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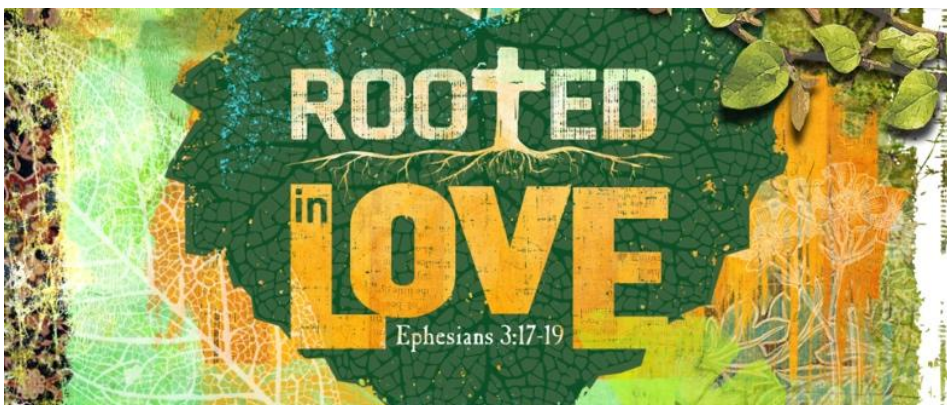
Rooted and Grounded in Love

3: 14-21

Rooted and grounded in love DIG: How might a person's prayer requests for others reveal the prayer's understanding of God? How might a person's understanding of God impact how they pray for the spiritual growth of others? What did Paul want his readers to have the strength to do? Why did that require strength? Why is it necessary for a believer to be rooted and grounded in love? What is the fullness of God and how can we experience it?

REFLECT: What is the connection between being strengthened by the Ruach Ha'Kodesh and Messiah indwelling you? How are they similar? How are they different? How does grasping the depth of Messiah's love bring power to your life as a believer? How does the love of Messiah change a person from the inside out? Do you place limits on God in your prayers? Are you making progress and growing in your personal relationship with God through Yeshua?

Sha'ul used three pictures here to convey the idea of spiritual depth, and the three pictures are hidden in three verbs: dwell, rooted, and grounded.



It is possible to know a great deal about cars - to know exactly how the engine, the ignition, the transmission, and so on - and yet never use it to go anywhere. It is also possible to know very little about cars and yet use it every day to travel many miles. In the same way, it is possible to know a great deal about the Bible - its doctrines, interpretations, moral

standards, promises, warnings, and so on – yet not live by those truths. In **Ephesians 1:1 to 3:13** Sha’ul gives the basic truths about the life of a believer – who we are **in Messiah** and the great, unlimited resources we have in **Him**. But, in **3:14** Paul gives **his prayer** requests on behalf of the **Ephesian** believers. This **the apostle’s** second **prayer** in **his** letter to the **Ephesians**, and is a **prayer** for enablement. The first **prayer** was for the believers to have **Godly wisdom** (to see link click [Ar](#) - **The Rabbi’s Prayer for Godly Wisdom**); the second is for them to use it.¹³⁰

The Spirit’s power (3:14-16): For this reason (3:14a) picks up after the parenthesis of 3:2-13, and begins by repeating the words of 3:1. The **reason** about which **the Rabbi** speaks is therefore found in **Chapter 2**. **Messiah** makes us spiritually **alive in Him (2:5)**, we are **God’s workmanship (2:10)**, **no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of His household (2:19)**, **built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (2:20)**, and **are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit (2:22)**. Therefore, **for this reason** (that our new identity makes us the **dwelling** place of **God**), **Paul prays for the Ephesians** to use **the power** that **their** new position **in Messiah** provides. Because believers house of the triune, all-powerful **God** of the universe, **Sha’ul prays** that **their** unlimited **power** and **energy** from **Him** would be seen in **their** daily lives.¹³¹

I fall on my knees before the Father (3:14b). After the amazing theological presentation in the early chapters of **Ephesians**, **the Rabbi** stops for **prayerful** reflection. **Jews** are not commonly known to **pray** or worship from **their knees**, but it is not unheard of. **Dani’el** was said to **pray** from **his knees** as **he** interceded for Jerusalem (**Dani’el 6:10**). Even in the modern synagogue services on Yom Kippur (see the commentary on **Leviticus Ef** - **Yom Kippur**) there is a dramatic moment during the Aleinu prayer when the Cantor lies prostrate on the floor. It is a physical expression of one’s need for humility and submission to the plan of **God**, especially on that High Holy Day. Here, **Sha’ul** shows such submission and praise for the unveiling of **God’s** unique plan in sending **the Messiah** for all mankind.¹³²

From whom every family in heaven and on earth, meaning those **believers** from every age, those now **in heaven**, and those still remaining **on earth**. This verse does not teach, as claimed by modern liberalism, the universal fatherhood of **God** and the universal brotherhood of mankind. There are only two families in the world. The family of **God** and the family of Satan, and if you aren’t in one, then you’re in the other. Nowhere are these two opposite fatherhoods more explicitly illustrated than in the book of **John**. To the unbelieving **Jews** who rejected **Him**, but presumed to claim **Abraham** as **their** spiritual forefather, **Yeshua** said: **If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham. But as it is,**

you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. You are doing the deeds of your father . . . If God were your Father, you would love Me . . . but you are of your father the devil (John 8:39-42 and 44).

