

BACKSLIDING AND COMPLACENCY DESTROYS AND KILLS SIMPLE FOOLS!

A caution against apostasy!

11th of the 10th month 2014/2015

Shabbat Shalom all,

As I was reading through this week's readings for Shabbat I got stuck on a verse in **Hoshĕa/Hosea 11** and began to dissect the verse and explore these very striking words. Words that I believe are extremely important for us to hear and to be on our guard against any form of compromise to walking in complete set-apartness before Elohim! The verse I am referring to is:

Hoshĕa/Hosea 11:7 **“My people are bent towards backsliding from Me. Though they call to the One above, none of them exalt Him.”**

Another translation writes this verse as follows:

“Moreover, My people are sticking to their turning away from Me. Though they call out to the Elohim on high, all of them alike fail to lift Him up.”

In a time when there are many people claiming to call upon the Most High Elohim, what we find is that most are actually failing to exalt Elohim as He should be exalted, and this is due to a continual backsliding that they cling on to so tightly, as the grip of false traditions has their hands firmly locked in to inherited lies and assimilated worship practices. In a message tonight called, **“BACKSLIDING AND COMPLACENCY DESTROYS AND KILLS SIMPLE FOOLS!”**, I want to expand on some of the words we find in this verse and look at other places in Scripture where we find these, helping us to hear the clear call to be a sober and watchful bride that earnestly seeks after the wisdom of Elohim and be like the wise maidens/virgins that have their lamps trimmed and filled with oil!

What יהוה is making clear here in **Hoshĕa/Hosea 11:7** is that His people are depending upon apostasy and while they call Him **“Most High El”**, He will not raise them up and will not hear their call!

The Hebrew root verb that is translated as ‘bent’ is תָּלָא tala – Strong’s H8511 which means, **‘to hang, hang on to, bent towards, cling to’**, and also carries the meaning, as a part of speech, **‘to suspend; figuratively (through hesitation) to be uncertain; and by implication (of mental dependence) to habituate; that is – to be bent, hang (in doubt).’**

This means that they were holding fast to that which they had become so accustomed to doing, and in the process had suspended the required called for set-apartness unto Elohim. This process of hanging on to assimilated practices that are falsely taught is often due to the result of people not fully trusting in יהוה, but rather find themselves putting their trust in man and as a result they hesitate in walking in total obedience because of uncertainty and therefore clearly compromise the clear standards set forth in the Torah! And while doing this they firmly believe that they are not doing anything wrong!

The Hebrew word used for ‘backsliding’ is מְשׁוּבָה meshubah – Strong’s H4878 which means, **‘turning back, apostasy, faithless, faithlessness, waywardness, backsliding’**, and comes from the root word שׁוּב shub – Strong’s H7725 which means, **‘to turn back, return, repent, recover’**. And so we see that while שׁוּב shub speaks of a repentance and a turning back to Elohim, we see the opposite in the word מְשׁוּבָה meshubah which expresses a turning away from Elohim. The continual turning away or waywardness of the simple is what kills them, as they do not turn to the One who gives life!

מְשׁוּבָה meshubah can also be understood as, **‘the state of rebellion against authority’**, and as a result of this rebellion against authority there is a break in a previous relationship bond, which is a figurative extension of turning aside off of a correct path! We clearly see this in Yisra’el’s backsliding that caused יהוה to issue a certificate of divorce, as we read in:

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 3:8 **“And I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Yisra’el had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Yehuḏah did not fear, but went and committed whoring too.”**

The House of Yisra’el, also referred to in Scripture metaphorically as Ephrayim, had turned aside from the correct path of complete obedience and set-apartness, by adulterating herself with the nations – and this brought about a break in the marriage bond with יהוה.

