

An open book with a dark bookmark is resting on a rustic wooden surface. The pages of the book are slightly blurred, showing some text. The wood grain is prominent and runs horizontally across the frame.

# COLOSSIANS

Study Guide

FOR [LOVEISRAEL.ORG](http://LOVEISRAEL.ORG)

# Colossians

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## Chapter 1

### Part 1: Colossians 1v1-8

Our faith should affect everything that we do, say, or think. This book teaches us how to live out a faith that is pleasing to G-d. If we have faith we ought to be faithful people.

**Verse 1:** *“Paul, an apostle of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ), by the will of G-d, and Timothy the brother.”*

*Paul* was an apostle, called by G-d. In Acts 9v15-16 we read that Paul was sent to take the gospel to the nations (to the Gentiles as well as to Israel), and to suffer for Messiah. Paul did not do this for himself, for his own plans and purposes, but for *the will of G-d* to be accomplished. Paul was extremely committed to the will of G-d. What is the will of G-d for the world, and what is the will of G-d for our lives? Until we can answer these questions we will not be able to grow or mature properly -we will lack a proper perspective, or understanding, needed in order to walk mightily before G-d – doing the things that He would have us to do. If our faith is important to us then we are going to be passionately committed to the will of G-d.

*Timothy* is a good example of what a *brother* in the L-rd is to be.

**Verse 2:** *“To the Colossians, the saints and faithful brethren in Messiah. Grace to you and peace from G-d our Father and the L-rd Messiah Yeshua.”*

*Colosse* was in Western Turkey. It was very close to the city of Laodicea.

*Saints:* Holy people who are submitted to the purposes of G-d.

In Paul’s writings he often emphasized this phrase: *“In Messiah”*. To be pleasing, to grow and to transform we need to be “in Messiah” (In His will, able to access the anointing of the Holy Spirit, submitted to His leadership in our lives – Messiah is pleasing to G-d, so only **in Him** do we become pleasing to G-d).

*Grace:* We receive grace, by faith. Grace produces faithfulness/obedience in our lives (Titus 2v11-14) whereby we begin to fulfill the will of G-d. It is only when we are doing the will of G-d that we will have *peace*.

Our behavior, as believers, is extremely important to G-d. We are redeemed by G-d, which means that we have been purchased by Him, belong to Him and, therefore, need to live in obedience to Him.

**Verse 3:** *“We give thanks to G-d, the Father of Messiah Yeshua, always concerning you praying,”*

*We:* this refers to Paul, Timothy, and others – Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Mark etc. (as seen in chapter 4). These are people Paul ministered with and people he also ministered to.

*Father* reminds us of One who Provides. G-d our Provider. All the good things, happening in and through this congregation, are being accomplished because of the provision of G-d.

**Verse 4:** *“After hearing of your faith in Messiah Yeshua and of your love for all the saints.”*

Paul was excited because he *heard* of the work G-d was doing in these individuals. Paul saw the faithfulness of G-d to mature and grow them. This caused them to multiply and have an impact in their community, as well as in other cities.

*Faith* is a word of commitment. *Faith in Messiah Yeshua* means that they were committed to the things that pleased G-d.

*Love* is a word associated with sacrificial giving. Redemption produced a change in these people so that they began to live sacrificially. They used their lives in order to be a blessing to others.

**Verse 5:** *“On account of the hope that has been laid up for you in heaven. Which you have heard previously in the Word of truth of the gospel.”*

The word ‘*hope*’ is always connected to the written promises of G-d. If we do not know the Scripture, and the promises of G-d contained in it, we are not going to live properly. Instead of living a life that is pleasing to G-d we will live lives much like those who are unbelievers.

‘*Heaven*’, as used here, refers to the Kingdom of G-d.

Paul links ‘*truth*’ and ‘*gospel*’ together. The gospel is good news about redemption. If there is redemption there has to be a Messiah; and that is Messiah Yeshua. He redeems us from ALL of our transgressions.

**Verse 6:** *“Which has come to you, as it has to all in the world, and it produces fruit in you from the day that you heard of it. And you have come to know the grace of G-d in truth.”*

This message of the gospel is for *ALL the world*. For Everyone.

To ‘*know*’, in this context, is experiential. i.e. they *know* it because they have experienced it.

*Truth* is being emphasized but is also tying two things together: It ties the gospel (of truth) and grace (in truth) together. You cannot accept the grace of G-d if you do not accept the truth of G-d. The truth of G-d is the gospel. Grace brings change in our lives, but this only happens when we have embraced the truth of G-d.

**Verse 7:** *“Just as you were taught from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Messiah on your behalf.”*

*Epaphras* is someone who gave his life on behalf of this congregation. He had received the love of G-d and this caused him to become an instrument of that same love.

The word *servant* can also mean ‘slave’.

**Verse 8:** *“Also this one has told us of your love in the Spirit.”*

When they received the gospel of truth into their lives the outcome was that they were now *“in the Spirit”*. It is the Spirit who brings divine, G-dly order into our lives. Without the Spirit, living within us, we would not be able to do anything pleasing to G-d.

Paul emphasizes that this congregation is *in the Spirit*. The Holy Spirit leads them to demonstrate love, to walk in truth, to be empowered by G-d’s grace and to be a catalyst for change in their community. This is what every believer is called to do. The Spirit enables us to be transformed, in order to be a testimony to those who do not yet believe.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Part 2: Colossians 1v9-14**

**Verse 9:** *“On account of this also we, from the day that we have heard, have not ceased on behalf of you praying. Asking in order that you might be full of the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”*

Paul uses a unique grammatical construction in this sentence. He makes it emphatic that he is *praying* for this congregation. On account of the fact that this congregation is *in the Spirit* they are called to function in, and live out, G-d’s order for their lives.

Paul is praying for this congregation to know (*have knowledge of*) the will of G-d. We, too, need to be praying to know what G-d’s will for our own lives is. After redemption, our lives no longer belong to us (1 Corinthians 6v19-20). We need to ask G-d for His wisdom so that we are enabled to see things from, and make decisions based upon, a spiritual perspective.

If the will of G-d is of no interest to us, we will not have spiritual perspective. To live a life of eternal significance, and meaning, will only be possible if we live according to the will of G-d.

**Verse 10:** *“You should walk worthy of the L-rd - in all things that are pleasing, in every good work producing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of G-d.”*

*Walk* is a behavioural word. It reflects our lifestyles. The way we walk, or live out our lives, needs to be pleasing to G-d.

Yeshua is our Saviour (Redeemer/Purchaser) but He is also our *L-rd*. When people do what is right in their own eyes (Judges 21v25), without considering G-d’s thoughts/Word, it is considered as evil. We need to take every thought captive (through the Word, Scriptural revelation, truth), to make it obedient to Messiah (2 Corinthians 10v5).

‘The word *‘good’* in the Bible is always attached to G-d’s will. We can know G-d’s will through His commandments. If we love Him we will obey His commands (John 14v15).

*Increasing* implies growth – in this case, growing *in the knowledge of G-d*.

**Verse 11:** *“And in all power (δυνάμει – dynamite) being empowered, according to the κράτος (creative power) of His glory. With all patience, with longsuffering and with joy.”*

It is only when we are recipients of the knowledge of G-d (His truth) that He entrusts us with His power.