The children of **God** are the only ones who legitimately **receive their names** from **God the Father (3:15)**. Believing **Gentiles** are no more or less children of **God** than believing **Jews**. **Every family** of believers is a part of the one universal, invisible, spiritual family of **God**, in which there are many members, but only one **Father**.¹³³ It is important to understand that your spiritual **family** is even more important than your physical **family** because it will last forever. Our **families** on earth are wonderful gifts from **God** (usually), but they are temporary and fragile, often broken by divorce, distance, growing old, and inevitably, death. On the other hand, our spiritual family - our relationship to other believers (which can hopefully include family members) - will continue throughout eternity. It is a much stronger union, a more permanent bond, than blood relationships.¹³⁴

I pray that from the treasures of His glory, He will empower you with inner strength by His Spirit (3:16). By sending **the Messiah, ADONAI** has opened up the treasure trove of **His** eternal riches. These are now the inheritance of every **Jew** and **Gentile** who calls on the name of **Yeshua (John 3:16 and First Corinthians 15:3b-4)**. The treasures of redemption and abundant life now reside in **the inner spirit** of each believer. Above all, **the Rabbi** prays that **the Ephesians** will be **grounded in love**, the central message of the Torah. **A story from the Talmud** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ei - The Oral Law**) illustrates this truth as well. **One day, a Gentile who wished to know the condensed message of the Torah approached the great Rabbi Hillel. To make it simple he requested that the Rabbi give him the answer while standing on one foot. Hillel answered him: "What is hateful to yourself, do not do to your fellow man" (Tractate Shabbat 31a). Yeshua** essentially gave the same answer in more positive terms what is commonly called the golden rule: **Treat others how you want them to treat you, for this is the meaning of the Torah and the teaching of the Prophets (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31 NCV)**. Either way, the foundation of all Scripture and **the God of Isra'el is love** and this is the call to all **God's** children as well.¹³⁵

Messiah's indwelling (3:17a): Sha'ul used three pictures here to convey the idea of spiritual **depth**, and the three pictures are hidden in three verbs: **dwell, rooted, and grounded**. **"So that"** translates *hina*, a Greek word used to introduce purpose clauses. The purpose of our being **empowered with inner strength by His Spirit through faith (3:16)** is **that the Messiah may dwell in our hearts through faith**. Paul is not saying

that **the Ephesians** were not saved. **He** has already made it clear that all believers are **in Messiah (1:1, 3, 10, 12, 2:6, 10 and 13)**. So, **he is not** referring to **Messiah's** indwelling believers in salvation, but in sanctification, being **conformed into the likeness of Messiah (Romans 8:28-29)**. The verb **dwelt** literally means *to settle down and feel at home*. **ADONAI** cannot be fully *at home in* our **hearts** until **He** is allowed to exercise **His** lordship over every aspect of our lives. We practice, as well as receive **His Presence through faith**. How awesome and wonderful that the Almighty and holy **God** of the universe wants to **dwelt in** our **hearts**, to be at home, and rule there! **Yeshua** said: **If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come in to him, and make our dwelling with him (John 14:23).**¹³⁶

Rooted and grounded in love (3:17b-19a): The verb **rooted** moves us into the plant world. A tree must get its deep **roots** into the soil if it is to have both nourishment and stability, and the believer must have his spiritual **roots** deep into the **love of God. Psalm 1:1-3** is a perfect description of this word, and **Jeremiah 17:5-8** is a good comment on it. One of the most important questions a believer can ask is, "From what do I draw my nourishment and my stability." If there is to be power in the life of a believer, then there must be depth. The **roots** must go deeper and deeper into the **love of Messiah**. The words **being rooted and grounded** are perfect tense participles in the Greek text, and *describe a completed action which produced results which are still in effect all the way to the present*. They are the result of **the strengthening by the Ruach** and the consequent feeling of *feeling at home with the Lord Yeshua in the believer's heart*, and **His** fellowship with **Him**.

Grounded is an architectural term; it refers to the foundation on which we build. The most important part of any building is its foundation. If you don't go **deep**, you can't go high. The trials of life test the **depth** of our experience. If two roommates in college have a falling out, they may seek new roommates. But if a husband and wife, who love each other, have a disagreement, the trial only deepens their **love** as they seek to solve the problems. The storm that blows reveals **the strength of the roots**. **Yeshua** told the story of two builders, one of whom did not go **deep** enough for his foundation (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Dy - The Wise and Foolish Builders**). **Paul** prayed that the **Ephesian** believers might have a **deeper** experience with **Messiah**, because only a **deep** experience could sustain **them** during the severe trials of life.