This word מְשׁוּבָה meshubah is used 12 times in Scripture. Twice it is used in **Hoshĕa/Hosea** – the verse we have read and then again in **chapter 14:4**, which we will look at shortly. It is used 9 times in the book of Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah, and once in **Mishlĕ/Proverbs**, which we will look at in more detail:

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 1:32 **“For the turning away of the simple kills them, and the complacency of fools destroys them.”**

Here the word מְשׁוּבָה meshubah is translated as ‘turning away’. The LXX (Septuagint – Greek translation of the Tanak) uses the word ἀδικέω adikeō – Strong’s G91 which means, **‘do wrong, be an offender, to act unjustly or wickedly, to sin, to have violated the laws in some way, to hurt, damage or harm’**. We see this word being used in:

Ḥazon/Revelation 22:11-12 **“He who does wrong, let him do more wrong; he who is filthy, let him be more filthy; he who is righteous, let him be more righteous; he who is set-apart, let him be more set-apart. 12 “And see, I am coming speedily, and My reward is with Me, to give to each according to his work.”**

In Sha'ul's letter to the believers in Colossae, he told them to bear with one another, and to put on love and to let the Word dwell in them richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing with pleasure in their hearts to the Master in psalms and songs of praise and spiritual songs, and whatever they do in word or deed, to do all in the Name of the Master יהוהשׁע. He then clearly instructed that proper submission and obedience should be observed by all – wives to their husbands, children to their parents and servants to their masters, and then writes in:

Qolasim/Colossians 3:23-25 “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Master and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Master you shall receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Master, Messiah, you serve. 25 But he who does wrong shall be repaid for the wrong which he has done, and there is no partiality.”

Why I am mentioning these verses is simply to highlight the need for us to walk in love, as we guard to obey all the commands of Elohim and not turn away from doing what He has commanded us to. Those who hear, guard and do will be rewarded by the Master, while the wrong will be repaid and there is no partiality with Elohim! Justification for compromise will not get the wrong to escape the just reward for compromise and complacency! Rejecting any authority of Elohim is a form of backsliding, and to refuse to submit to walking as a body together in unity, by each one doing whatever seems right in their own eyes is also a form of backsliding! יהוהשׁע Messiah is our King, and His Kingdom has rules (His Torah) and His Kingdom has order, by which He has appointed some to teach and equip the body unto maturity, and any refusal to submit to the teaching and the admonishing of each other through the wisdom of Elohim will simply reveal one as being ‘simple’!

For the turning away of the simple kills them:

The Hebrew word for ‘simple’ is פְּתִי pethi – Strong’s H6612 which means, ‘*open minded, foolish, simple, naïve*’, which comes from the root verb פָּתַח pathah – Strong’s H6601 and means ‘*easily deceived, enticed, to be simple or to be in a state of holding a wrong view about a situation*’. The message here is clear – do not be deceived or enticed into holding a wrong view about any situation. In Hoshĕa/Hosea 7 Ephrayim is referred to having become a simple dove:

Hoshĕa/Hosea 7:11 “And Ephrayim has become a simple dove without heart, they have called on Mitsrayim, they have gone to Ashshur.”

Here Ephrayim is symbolically used in referencing the House of Yisra’ĕl that had gone astray and been enticed by the nations! Ephrayim was easily deceived and enticed into a mode of pagan influenced worship. It also means to be naïve – and boy, how many today are so naïve about the corrupted practice of Christianity as an assumed means of pure worship, when it is nothing more than a man-made twisted blend of truth and pagan influence; which according to Torah is clearly an abomination in the eyes of יהוה. Ephrayim, which represents us today, had become naïve and in their naïve state they called to Mitsrayim and went to Ashshur. They had gone to the world for advice and learnt their ways as they were without heart or rather “understanding” – the very thing we are to seek from יהוה. Simple people lack heart – they lack understanding as they neglect to do what is commanded, as we recognise that understanding comes in the doing of the Word, and when anyone compromises the pure standard of the Torah they lack heart and will find themselves easily giving in to the pressures of the world around them and look to worldly ways and reasonings as to how they can assimilate a form of worship that they deem acceptable to Elohim, when in fact it does not measure up to the clear plumb line of His Truth!

Backsliding kills the simple! The Hebrew word used for ‘kills’ is הָרַג harag – Strong’s H2026 meaning, ‘*to kill, slay, destroy, ruin*’. Being naïve for not guarding the Word of Truth on a continual basis, and being gullible to worldly ways that run contrary to the Truth and seem right at the time of a crisis, without having been tested against the truth, will cause one to drift and backslide away from the narrow path of set-apartness, and as a result will lead one on a broad path of destruction. One’s own backsliding destroys them:

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 8:36 “But he who sins against me injures himself; all who hate me love death!”