Some things in our lives have to be destroyed (dynamite) in order for us to be built up by G-d’s creative power. (Ecclesiastes 3v3). When we use the power of G-d, to build the things of G-d, it leads to joy.

A process for spiritual growth is being revealed here (Biblical principles **must** be derived from the Bible - not from people’s own experiences and thoughts. We need to follow Scriptural revelation in order to see the will of G-d accomplished). An understanding of the will of G-d leads to us becoming recipients of the power of G-d. When we build upon the purposes of G-d there will be a manifestation of His glory. As we become involved in this process, as the Holy Spirit enables us, we have a growing desire to do it more and more, again and again.

When something is valuable and satisfying we will be committed to it. No matter what it costs, we would be willing to pay. We are able to be *patient and longsuffering*, when we set out to do G-d’s will, because we realise that it is worth it.

When we are committed to the things of G-d, and our lives are being used to manifest His glory, it is addictive. We want to continue in it - even if it means that it may take a while, or there is suffering in the midst of it. We know that at the end of it all we will have a unique joy.

**Verse 12:** *“Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us for a portion in the inheritance of the saints, in light.”*

We are willing to be patient and longsuffering because G-d has *qualified* (redeemed) us for His Kingdom. G-d is willing to share (Romans 8v32). He is not stingy and will not hold back anything. If we submit to G-d’s truth we will have a wonderful *inheritance* in the Kingdom of G-d.

*In light....* i.e. in the Kingdom. Most people are in darkness. They do not see Kingdom light or from a Kingdom perspective. They pursue the things of this world which never satisfy.

**Verse 13:** *“He has delivered us from the authority (power)of darkness, and transferred us into the Kingdom of His Beloved Son.”*

It is only in Messiah that we can be pleasing to G-d. When we are pleasing to G-d we will also be pleased with our own lives.

**Verse 14:** *“In whom we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”*

This promise from G-d gives us assurance. *Through His blood* we have been delivered from darkness and are now able to live in His marvellous light. It is in light that we are enabled to see things differently.

# Chapter 1

## **Part 3: Colossians 1v15-22**

The will of the Father for Yeshua was that He would redeem mankind by shedding His blood, in order to forgive our sins and to purchase us for G-d. Through Messiah, we become servants of the living G-d. It is through knowing truth that our relationship with G-d is deepened, matured, and grows to become the most satisfying aspect of our lives.

**Verse 15:** *“(Yeshua) Who is the image of the invisible G-d, the firstborn over all creation.”*

*Image* is the Greek word ‘icon’ and should be understood as something that represents, PERFECTLY, that which is uniquely related to it. Yeshua (G-d in the flesh, visible) perfectly expressed the image, the character, the purpose, the nature (everything!) in regard to G-d His Father (John 14v9-10) – who is unseen.

*Firstborn* shows authority, control, and superiority. Yeshua has superiority over all creation. Why? ...

**Verse 16:** *“Because in Him were created all things: the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, visible things and invisible things, whether they be thrones, principalities, rulers or authorities; all things through Him and for Him were created.”*

This is a very important piece of revelation. Paul reveals to us that it was not G-d the Father, but it was the Divine Son of G-d, who *created all things* in Genesis 1. Messiah WAS NOT created. He was the source of creation. There was never a time that Yeshua did not exist. He is eternal. (Going backwards or forwards)

Yeshua created ‘*thrones*’ – places for government and authority.

We were also created FOR Him.... Are we living for Him? Doing His will? He created all things in the past, all things today and all things that will be – including the creation and the establishment of the Kingdom of G-d to still come. All things were created BY Him but also FOR Him.

**Verse 17:** *“He is before all, and all things In Him consist.”*

Yeshua spoke creation into being and holds it all together. If He did not it would fall apart or break down. He maintains creation and ensures that it endures.

**Verse 18:** *“He is the head of the body of the church. He is the beginning; He is the firstborn of the dead in order that He should have, in all things, pre-eminence.”*

Out of all of His creation the most precious thing, to Yeshua, is the *church* [those who have been called out - e.g. Abraham - throughout the Bible, G-d consistently calls His people to leave the places where they are (e.g. Babylon, or the things of this world) in order to embrace the

things of the world to come (His Kingdom)]. The church is a new creation and submits to the authority of Messiah. She lives with a sure hope of the Kingdom to come.

Yeshua brought about a *beginning* (Genesis 1v1) to the creation of this world.

*Pre-eminence*: He is first, and all things need to be subjected to Him.

**Verse 19**: *“In Him (Yeshua) it was pleasing (to G-d, His Father) that all the fullness of deity should dwell.”*

Verses 15-19 show strong Biblical evidence for the Divinity of Messiah Yeshua.

**Verse 20**: *“Through Him was reconciled all things. All things in Him having made peace, through the blood of His cross, whether things on the land or things in the heavens.”*

We can be assured of our salvation because G-d did it (we cannot save ourselves), and all He does He does perfectly. He is omnipotent, so has all the power to bring about our salvation. Paul’s teaching often focussed on the cross. The cross testifies of G-d’s judgement/wrath but also of His love to save us. Through His blood, shed on the cross, Messiah Yeshua reconciled us to G-d. He has enabled us to have peace with G-d (2 Corinthians 5v18-21)

**Verse 21**: *“And you once (our pre salvation situation) were alienated (estranged/hostile) in your minds, in regard to your evil work,”*

Our relationship with G-d, pre-salvation, was a broken one. Everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of G-d (Romans 3v23). Before coming to faith, we were enemies of G-d (Romans 5v10). G-d did not have enmity toward us (John 3v16) but we had enmity toward Him. It is only through the gospel that we can have peace with G-d. Before salvation we had a desire in our minds for that which was evil – our own wills foremost in our thoughts, rather than G-d’s will.

**Verse 22**: *“But now, having been reconciled in the body of His flesh through death. He did that so that He could present us holy and blameless and complete (perfect) before Him.”*

What a wonderful gift to be reconciled to G-d! The cross is the foundation of the gospel message.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Part 4: Colossians 1v23-29**

**Verse 23**: *“Since (some translators translate it as “If”) also you remain in the faith, established and firm (stable), not moving away from the hope of the gospel which you have heard, which has been proclaimed in all of creation under the heavens, which I Paul have become a minister.”*

‘If’ is better translated ‘since’. It is not a word intended to show doubt. In this verse Paul is affirming this congregation who he has previously referred to as ‘saints’ or fellow believers.

He is encouraging them to do the right thing. We are positioned to walk with great potential before G-d because of all that He has done for us (see preceding verses). Paul is encouraging them with the benefits of being a believer.

This is the second time that Paul has spoken of *hope*. This hope refers to the inheritance of the believer. Once you inherit something it is not lost.

**Verse 24:** *“Which now I rejoice in my suffering on behalf of you. And completing (filling up) that which is lacking of the afflictions of Messiah in my flesh, on behalf of His body which is the church.”*

*Rejoice* is also a word of affirmation. Paul is filled with joy because they are continuing in their faith. Paul is making sacrifices. When we walk with G-d it is going to cause us to suffer. Paul is having a positive influence in growing and discipling these people. He had been put into prison because of his desire to minister to this congregation and others.