So that you, with all God's people, will be given strength to grasp the breadth, length, height and depth of the Messiah's love in all its fullness (3:18). Even with all the riches that Messianic **Jews** and Messianic **Gentiles** have experienced, **the apostle**

prays that we will continue to grow in our understanding of it all. It is, in fact, **beyond all comprehension** in this present age, but we are encouraged to strive to be filled with **the fullness of YHVH**. Wherever we are in our spiritual journey, we can always grow. Spiritual growth is the sign of one in true relationship with **Yeshua**. It is at the same time, daunting and yet exciting, as our relationship with **Ha'Shem** should never be stale or static.¹³⁷

To what may at first seem as a self-contradiction, **the Rabbi** says that **to know the love of Messiah is beyond all comprehension (3:19a)**. **Knowing Messiah's love** takes us **beyond human comprehension**, because it is from an infinitely higher source. **Paul** is not speaking here of our **knowing the love** that we have *for Messiah*, but **the love of Messiah, His very own love** that **He** must place in our **hearts** before we can **love Him** or anyone else. We are commanded to **love** because we are given **love**. **ADONAI** always gives **love** before **He** commands anything in return, and **love** is one of **Messiah's** greatest gifts to **His Church**. Throughout **John Chapters 14-16**, **Yeshua** promises **love, joy, peace, power, and comfort** without measure to those who belong to **Him**.

The world cannot **comprehend** the great **love** that **Messiah** gives because it cannot understand **Him**. **The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the Gospel that displays the glory of Messiah (Second Corinthians 4:4)**. Worldly "love" is based on attraction and therefore lasts only as long as the attraction. **Messiah's love** is based on **His** own nature and therefore lasts forever. Worldly "love" lasts until it is offended or rebuffed. **Messiah's love** lasts despite every offense and every rebuff. Worldly "love" loves for what it can get. **Messiah's love** loves what it can give. What is **beyond all comprehension** to the world is to be normal living for the child of **God**.

The fullness of God (3:19b): The inner **strengthening** of the **Spirit of God** leads to the **indwelling** of **Messiah**, which leads to **abundant love**, which leads to **God's fullness** in us. To **be filled with all the fullness of God** is indeed **beyond all comprehension**, even to **God's own children (3:19b)**. It is incredible and indescribable. There is no way, on this side of heaven, we can fathom that truth. But as someone once said, "**God** said it, I believe it, and that does it!" To even begin to grasp the magnitude of **God's fullness**, we must think of every attribute and every characteristic of **ADONAI**. We must think of **His** power, majesty, wisdom, love, mercy, patience, kindness, longsuffering, and every other thing that **YHVH** says and does. That **Paul** is not exaggerating is clear from the fact that in this letter **he** repeatedly mentions the **fullness** of **God's** blessing to those who belong to **Him in Messiah**. **He** tells us that **the One who went down is Himself the one who also went up, far above all of heaven, in order to fill all things (4:10)**, and that **God** wants every

believer to **be filled with the Spirit (5:18)**. From our human, earthly perspective, we can never see more than **the fringes of His ways (Job 26:2-3, 7-8, 11, and 13-14)**. No wonder **David** said that **he** would not be satisfied until **he** would wake-up and **see God's face (Psalm 17:15)**. **Rabbi Sha'ul** agreed with **David**, saying: **Now we see obscurely in a mirror, but then it will be face to face. Now I know partly; then I will know fully; just as God has fully known me (First Corinthians 13:12)**.¹³⁸

The glory of God (3:20-21): Now to him who by his power working in us is able to do far beyond anything we can ask or imagine (3:20). **Sha'ul** rejoices in **prayer** with the reality that the **God** we worship is all-powerful and able to accomplish anything that is according to **His** divine will. Not only that, but our **Father** is able to do things even beyond what we may ask or even imagine. Messianic believers have a relationship with **the Omnipotent Father** who **loves to work all things for good for His children (Romans 8:28)**. Many times these things are even beyond what we may ask for in **prayer**. This is not to say that we always understand the challenges that come our way in life. Yet, **He is the One** who knows better what is really the best answer for every situation. How much easier it is for us not to force our personal agenda (as if we could do that anyway) and to trust our loving **Father**.

To Him be glory in the Church and in the Messiah Yeshua from generation to generation forever. The language is that of **Psalms 48:13, 119:90, 145:4 and 13**. **The Rabbi** concludes **his** prayer of thanksgiving with an acknowledgment that there will be **glory** given to **God** for all these gifts. It is not just the reflection of the last few verses that leads **him** to this conclusion, but a survey of all the blessings of **YHVH** reflected in the first three chapters of **his** letter. **ADONAI's** divine plan of world redemption through **the Messiah** is beyond reproach. Humanity may have caused much pain and suffering in history, sometimes even in the name of religion. But **God** cannot be blamed for such evil. The tragedies of human history are actually proof that mankind has not followed the truth of the Scriptures.

No matter how confusing the issues of the world are, **Paul**, here, reminds us all that **the LORD** will ultimately **work all things for good** and certainly for **His glory**. This **glory** is experienced by those who diligently **seek Him (Jeremiah 29:13)**, a hope that is expressed in the siddur (the Jewish prayer book). To this important truth, **the apostle** simply closes with the Hebrew exclamation: **amen (3:21). God is the Faithful One!**¹³⁹