The complacency of fools destroys them:

The Hebrew word for ‘complacency’ is שְׁלוֹוָה shalvah – Strong’s H7962 which means, ‘*quiet, at ease, complacency, time of tranquillity*’. This is certainly a blessed character trait in anybody’s life as we see in speaking of the ‘rest’ that shall be in Yerushalayim:

Tehillah/Psalm 122:7 “Peace be within your walls, rest in your citadels.”

What we must be careful of is that unguarded quietness and rest can become an open door for disaster. This ‘unconcerned’ ease was the problem with Sedom:

Yehezqĕl/Ezekiel 16:49 “See, this was the crookedness of your sister Sedom: She and her daughter had pride, sufficiency of bread, and unconcerned ease. And she did not help the poor and needy.”

The lack of concern in one’s peace can result in carelessness, and it is the carelessness of fools in their unconcerned ease that destroys them as they are caught unaware when facing punishment for sin and lawlessness!

As wise maidens that have oil in their trimmed lamps we can be at rest in our Master, as we diligently guard His Word, yet ‘fools’ who are at ease in their foolishness will be destroyed!

The Hebrew word for 'fool' is כְּסִיל *kesil* – Strong's H3684 which means, 'fool, stupid fellow, dullard (which is a stupid and unimaginative person)', and comes from the root verb כָּסַל *kasal* – Strong's H3688 which means, 'to be or become stupid, foolish'. So we can clearly see that while we are able to become 'wise' if we pay attention to the proper hearing, guarding and doing of the Word of Elohim, we also realise that we can quickly become stupid if we do not listen to and obey His Word, and can be a fool if we refuse to accept the disciplining of His Word.

The Hebrew for 'destroys' is אָבַד *abad* – Strong's H6 which means, 'to perish, destroy, lose, put to death, blot out, do away with, to give up as lost, vanish, be lost or strayed'. We are commanded in Scripture to utterly destroy all forms of abominable and pagan worship, lest we are destroyed for not doing so!!! The Torah makes it clear that we are to destroy the names and titles of false mighty ones out of our midst, something that so many are unwilling to do as they are 'bent on' clinging to what they have known all their life!

Yisra'el were bent on backsliding, by holding fast to false worship practices that they had learnt from the nations that they were supposed to have destroyed, and held fast to the calling upon of false names and titles of false mighty ones, while at the same time they were under the impression that they could and were calling upon the Most High Elohim. This is the same problem we see happening in varying degrees today. While we recognise that Christianity has totally got it wrong, there are still some who claim to be on the Torah path that are unwilling to let go of false pagan rooted titles of false mighty ones, and here יהוה *Yehovah* makes it very clear – He will not raise them up!

Those who disregard the importance of studying and meditating upon and walking in the Torah of Elohim, and disregard the need to be calling upon, praising and making great the True Name of Elohim Most High, are not being heard by יהוה *Yehovah*!

Tehillah/Psalm 50:14-17 "Offer thanksgiving to Elohim, and pay your vows to the Most High. 15 "And call upon Me in the day of distress – let Me rescue you, and you esteem Me." 16 But to the wrong Elohim said, "What right have you to recite My laws, or take My covenant in your mouth, 17 "While you hated instruction and cast My Words behind you?"

Backsliding and complacency, even in the slightest manner, destroys and kills!!! The Aramaic rendering of Hoshēa/Hosea 11:7 gives us the understanding of being bent towards backsliding as being "undecided about returning to the Law"; and with none being exalted, the Aramaic is understood as saying that those who are like this will "not walk erect or upright"! Anyone who is undecided about living a completely set-apart life will never walk upright, and it is only the upright that shall see His face!

Tehillah/Psalm 11:6-7 "Upon the wrong He rains snares, fire and sulphur and a scorching wind are the portion of their cup. 7 For יהוה *Yehovah* is righteous, He has loved righteousness; the upright shall see His face."

What we can clearly see from the words of Elohim to a backsliding Yisra'el, is that their walk did not reflect their talk! People with lips that assume to be honouring Him, while their hearts are far from Him, for the Torah is clearly not in their hearts AND mouths to do it!

Deḥarim/Deuteronomy 30:14 "For the Word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart – to do it."

The verses that follow this is where Mosheh makes it very clear that he has set before us life and good, and death and evil, and commands us to love יהוה *Yehovah*, walk in His Ways, guard His commands, laws and right-rulings, for then we will live; yet if we turn away from doing this we will perish!