What Messiah did He did perfectly. He provided everything to redeem us eternally. What He did on the cross was sufficient. It was finished, perfectly. Messiah did the work of redemption completely and paid full price for redemption so, then, **what was still lacking?**

In order to get the gospel out, and to disciple people so that they can grow, **we** (the body of Messiah) **also participate in carrying on the ministry of Messiah** – that is why we are given His Spirit. In order to see people saved, redeemed, forgiven, and made into a Kingdom people we need to participate and carry on this ministry. Just like Yeshua suffered we are going to suffer too. Our suffering is not in any way paying that price. Messiah paid it in full. However, believers, for the sake of Messiah - and for the ministry of Messiah - are going to suffer as well. **We have a role in completing the purpose of Messiah**, not the work of redemption, but the proclamation of the gospel and helping people to grow up. Paul rejoices in this call and does not mind suffering on behalf of the church.

**Verse 25:** *“For which I became a servant according to the administration/management of G-d, that was given to me, on behalf of you, for the fulfilment of the Word (logos, blueprint) of G-d.”*

We (like Paul) are called to play a role in the building up of the body of Messiah. Paul worked in order that the purpose/blueprint of G-d actually became a reality. We are supposed to do this same thing – participate in bringing about the outcome of G-d’s will (namely, discipling people so that lives are changed through Messiah, by His Spirit).

**Verse 26:** *“The mystery that has been concealed (hidden) from the ages and generations, but has now been revealed to His saints.”*

One nation was called to bless all the nations of the world (Genesis 12v3). In the same way, now, the church has been called to be a blessing to the nations of the world (Matthew 28v18-20).



**Verse 27:** *“G-d desired to make known what the riches of the glory, of this mystery, to the nations is: Messiah in you, the hope of glory, “*

Judaism did not understand what G-d’s purpose for the nations was -that all the people of the world could be transformed.

Messiah is for the Jewish people. What they did not realise was that Messiah was for the nations too! This was the mystery that was now revealed.

**Verse 28:** *“whom we proclaim (reveal). We admonish all people, and teach all people, in all wisdom in order that they should present all men perfect (complete or whole) in Messiah Yeshua.”*

To *admonish* means to warn people of a consequence if they do not agree or participate with something. The purpose of the gospel is that all people are presented before G-d the Father for entrance into the Kingdom of G-d. There is no hope, and no expectation of receiving any of the promises of G-d, unless we are IN Messiah. You can only be in Messiah if you have a New Covenantal relationship with Him. According to Jeremiah 31v31-34 it is a covenant of forgiveness (G-d, who does not lie, has said He will remember our sins no more! Because of the sufficiency of Messiah’s blood, and this promise, we can go before Him, on judgement day, with an assurance and a boldness that we are pleasing to Him).

**Verse 29:** *“For which also I labour, and striving according to His working, that the work in me would be powerful (mighty).”*

It is through the gospel that we can have the privilege of presenting people perfect before G-d. The gospel saves and brings about regeneration. It brings joy, peace, and contentment. Paul experienced all of this and, therefore, dedicated his life (to the degree of becoming a servant or labourer for it) in order to share the gospel with others.

The will of G-d is to have people presented as perfect before Him. When we humble ourselves, turning from our fleshly desires, and embrace the truth, the call, and purposes of G-d in our lives, we become recipients of His power. We receive this power in order to be able to release it into the lives of other people, whereby they become saved. G-d’s power, in turn, is then given to them and they begin to disciple others. In this way more and more people are brought into a Kingdom reality.

## Chapter 2

### Part 1: Colossians 2v1-8

**Verse 1:** *“I want to make known to you how great my struggle I have concerning you, and for the Laodiceans, is; as many who have not seen my face in the flesh.”*

Paul wants to reveal to this congregation how great his struggle is. Colosse is very close to the city of Laodicea. Speaking face to face brings change to relationships. (G-d revealed things to Moses, speaking to him face to face – Exodus 33v11). Paul wants them to see, first-hand, his face and the love that he has for them written on it.

Verse 2 tells us why Paul desired this:

**Verse 2:** *“In order that their hearts would be encouraged and knit together in love. And in all the richness (abundance) of the assurance of the understanding in the knowledge of this mystery of G-d, namely Messiah”*

*Heart* has to do with mindset. “As a man thinks in his heart... “(Proverbs 23v7) Paul wants to encourage these churches to think properly. He wants to share with them the love that he has for them – a sacrificial love manifested through his commitment to them. When they see Paul’s love for them they will be changed and in turn will be encouraged to love others.

Paul speaks often of this concept of *assurance*. To have assurance means that something can be known with certainty.

*Messiah* Yeshua is *the mystery of G-d*. This mystery relates to the redemptive work of Messiah i.e. that He went to the cross in order to redeem His people and to present them blameless before G-d, His Father.

**Verse 3:** *“And in which all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge has been hidden.”*

G-d hid/concealed this wisdom and understanding because it was reserved for believers only (those who would believe in Messiah). It is only when we believe in Messiah Yeshua that we can appreciate who He is and what He has done. It is only after salvation that we can truly understand what G-d’s plans and purposes are.

**Verse 4:** *“But this I say to you in order that no one should delude you in enticing words.”*

There is a battle. Paul loves this congregation and wants them to receive assurance through the knowledge of the truth and through an understanding of it. Until you are a believer these things are hidden from you.

**Verse 5:** *“For I say this is true; when I am absent from you in the flesh, I am in the Spirit with you. Rejoicing and beholding the order that you have, stable, because of your faith in Messiah.”*

Even though Paul is in prison and cannot be with them, physically, he is praying for them and spiritually is with them.

Paul wants to minister to them, grow them and impart to them Biblical truth. The motivation for all of this is his love for them. He wants them to become recipients of that which is hidden to the world, that which is reserved for the congregation of the redeemed. When they are recipients of it they can have a proper walk (behaviour) before G-d.

Paul looks at them and sees *stability*, a fruit of their faith in Messiah.

**Verse 6:** *“Therefore (as an outcome of that faith in Messiah Yeshua), as you have received Messiah Yeshua, the L-rd, in Him walk.”*

They received Messiah in faith. This faith produced a faithful observance to the things of G-d, impacting their lifestyles.

We need Messiah Yeshua as Saviour, but we also need Him as *the L-rd* of our lives. As L-RD He has expectations of us, and we have spiritual obligations that impact every aspect (including the physical aspect) of our lives (time, emotions, finances etc –G-d is L-rd over all of these things).

**Verse 7:** *“Being rooted and built up in Him, and that might rule (govern/being established) in faith; just as you have been taught abounding in it (in this faith) in thanksgiving.”*

If our walk is going to be pleasing to G-d we need to be *rooted ...IN Him* – it all comes out of a covenantal relationship with Him. Intimacy with Him produces a change in our lives and gives us this perspective.

The word *“rule”* here is the word for being established/becoming qualified. It is not a qualification to enter into the Kingdom of G-d (e.g. because of Him declaring “you are My son”), but it is a qualification demonstrating that we belong to Him by our conduct (e.g. we show that we are His children because we act like His children).

Thanksgiving has been alluded to for two things in Colossians:

1. Thanksgiving for salvation – assurance that we will be in the Kingdom of G-d.
2. Thanksgiving for G-d working in our lives. Faith rules in our lives from a behavioural standpoint.

We can be thankful as these aspects of thanksgiving bring about the eternal promises of G-d. We are going to become recipients of these in the Kingdom of G-d.

