as the Spirit is now revealing it to his emissaries and prophets, that in union with the Messiah and through the Good News the Gentiles were to be joint heirs, a joint body and joint sharers with the Jews in what God has promised. I became a servant of this Good News by God's gracious gift, which he gave me through the operation of his power (Ephesians 3:1-7).

But, because of the extraordinary greatness of the revelations, I refrain, so that no one will think more of me than what my words or deeds may warrant. Therefore, to keep me from becoming overly proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from the Adversary to pound away at me, so that I wouldn't grow conceited. Three times I begged the Lord to take this thing away from me; but he told me, "My grace is enough for you, for my power is brought to perfection through weakness. Therefore, I am very happy to boast about my weakness, in order that the Messiah's power will rest upon me. Yes, I am well pleased with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and difficulties endured on behalf of the Messiah; for it is when I am weak that I am strong (Second Corinthians 12:6b-10).

In these three cases, **Paul** keeps emphasizing the direct revelation that came from **God**, the uniqueness of the revelation, and the abundance of that revelation it was necessary for **him** to remain humble by giving **him** a **weakness**, **a thorn in the flesh**. When **Paul and Barnabas** were on **their** way back to Syrian Antioch in **Acts**

14:24-25. They traveled through the low swampy lands of **Pamphylia** where **he** contracted an oriental eye disease called ophthalmia (see the commentary on **Galatians Bp – Until Messiah is Formed in You**). So, with the abundance of revelation given to **him**, was **indebted**, or obligated, so to speak, **to proclaim the Good News (1:15)**.[25] Life had but one value for **Paul**: to do **God's** work.