Our choice is simple – be wise and choose life, or be a fool and choose death – which path are you on? The path that leads to destruction or the narrow path that leads to life? You cannot be on both! You cannot have one foot on one path and the other foot on the other! If both feet are not firmly grounded in the narrow path of life and complete set-apartness, due to some compromise or form of complacency and a slight backsliding then you are on the broad path of destruction!

To exalt Elohim as we should we have to cease from all backsliding and complacency!

Let me just run through the other verses that contain the Hebrew word for 'backsliding' – מְשֻׁבָּה *meshubah*:

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 2:19 "Your own evil instructs you, and your backslidings reprove you. Know therefore and see that it is evil and bitter that you have forsaken יהוה *Yehovah* your Elohim, and that My fear is not in you," declares the Master יהוה *Yehovah* of hosts."

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 3:6 "And יהוה *Yehovah* said to me in the days of Yoshiyahu the sovereign, "Have you seen what backsliding Yisra'el has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there committed whoring."

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 3:11 "And יהוה *Yehovah* said to me, "Backsliding Yisra'el has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Yehuḏah."

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 3:12 "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, 'Return, O backsliding Yisra'el,' declares יהוה *Yehovah*, 'I shall not look on you in displeasure, for I am kind,' declares יהוה *Yehovah*, 'and I do not bear a grudge forever.'"

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 3:22 "Return, O backsliding children, I shall make your backslidings cease." "See, we have come to You, for You are יהוה *Yehovah* our Elohim."

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 5:6 “Therefore a lion from the forest shall smite them, a wolf of the deserts ravage them. A leopard is watching over their cities, whoever comes out of them is torn in pieces. For their transgressions have been many, their **backslidings** have been numerous.”

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 8:5 “Why then has this people, Yerushalayim, turned away in a continual **backsliding**? They cling to deceit, they refuse to turn back.”

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 14:7 “**יהוה**, though our crookednesses witness against us, act, for Your Name’s sake. For our **backslidings** have been many, we have sinned against You.”

Hoshĕa/Hosea 14:4 “I shall heal their **backsliding**, I shall love them spontaneously, for My displeasure has turned away from him.”

As we read these verses together, in establishing the clear pattern of warning against backsliding, we are able to see the promise of healing from any such backsliding, and that is given to those who return to **יהוה**. The Hebrew word for ‘return’ is the root word

שׁוּב **shub** – Strong’s H7725 which means, ‘to turn back, return, repent, recover’, which we have already mentioned as being the root from which **מְשׁוּבָה** **meshubah** comes from.

In the ancient pictographic letters **שׁוּב** **shub** – Strong’s H7725 looks like this:



Shin - שׁ:

This is the letter ‘shin’ which in the ancient script is pictured as, , which is ‘two front teeth’ and carries the meaning of ‘sharp or press, chew or devour’; which is what the teeth do, and also speaks of the sharpened word that comes forth from the mouth, as the teeth ‘chew’ or ‘meditate’ on the Truth, making what comes forth pure and sharp! It also carries the understanding of consuming or destroying – as teeth do to food.

Waw/Vav – װ:

This is the Hebrew letter ‘waw’ or ‘vav’ which in the ancient script is pictured as , which is a peg or ‘tent peg’, which was used for securing or tying down of the tent or other items. The possibility of it having a Y-shape is to show that it prevents the rope from slipping off. The root meaning of this letter is ‘to add, secure or hook’.

Beyt – בׁ:

The ancient script has this letter as , which pictures a tent floor plan and means, ‘house’ or ‘tent’. It represents family and the importance of those who are inside the tent as opposed to the tent structure itself.

When we understand the combination of these pictures as rendering a returning or recalling to mind, we are able to recognise that the **teeth** which speaks of a ‘pressing’, and the picture of the **peg** that **secures**, and the **house** which speaks of **dwelling**, we are able to understand this representing the following:

‘The secure dwelling place that is to be returned to’.

This word in the ancient form represents for us a:

‘Returning to the secure House where we are fed, as we meditate on the Word of the House’.

In a clear and wise call to return being given to a people who had backslidden and strayed from following **יהוה**, Shelomoh says in:

Dibre haYamim Bĕt/2 Chronicles 30:9 “For if you **turn back** to **יהוה**, your brothers and your children shall be shown compassion by their captors, even to **return** to this land. For **יהוה** your Elohim shows favour and compassion, and does not turn His face from you if you **turn back** to Him.”