**Verse 8:** *“Watch out! (word of warning) Do not let anyone take you captive (ownership or command over someone) through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the traditions of man and according to the elementary principles of the world and not according to Messiah.”*

Paul is talking to believers and telling them to *not be taken captive*. There are people in the Kingdom whose lifestyles do not reflect the L-rdship of Messiah. Their behaviour shows that they have been taken captive from a fleshly standpoint. They are still in bondage to the things of the world rather than having taken hold of the things that belong to the Kingdom.

Many Bible teachers teach about the traditions of man and about worldly principles of living (using logic and reason) rather than teaching the Biblical principles found in the Word of G-d. Traditions of man are followed, rather than the commandments of G-d.

When he talks of Messiah he is talking of this “mystery”. The concept of Messiah was not a mystery, but the concept of a suffering One was. Messiah had to lay down His life for our sins. We too have to learn to die to ourselves – this is not a popular message, although lifechanging when embraced, and many people do not want to hear it. Many would rather walk in the traditions of man rather than according to the truth of G-d.

## Chapter 2

### Part 2: Colossians 2v9-15

Living a sacrificial life and denying oneself (it is not about accumulation but is about giving and making a difference in the lives of others) of all the things of this world, so that we might take hold of the truth and purposes of G-d, is not a popular thing to state. Why should people embrace this unpopular way of life? Our lives will be lived with eternal significance if we do. We will see how the Holy Spirit will use us to impact others for eternity.

**Verse 9:** *“In Him (Messiah) dwells all **the fullness of the G-d-head** in bodily form.”*

Paul wants to provide encouragement to this congregation. He wants to provide them with Biblical truth that will transform the way that they think. Paul has spoken about who Messiah is in chapter 1v15-16 etc

This is a verse that shows us who Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ) really is. He is the very essence of G-d. For the time that Messiah was in this world He did not live according to His desires (“Not My will”) but according to His Father’s desires. He was a perfect example to us of how we should live. Submitted to the Father’s plan.

**Verse 10:** *“And you are in Him being made complete (fullness, like in v9) in **Messiah who is the head of all rule and authority.**”*

He is the One who starts the work in us, and He is the One who carries it to completion. As we submit to the work, the ministry, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and as we obey G-d, this comes about in our lives.

Messiah is the head over all rule and authority. We are called to obedience. We are admonished to submit.

**Verse 11:** *“In which also you have been circumcised, the circumcision that was done without hands, and the removal of the body of sin of the flesh in the circumcision of Messiah.”*

Unless we understand the Old Testament we will not understand the New. Circumcision is still relevant today because it speaks of the truth of G-d. Circumcision is a picture of the death of the flesh. This verse is not talking about a physical circumcision but a spiritual one. Circumcision symbolises the Abrahamic covenant and was initially not related to the law of Moses, as it preceded Moses. When the law of Moses was revealed circumcision was included in it. It is associated with a covenant of faith – faith in the seed of Abraham; Galatians 3v16, this seed being Messiah. As an outcome of salvation, we go through the circumcision of Messiah – which is the death of sin/the flesh.

**Verse 12:** *“Being buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you have been raised together through the faith of the work of G-d, the One who raised Him from the dead.”*

Paul unites circumcision with baptism. We will not understand baptism if we do not understand circumcision. There is a relationship between them. What is the circumcision of Messiah? What is baptism? Death. Burial. Resurrection. (The ministry / work of Messiah brings about the death of the flesh) We do not serve ourselves. We serve the Living G-d.

**Verse 13:** *“And you, being dead in your transgressions, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh He (G-d) has made you alive together with Him (Messiah) and He has graciously forgiven you of all your transgressions.”*

Through the ministry of Messiah, we find forgiveness for our transgressions and the evidence of that is that we are no longer going to live in the flesh. We live in either the flesh or in the spirit. There is no position in between.

*Making alive* has to do with a new life, a new life that is brought about by baptism (not of water) but by Baptism of the Spirit. This forgiveness of sin is important to us - we no longer need to live in sin.

**Verse 14:** *“Blotting out that which was against us, those decrees that were written, the ones that were contrary to us, and he has lifted them from our midst, nailing it to the cross.”*

What has been blotted out? All of those decrees of judgement. Of death. Of curse. All of these have been done away with. We are not going to be cursed by G-d but rather we are going to live a new life empowered by the Spirit of G-d - which is related to the order of G-d. The order of G-d is seen in His Word, in His purposes, in His instructions, laws and statutes. Messiah came to earth with a call on His life – to lay it down for humankind. When we believe, we too have a call on our lives, and this is based on the instructions of G-d. We have the motivation to submit to Him because of what He has done.

What did He nail to the cross? All the things that were against us (The laws with judgements that led to curses and death).

The laws that lead to life and blessing are still available to us today. He did not nail these to the cross. Blessings are the outcomes of obedience. My obedience leads to the blessings of G-d.

**Verse 15:** *“By means of the sufficiency (power) of the cross it has disarmed the rulers and authorities (demonic) and He exposed them publicly and He triumphed over them in Him.”*

There are weapons aimed against us. It is through the power of the cross that these forces (demonic rulers and authorities) are stripped of their power against us and they no longer have any rule or authority in our lives. It is only IN Him that this occurs.

G-d dealt perfectly with our sin (when He died on the cross and shed His blood) so that we do not need to continue in sin, What is sin? It is a violation of the instructions (commandments) and will of G-d. The commandments are not done away with. They teach us how to love G-d and how to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. The commandments are rooted in love. We do not want to violate G-d’s instructions. We want to follow them...knowing that everything that was against us was defeated at the cross. Paul keeps coming back to this phrase *“in Him”*. It is only when we are in Messiah that we have victory, access to power, knowledge, insight, the counsel of the Holy Spirit. When we are IN Him we have the same mindset as He does. When He came into this world He knew He was coming to lay His life down, knowing that the Kingdom was on the horizon. In Him, we will think the same way– not thinking about accumulation but thinking of how we can give, what He has bestowed on us, in order to impact others. We can be a force for truth. We can be instruments of righteousness. If we want to be IN Him we need to be in the Word, following His truth. IN Him we have to be a recipient of the gospel. We are called to manifest His glory.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Part 3: Colossians 2v16-23**

**Verse 16:** *“Therefore, let no one judge you in regard to food or drink, or in respect to a festival or a New Moon or the Sabbath.”*

*Therefore:* In light of what has been said in the preceding verses.

*Let no one judge (condemn) you:* This is an admonition to believers. Do not be condemned based on wrong opinions that others have.

*Food or drink* etc: These things were all related to the Torah or to the commandments of G-d. Food and drink relates to Kashrut (kosher) laws. The festivals were referred to as “G-d’s appointed festivals”. Most cultures, throughout the world, all have holidays or days of celebration. If we observe G-d’s appointed festivals we must not let anyone condemn us for doing so. (*New Moon* relates to a new calendar month). All of these things have wisdom in them and help us to better understand what is coming.

**Verse 17:** *“Which are a shadow of coming things. But the body is of Messiah.”*

The dietary laws, the festivals, the new moon, and the Sabbath are all a shadow of what is to still come. What coming things is Paul referring to? The Kingdom. If there is a shadow we know that there is something/someone casting the shadow. There is a connection between a shadow and the body. In this verse the shadow is related to the coming things which are related to the Kingdom of G-d. Messiah is the body. Messiah means the anointed one. Kings were primarily anointed. They had oil poured over them. The source of the shadow is the King, so the shadow relates to those things that are related to the Kingdom. The more we understand these things (kashrut, festivals, new moons, Sabbath) the more we can apply the truth of them to our lives. Isaiah 2 v3 – In the last days, the law will go out from Zion and the Word of the L-rd from Jerusalem. When Messiah rules with His rod of iron He is going to be enforcing the Torah. There is a connection between the millennial kingdom and the Torah.

**Verse 18:** *“Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and worshipping angels disqualify you, detailing things which they have not seen. All of this is vanity and is being puffed up by the mind of his flesh.”*

We have been qualified for the Kingdom of G-d, but we can become disqualified. Instead of submitting to the things of G-d and utilising Biblical truth these people delight in false humility, worship of angels etc. They talk about visions that they have had, things they have experienced. This verse says, however, that they have not seen these things whatsoever.

**Verse 19:** *“And it is not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, joints and ligaments, are supplied and joined together. So that we increase with the increasing of G-d.”*

The *Head* is Messiah Yeshua. When we live and do things by our own fleshly mindsets (even if they are religious in nature, have spiritual overtones etc) we are not holding fast to Messiah and His teachings. When we hold fast to Messiah (His pre-eminence and superiority) it brings about unity. He takes individuals, nourishes us and draws/joins us together.

If we stay connected to Messiah we will be transformed and have an abundance of righteousness.

**Verse 20:** *“Therefore, since you have died with Messiah from the elementary things of this world why, as if you live in the world, do you submit to these decrees?”*

What are the *elementary things*? False humility, paying homage to man etc...- all the things that are rooted in the flesh. The *decrees* here are not G-dly decrees. They are the rules made up by man.

**Verse 21:** *“Do not touch! Do not taste! Do not handle”*

People deny themselves but it is ultimately for their own selfish gain (see 2v22).

**Verse 22:** *“Which is all for the corruption of consumption. According to the commandments and the teachings of man.”*

People will deny themselves and live in humility. They will do all of these things religiously, in order to get what they selfishly desire. They will be so called spiritual, but in the end it is for them to get more of what they want. This consuming of that all brings about this corruption of consumption (2v16 and 2v17, in contrast to this, were not the things of man. They were the things of G-d).

**Verse 23:** *“Which is logical, having some wisdom; self-imposed worship, false humility and the punishment of the body are not valuable in putting away the satisfaction of the flesh.”*

*Having some wisdom:* What they do appears to be logical, it has a human form of wisdom.

*Self-imposed worship, false humility etc:* All of these things that they do are not valuable and are all about the gratification of the flesh.

There are two approaches to life:

1. To follow the Word of G-d. Through the holidays (G-d’s appointed times) we are better able to understand the death of Messiah in light of Passover. We can understand the resurrection of Messiah in light of First Fruits and the giving of the Holy Spirit in light of Pentecost. These all have revelation for us.
2. To follow the creations of men – the self-imposed worship, false humility, the logical wisdom that originates in man.

When we follow this false religion, following the instructions of man rather than of G-d, our flesh is not brought into submission to the truth of G-d.

True spirituality is taking every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah Yeshua (2 Corinthians 10v4-5). When we obey Messiah, we have the same mindset as Him and our desire is to be pleasing to Him.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Part 1: Colossians 3v1-4**

In Genesis 12, G-d called Abraham as He wanted to bring a change into his life. The children of Israel were called to come out of bondage. The church has also received a call. If we answer the call of the gospel, Messiah wants to bring a change into our lives. He will cause us to move from where we are comfortable and lead us into a new life. As believers we have been given a call to serve and follow G-d. As we do that we bear witness (have a testimony) to the power and truth of G-d, and we will behave in the knowledge of G-d. This chapter outlines for us how the church should behave.



**Verse 1:** *“Therefore, since you have been risen with Messiah, the things up above you seek; where Messiah is at the right hand of G-d, having been seated.”*

*You:* Paul is only talking to believers in this verse.

*Risen with Messiah:* G-d’s salvation has brought about a resurrection experience in our lives. This resurrection raises us up into a new life, one that carries out the purposes of Messiah.

G-d is **commanding** us to *seek those things that are above*. It is not a suggestion or a request. The *things up above* are Kingdom things. G-d wants us to live lives that reflect His truth, character, power, and the glory of the Kingdom of G-d. He does not want us to live under the consequences of sin.

When we follow Messiah, and submit to His will, we will experience His Presence. His Presence brings a peace, into our lives, that surpasses all understanding, and it gives us contentment in every situation that we find ourselves in.

Messiah Yeshua has been *seated at the right hand of G-d*. Messiah’s submissiveness and the way He humbled Himself (Philippians 2v6-11) shows us how humanity should behave. We should always be in obedience and in submission to the Word, will and truth of G-d. Yeshua did not seat Himself at the right hand of G-d, but He was placed in that seat by the Father. He had a right to sit there – as the Son of G-d - but He did not use His right to grasp that seat. This teaches us that when we obey G-d it brings us into intimacy with Him. The right hand is the place of preference. That is the place of G-d’s favourable answer. He (Messiah) is there, making intercession for us.

**Verse 2:** *“The things up above you think of. Not the things upon earth.”*

We should live in a way that is heavenly minded. The *things above* should be the focus of our thoughts. Kingdom truth is connected to the purposes of G-d. The purposes of G-d are revealed through the commandments, found in the Word of G-d (These are instructions that tell us what to do and what not to do, so that we can behave in a way that is pleasing to G-d) Following these commandments brings about G-d’s will and blessings in our lives.

*Not the things upon earth:* We should not be consumed by the things of this world. The enemy moves in our lives to try to move us away from the Kingdom things. When we are ruled by our fleshly desires we are headed for disaster.

**Verse 3:** *“For you have died, and your life has been hidden with Messiah in G-d.”*

G-d is going to bring all the material things to destruction. Why labour, struggle, sweat, and worry about all the things that will ultimately be destroyed? If we want to have a life that is pleasing eternally then our lives, presently, need to be hidden *with Messiah*.

*In:* Relates to a covenant. Through Messiah we have entered into a covenant with G-d!

**Verse 4:** *“And whenever Messiah shall be made manifest, who is our life, then also you with Him will be made to appear in glory.”*

*Whenever:* Nobody knows the day or the hour of Messiah’s return. He does nothing on His own, but only does that which He hears, that which His Father commands. Yeshua is at the right hand of His Father, waiting for His Father to give Him the command to return and gather up those who are waiting for Him.

*Made Manifest:* Caused to appear (Yeshua is still in submission to His Father). This is talking about our blessed hope, the rapture. Messiah is going to return to gather up His followers, to give us our new bodies, and to deliver us from the wrath to come.

All the prepositions emphasise that we are *with Him*; we are in a covenant relationship with Him.

*You, with Him, will be made to appear in glory:* What a wonderful promise this is! Messiah is our life. If our eternity does not include being in the glory of G-d we will be the most miserable individual forever and ever. This hope motivates us to live differently. We do not live based on the things of this world, or pursuing material things. We need to be submissive and obedient - like Messiah is.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Part 2: Colossians 3v5-12**

The Scripture counsels/commands us on how to live a life that is pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

**Verse 5:** *“Therefore put to death your members, those things upon the earth: sexual immorality, impurity (those things that are unclean to G-d), unrighteous passion, evil desires and covetousness. These things are idolatry.”*

*Therefore:* This word ties this verse back to what we read in 3v1-4. When Messiah, who is our life, is made manifest then we also are going to be made manifest in glory. Based on this hope, we should have sufficient motivation to be able to carry out what He has commanded us to do.