As we carefully consider the words that we have read from **Hoshĕa/Hosea**, **Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah** and **Mishlĕ/Proverbs**, in regards to the very real and present dangers of what backsliding and complacency does, let us be on guard to ensure that we are like 5 wise maidens/virgins who have not only trimmed their lamps (which all 10 had done) but also have our lamps filled with oil and are walking in the Spirit as we hear, guard and do His Torah, keeping our garments of righteousness clean in living completely set-apart lives unto the Master, as we cling to Him and His Word. Let us be on guard against any form of being foolish by hanging on to backsliding and the complacency of compromised traditions and lies, for:

BACKSLIDING AND COMPLACENCY DESTROYS AND KILLS SIMPLE FOOLS!

How is your life at the moment? Have you found yourself being riddled with complacency that has been quickly justified away with vain excuses of how you have been and how much pressure you are under and how drained out you are, and having no time for keeping your lamp of Truth trimmed and filled and lack a proper renewing of your mind through proper meditating on the Torah day and night? Have you found that you have backslidden from your steadfast position in Messiah, our Rock and Refuge, due to a lack of trust? Have you been seeking instant solutions from the world and from fleshly reasonings to your pressing tests, trials and distress that you might be facing?

Has your own folly in backsliding and complacency toward the Truth caused you to make irrational choices that have brought about some of your own destruction and you find yourself in huge despair, calling upon the Most High only to find that your prayers are hindered by your backsliding complacency and compromise toward the Truth?

Then hear the call to return to יהוה and destroy all traces of backsliding and complacency, as we hear the sure promise of His blessing of healing given in **Hoshĕa/Hosea 14:4**, given to those who hear, guard and do his Word and respond to the call to return to יהוה and acknowledge that the worlds ways cannot save, nor can the work of your own hands deliver you from distress and trials!

In returning and rest we are saved and in stillness and trust is our strength, says יהוה to Yisra'el (**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 30:15**). Let us never be found to be a rebellious, backsliding and complacent bride, but one that has returned completely to our Master and Elohim, for:

BACKSLIDING AND COMPLACENCY DESTROYS AND KILLS SIMPLE FOOLS!

In the message given to the assembly in Laodikeia the Master says:

Ḥazon/Revelation 3:19 **“As many as I love, I reprove and discipline. So be ardent and repent.”**

As the wise returning remnant and set-apart Bride of Messiah, let us be on guard to stay in Him and He shall stay in us....!

Let us encourage one another daily, and do our utmost to walk in unity together as we make the Name of Elohim great together, leaving the path of destruction for the foolish, for bad company corrupts good character:

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 13:20 **“He who walks with the wise, shall be wise, but the companion of fools suffers evil.”**

Repentance and forgiveness is what we are to be proclaiming in the Name of יהושע Messiah, as we see from the words of our Master that He spoke to His taught ones when He appeared to them after His resurrection, in:

Luqas/Luke 24:45-47 **“Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it has been written, and so it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His Name to all nations, beginning at Yerushalayim.”**

Kĕpha Bĕt/2 Peter 3:9-12 **“יהוה is not slow in regard to the promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward us, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of יהוה shall come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with intense heat, and the earth and the works that are in it shall be burned up. 11 Seeing all these are to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be in set-apart behaviour and reverence, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of Elohim, through which the heavens shall be destroyed, being set on fire, and the elements melt with intense heat!”**

BACKSLIDING AND COMPLACENCY DESTROYS AND KILLS SIMPLE FOOLS!

Eph'siyim/Ephesians 5:14-17 **“That is why He says, “Wake up, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Messiah shall shine on you.” 15 See then that you walk exactly, not as unwise, but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are wicked. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the desire of יהוה is.”**

Sha'ul says we are to walk 'exactly' (as wise) which is the word ἀκριβῶς akribōs – G199 and means '**exactly, accurately, thoroughly, more carefully, diligently**' and implies care and adequateness. Some translations translate this word as '**circumspectly**' which means to '**carefully consider all circumstances and consequences**', and this leaves no place for backsliding and complacency that destroys and kills, so let us therefore walk accurately in the truth as we walk in the full assurance of abundant life, as wise maidens/virgins who have trimmed and filled their lamps!

יהוה bless you and guard you; יהוה make His face shine upon you and show favour to you; יהוה lift up His face to and give you shalom!