If we *put to death* those *things of the earth* (*members* speaks of our natural being) what do we have left? Only Kingdom things.

This list of unG-dly behaviours, or spiritual conditions, all speak to the fleshly nature of man. They are all rooted in the natural desires of man – not the spiritual desires.

*Idolatry* is a religious attempt to justify sinful behaviour.

**Verse 6:** *“On account of which the wrath of G-d comes upon the sons of disobedience.”*

*G-d’s wrath* is coming. This verse puts into our minds the nearness and the reality of the wrath of G-d. G-d’s judgement will come upon those who are disobedient.

*Sons of disobedience* speaks of those who serve in a disobedient way. Sons are also heirs. Those who are living disobediently are going to inherit the wrath of G-d.

**Verse 7:** *“In which also you walked, once when you lived in them.”*

*Walked:* We used to behave like this in our past. If we have accepted the gospel our lives should reflect evidence of a new conduct or lifestyle.

*Them:* Those things mentioned above.

**Verse 8:** *“But NOW, set aside, even you, all these things: wrath, anger, evilness, blasphemy and foul language that comes forth from your mouth.”*

*NOW* that we are in Messiah we need to live in a new way. When we are in a covenantal relationship with Him our focus needs to change. Instead of our minds being on the things of this world they need to be on the things up above – Kingdom focussed and minded.

*Set aside:* Put away from.

These things Paul lists all have to do with our attitude. They are inner conditions that reflect a spiritual problem. How we think and feel will greatly influence how we behave. We need to control our tongues and not let our feelings control us. In fact, we need to have new feelings! These new feelings come from obedience to what Messiah says, and from setting aside all these things mentioned here. When we put aside all of these things, our lives will be filled with joy, contentment and peace and we are going to live lives that are radically different.

**Verse 9:** *“Do not bear false witness, do not lie to one another. Put off the old man with his deeds.”*

*Put off:* To undress.

The *old man* is our previous condition, our old way of life.

**Verse 10:** *“And clothe yourself in the new. Having been renewed in the knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”*

*Clothe yourself in the new:* The implication is to clothe ourselves with the new man. The word ‘new’ is a Kingdom word. When we see this word mentioned in the Bible it should remind us to be those who have a Kingdom mentality. When the Holy Spirit dwells within us we become new. (2 Corinthians 5v17). Clothes are frequently spoken of, symbolically, as good deeds (see Revelation 19v8). We need to live fruitful lives, full of good deeds.

We were *created in the image of G-d*. We were created in order to reflect the nature, character, purposes, desires, and thoughts of our Creator – Almighty G-d, Messiah Yeshua. When the first sin took place that image was ruined, distorted, affected by sin. There is only One, Messiah, who can bring change to each individual – He is the only One who can repair our ruined or distorted images/lives.

**Verse 11:** “Where there is no longer any Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian and Scythian, slave or free but all these things are in Messiah.”

The *Barbarians and Scythians* were two different ethnic people groups that lived close to this city of Colosse. Religious, ethnic, or cultural lots in life are of no consequence in the Kingdom. We can **all** (all people) have the same experience in Messiah, and by our actions we can **all** reflect Messiah. Having been renewed, we can now live as G-d intended us to.

**Verse 12:** “Therefore clothe yourselves as the elect of G-d, be holy ones (saints) and beloved ones, moved by the bowels of compassion, gracious (kind), and being humble in mindset, meek and **long suffering.**”

*Clothe yourselves:* When we go somewhere we want to be appropriately dressed. We are on a journey in the pursuit of G-d. As we draw close to Him, and live in a way that pleases Him, He draws near to us.

*Elect:* Chosen by G-d. We belong to Him. As such, we present ourselves to Him in a particular way.

*Holy...beloved ones:* G-d sees us as holy and beloved as we are in a covenant relationship with Him through the sufficiency of the work Messiah - not because of what we have or have not done. Through a variety of means, G-d has made known to people the good news of the gospel (Which is a heavenly revelation about redemption).

*Bowels* speaks of an inner feeling, usually in the pit of ones stomach. (Messiah often looked at those who had a great need and was moved by compassion for them – Matthew 9v36) Like Messiah, we should be moved to compassion by the needs of others. His Spirit is living in us and, hopefully, ruling us.

*Gracious:* Kindness is behaving in such a way toward someone that they receive the will of G-d. It is a word of ministry.

*Humility:* A necessity in serving G-d is to think in humility. When a person is full of pride they cannot serve G-d.

*Meek:* Patience. We need to wait for G-d to provide what He wants to give us, rather than just going and taking what we want for ourselves. (Matthew 5v5: The meek will inherit the earth – the Kingdom blessings, G-d’s creation)

*Long suffering:* Part of our call is to suffer for long periods of time. When we do what G-d has called us to do we are going to suffer.

We are transformed and empowered when we realise who we are in Messiah. In Messiah, we have the potential to live in the state that humans were originally created to live in. What a wonderful message of hope that should motivate us to surrender our lives to the Living G-d!

## Chapter 3

### Part 3: Colossians 3v13-17

One of the reasons this book was written was to bring G-dly order into our lives.

**Verse 13:** *“Bear the burden for one another, forgiving each other. If a certain one should have a complaint against another, just as also Messiah has forgiven you thus also you.”*

*Bear the burden:* Put up with things. Be long suffering.

*Forgiving each other:* Do not be upset or angry because someone has a complaint against you. Deal with it. Go to them. Heal that relationship. Forgive them. If you have something against someone forgive them - no matter what it is.

**Verse 14:** *“Above all of these Love. For love is a bond of perfection.”*

*Love:* Love does not come naturally to us. What does come naturally to us is selfishness and pride. The law, which is foundational for a believer, teaches us how to love each other and look out for the best interests of others. The law is all about love – loving G-d and loving others. It is out of love from G-d that I am able to love my neighbour.

*Love is a bond of perfection:* Love binds people together for the purpose of perfection. We should be so interested in the will of G-d that we do not want anything to negatively affect our relationships with others. Messiah speaks of the church as a body. A body has many members. If G-d’s work and will are going to be done we need to learn how to work together. Therefore, we need to keep that bond of peace. For that peace to become a reality we need to demonstrate love.

**Verse 15:** *“And the peace of G-d let it rule in your heart, for which you have been called into one body. Do all of this with thanksgiving.”*

When we act in love it acts as an umpire to set things in order so that G-d’s rule can be manifested in our *hearts*. When we apply truth, the Word, and the instruction of G-d, to our lives the outcome/result is *peace*. The peace of G-d is connected to the will of G-d, which is also connected to the power of G-d.

*Thanksgiving* is one of the most important attitudes we can have. We need to offer up our thanksgiving consistently to G-d, showing Him gratitude.

**Verse 16:** *“And the Word of Messiah let it dwell in you richly. In all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, in grace singing in your heart to the L-rd.”*

*Word of Messiah:* Through the Scripture we learn about the purposes of G-d. If we put the Word of G-d into ourselves we are going to have wisdom.

*Wisdom:* This wisdom enables us to make use of the knowledge of G-d in order to teach and admonish each other.

*Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs:* The Word of G-d leads us into worship. In the context of worship, we see, and exalt, Messiah as our L-rd. As we see the will of G-d being fulfilled it brings about a desire to worship Him.

**Verse 17:** “*And all which you do, in word or in deed, all things in the name of the L-rd Yeshua, giving thanks to G-d the Father through Him.*”

*In the name:* Name is synonymous with character. If we are going to be successful servants of G-d, and if we are going to worship Him, then everything that we say or do needs to be in His character. We need to become more and more like Him. John the Baptist understood this (John 3v30). We need to become less and Messiah, in our lives, must become more. All we are needs to be hidden, needs to disappear. We need to live as Him. When we live in His character His power can be revealed, His wisdom will be provided, His knowledge will be extended to us so that we can act as He would act.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Part 4: Colossians 3v18-25**

Family is very dear to the heart of G-d. Abraham was called to be a blessing to the nations (Genesis 12v3) so that all the families of the earth could be blessed. Our family will be the chief recipient of blessing when we live G-d pleasing and honouring lives.

**Verse 18:** “*Wives, be submissive to your own husband, which is fitting (proper) in the L-rd.*”

*Wives:* Women are so important in the spiritual condition of their household. More often than not, the one who gets things going spiritually, and the one who invests the most, is the wife.

*Submissiveness* speaks to a position and a purpose. A wife needs to submit to those things that are fitting or appropriate in the L-rd – under His L-rdship. If a man asks his wife to do something that is outside the will of G-d she should obviously refuse that.

In Genesis 2v18, we read that a woman was created in order to be a helpmeet for a man. She was created after the man. She was also created, uniquely, from him in order to assist him (and participate with him) in fulfilling the will of G-d.

**Verse 19:** “*Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh.*”

*Love* implies surrender and sacrifice (John 3v16). Husbands need to give generously of themselves to their wives. They need to be invested in their wives.

**Note:** Submission and love work together in order to produce a G-dly family that G-d will bless. (Ephesians 5v25 – Husbands need to love their wives as Messiah loves the church – He gave Himself up for her. Men need to put their wives ahead of themselves).

*Harsh:* Husbands must not make their wives bitter or embitter them.

**Verse 20:** *“Children, obey your parents, according to all. For this is pleasing to the L-rd.”*

*Obey* means to listen to.

**Verse 21:** *“Fathers, do not provoke your children, in order that they might not despair.”*

The word used here for *children* is usually referring to a smaller child and not an adult child. Parents are supposed to be an encouragement to their children. They are supposed to instruct them in a way that motivates them to do the right thing in the L-rd. Parents have a responsibility to teach their children the Word of G-d.

*Despair:* Lose heart.

**Verse 22:** *“Servants, obey according to all things, those according to the flesh who are masters. And do not do so with eye service or as man pleasers but in the sincerity of the heart and fearing G-d.”*

*Servants:* The kind of servitude/slavery spoken of here is much like the relationship today between an employer and an employee. Slaves, in Judaism, worked for a specific period of time in order to pay off their debts (they did not work for more than 6 years. In the seventh year they did not need to work but were still provided for).

*Master* is speaking of a person who has authority over another. The one under authority needed to submit to the authority over him, without forsaking or compromising on Scriptural truth.

*Fearing G-d:* To put G-d first and to do things in a way that are pleasing to G-d. If we are instructed to do something against the priorities of G-d we must not do that.

(Daniel was submissive, but he would not stop praying to G-d when instructed to do so. Peter was commanded by the authorities to stop speaking about Yeshua. However, he continued to do so). Ultimately our obedience and submissiveness is, first and foremost, to G-d.

**Verse 23:** *“And all what someone should do, do it as work of the soul, as to the L-rd and not to man.”*

*Work of the soul:* Do things with sincerity and in the proper way.

*As to the L-rd:* This Scripture makes it clear that we should never lose sight of the fact that we are serving G-d. In marriage, in our dealings with our own parents, or as parents ourselves, dealing with our children, we need to remember that G-d is the first priority of our lives. We need to do everything, serve, out of a fear of G-d. Never in serving Him should we do something against His instructions.

**Verse 24:** *“Knowing that from the L-rd you will receive a reward of the inheritance. For to Messiah the L-rd you serve.”*

*A reward of the inheritance:* The inheritance, spoken of here, is one that we are going to receive in the Kingdom of G-d. We need to live in light of the fact that there is a Kingdom inheritance.

Hebrews 6v10 tells us that G-d will not forget any of our good deeds. Messiah is coming soon, and His reward is with Him - to render to each person according to his deeds (Isaiah 40v10, Revelation 22v12). Believers are going to face a judgement of rewards.

The gospel causes us to live properly, to live in a way that pleases G-d. As disciples ourselves, according to Matthew 28v18-20, we are called to go and make disciples of all nations. Baptism follows, but so too does the teaching of the Word. We teach people to obey G-d and His commandments. The purpose of the gospel is for salvation, but it also includes lives being changed by the observance of G-d's commands. We need to serve the L-rd wholeheartedly in everything we say or do.

**Verse 25:** *“And the one who does unjustly will be rewarded for that which he does that is wrong. G-d is not a respecter of people.”*

G-d has no favourites. He does not show partiality. G-d responds to us according to His truth. He rewards the faithful and He punishes the faithless. Our G-d is a faithful G-d, and we need to approach Him in faithfulness.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Part 1: Colossians 4v1-12**

**Verse 1:** *“Masters, show justice and equality to the servants. Knowing that also you have a Master in heaven.”*

*Masters* are those who are in a position of authority. This is another commandment – it is not an option.

*Equality:* Equal worth or value. The measure that we measure with will be measured back to us.

**Verse 2:** *“In prayer continue. Watch. With thanksgiving.”*

If we are people of authority we need to be people of *prayer*. When Messiah went to the Garden of Gethsemane He took His disciples with Him to pray and He told them to “*Watch and pray*” (Matthew 26v41). In regard to the last days we are admonished by Messiah to be watching. What are we watching for? Prophetic signs. As the end days approach, we should be growing in obedience and submissiveness.



**Verse 3:** *“Praying, concerning us, in order that G-d would open up for us a door of the Word to speak the mystery of Messiah. Also, on account of which (this mystery) I have been bound.”*

Three things in the New Covenant are called “mysteries”:

1. The mystery of the congregation of the Redeemed, the church. (The prophets did not see the church age. They thought Messiah was going to only come once – Colossians 1v26-27, Ephesians 3v6).
2. The Mystery of a suffering Messiah. (The suffering servant, spoken of in Isaiah, is mostly speaking about the Messiah and not about the Jewish people)
3. The mystery of our blessed hope/rapture (1 Corinthians 15v51). This was first manifested by the death and resurrection of Messiah. It is exclusive to the congregation of the redeemed and is a type of resurrection.

*I have been bound:* Paul is writing this epistle while he is in prison.

**Verse 4:** *“In order that I manifest it as it is necessary for me to speak.”*

*It:* That mystery. Paul is showing submissiveness in this verse and demonstrating that he recognises authority. Paul is asking to be prayed for – not only for the opportunity to speak, but also that he should speak as he should, as is fitting, and as Messiah would have him to speak.

**Verse 5:** *“In wisdom that you should walk to those who are outside. Redeeming the time.”*

*You should walk:* We need to have a lifestyle (a behaviour, a walk) that is worthy of our call, and is an appropriate testimony before those who are *outside* the body of believers.

*Redeeming the time:* There is an enemy that wages a spiritual battle against us and often he claims many victories in our lives. This wastes time. The good news is that when we speak the truth, and walk in a way that we should, what satan has destroyed or defeated (the time that he has wasted), through the gospel, can be redeemed. The gospel can take something that was bad and transform it into something that is good.

**Verse 6:** *“Let your speech always be with grace. Having been seasoned with salt. Knowing how it is necessary for you to answer each one.”*

Paul frequently emphasizes the *grace* of G-d. The grace of G-d saves, but the grace of G-d also brings about an obedient change into a person’s life. It produces the will and purposes of G-d in our lives.

*Answer* is a term of response. We are to get revelation and insight from G-d on how to respond to people. He will only give us this wisdom and knowledge as we demonstrate the grace that we have received from our L-rd Yeshua.

**Verse 7:** *“And these things concerning me Tychicus, the beloved brethren and the faithful minister and bond servant in the L-rd, he will make known to you.”*

Paul realizes that he cannot do things all by himself. He is dependent on other joint servants of Messiah who play a role in his ministry, just like he too plays a role in theirs.

**Verse 8:** *“Whom I will send to you for this same purpose, in order that he might make known to you concerning things and also that he may encourage your hearts.”*

Paul is going to *send* Tychicus to them. Tychicus is going to make known to them Paul’s situation as well as their own situation. He is going to set them in order. He is going to bring more information to them so that they might grow, mature and be more successful in the things of G-d.

**Verse 9:** *“With him is Onesimus, who is a faithful and beloved brother, who is from you. All they will make known to you concerning the things that are here.”*

Onesimus left this congregation to join with Paul. Now Paul is sending him back to Colosse. Paul has a twofold purposes in sending these men to Colosse:

1. To make known to the congregation what is going on in Paul’s location
2. To set straight and give additional wisdom to the church in Colosse about their circumstances.

**Verse 10:** *“Aristarchus he greets you, who is my fellow prisoner. Also Mark the nephew of Barnabas -concerning whom you have received commandments. If he should come to you receive him.”*

Aristarchus is a prisoner like Paul and is suffering like Paul.

Mark taught them commandments – these would have been all the Biblical commandments. The new Testament commandments did not exist then like we know them today. This church in Colosse had the Old Testament and now also this letter to refer to and to learn from.

**Verse 11:** *“Also Yeshua, the one who is called Justice, whom are being from the circumcision. These only are fellow servants, fellow workers for the Kingdom of G-d. These having comforted me”*

*Being from the circumcision:* All of these individuals who have been mentioned are Jewish.

**Verse 12:** *“Epaphras, he greets you, this one also from you; a servant of Messiah always struggling on your behalf in prayers. He prays constantly with zeal in order that you might stand (a word of victory) perfect and complete in all things in the will of G-d.”*

Epaphras prays and does spiritual warfare for this congregation. It is through prayer that G-d is going to make known to us what His will for our lives is. As we walk in the will of G-d we manifest His Kingdom (His power, His order, His truth).

**Note:** Paul has spoken about two very important things in this letter – the Kingdom of G-d and (he has closed out this section with) the *will of G-d*. If we want to experience Kingdom power and revelation in our lives, then our passion should be pursuing the will of G-d.

## Chapter 4

### **Part 2: Colossians 4v13-18**

What type of testimony do we have before others? Is it a G-dly testimony? What do those around us say about us to others? The people Paul names are people who he considers to be fellow servants with him in the Kingdom of G-d.

**Verse 13:** *“For I testify of him that he has great zeal on behalf of you. And also for those of Laodicea and also Hierapolis.”*

Paul commended Epaphras as he had a *great zeal* for the things of G-d and wanted them to be manifested to this congregation. He prayed for spiritual truth, obedience to the Word of G-d, to be manifested in this congregation. Epaphras ministered to three congregations.

**Verse 14:** *“And also Luke, the beloved physician, he greets you; and also Demas.”*

*Luke* is another precious fellow servant with the Apostle Paul (It is presumed that Luke wrote the book of Luke as well as the book of Acts). We do not know anything about Demas except his name, but G-d knows all about him – his deeds and faithfulness. Paul is not just mindful of himself, but he also testifies about others.

Paul recognised that just as he was a servant of G-d so too were these people.

**Verse 15:** *“And you give greetings to the brothers in Laodicea and to Numpha – this one who has a congregation in his house.”*

It is not clear whether *Numpha* is masculine or feminine. The Textus receptus identifies this person in the masculine, but the Nestle Aland identifies this person in the feminine. He/she had a congregation/an assembly meeting in their home. Do not underestimate what these small assemblies can do. They can impact individuals, as they gather people together to worship G-d. (Do not despise small beginnings – Zechariah 4v10)

**Verse 16:** *“And whenever the epistle is read to you do so (read it) in order that also in Laodicea, in that congregation, it is read also. And also, that the one from Laodicea that you read it.”*

This verse suggests that Paul also wrote a letter to *Laodicea*.

**Verse 17:** “Say (all of you) to Archippus, tell him to watch the ministry that he has received **in the L-rd** in order that he fulfils it.”

*Tell him:* A term of commandment.

*Watch:* To take heed, to guard. Every believer, in some way, has received a call/a work from the L-rd, in order that we can serve or minister to fulfil the purpose and will of G-d. If we are faithful to pray, and put into action the commandments in the Word of G-d (the will of G-d), He will lead and guide us into the call/ministry He has for our lives.

**Note:** This book is about one main thing – that we would have a pleasing testimony, a righteous witness, before G-d. Others see the truth of G-d, the knowledge of G-d and the wisdom of G-d in our lives as demonstrated through ministry. We are called to be doers of the Word. We are not doers in order to be saved, but we are doers as a result of the fact that we are saved.

**Verse 18:** “The greeting of my own hand, the hand of Paul. Remember my bonds. The grace be with you. Amen.”

*My own hand:* Paul makes it personal. He was personally involved in many people’s lives. Paul was not aloof and hard to get to know. He made friends wherever he went.

There are two primary reasons why Paul might have mentioned his *bonds*:

1. To tell the people that he is suffering for his faith. Being in bonds or shackled ensured that someone was in an uncomfortable position, and being in bonds might have even resulted in beatings for some people. Paul wanted out of prison so that he could serve them face to face.
2. In order to encourage the people that suffering is part of our faith. There is going to be opposition, as there are always those who are going to reject this truth and be hostile toward it. Paul could be warning the people to get ready for their bonds as well.

G-d **always** provides a solution to any of the opposition, the persecution, the sorrow, and the troubles that we encounter. **Grace.** If we want to live G-dly lives, and fulfil G-d’s will for our lives, we need to be those who walk in grace. Grace enables us to have G-dly testimonies. Grace is not just for the purpose of saving us. Grace gives us the power, through the blood of Messiah, to live lives that are pleasing to G-d (Titus 2v11-13)

*Amen* means “believe it”! It is derived from the same word as truth. Every word written in this book we can believe because it is the truth of G-d.