

OUR SURE HOPE AMIDST THE TORTURE OF SEEING AND HEARING LAWLESSNESS!

24th of the 5th month 2017/2018

Shalom all,

Kěpha Bět/2 Peter 2:6-9 “and having reduced to ashes the cities of Sedom and Amarah condemned them to destruction – having made them an example to those who afterward would live wickedly, 7 and rescued righteous Lot, who was oppressed with the indecent behaviour of the lawless 8 (for day after day that righteous man, dwelling among them, tortured his righteous being by seeing and hearing their lawless works), 9 then יְהוָה knows how to rescue the reverent ones from trial and to keep the unrighteous unto the day of judgment, to be punished”

As I was going through the second letter of Kěpha (Peter), I was once again gripped by these verses that I have quoted above, pausing to consider what it must have been like for Lot, a righteous man, as he was greatly troubled by the lawlessness and indecency of the unrighteous.

Kěpha highlights the example of Lot for us as an encouragement for us to hold firm to the sure hope we have in the deliverance that our Master and Elohim is coming to complete in us.

We know how Sedom and Amarah was destroyed and was reduced to ashes and the example of Lot being rescued by Elohim is one that is used to encourage us in the knowledge that our Master and Elohim will deliver us from the coming destruction that is about to be poured out on the unrighteous, when the fire of the wrath of Elohim is poured out on the sons of disobedience in the day of יְהוָה.

Kěpha reminds us that the destruction of Sedom and Amarah was made an example to all who afterward would live wickedly (**verse 6**) and therefore the warning of this example still applies to those who are living wickedly today!

The Greek word that is translated a ‘wickedly’ in Kěpha Bět/2 Peter 2:6 is ἀσεβής asebēs – **Strong’s G765** which means, *‘impious, destitute of reverential awe towards Elohim, living without regard for the belief and practice of set-apartness, without fear or reverence for Elohim’*.

This word does not necessarily mean irreligious, but rather speaks of one who actively practices the opposite of what the fear of Elohim demands!

When I stop to consider what this word describes I am gripped with a severe sadness by what I see happening at large today.

So many who claim to be believers yet they practice the very opposite of what true fear of Elohim demands!

While the subject of the ‘fear of Elohim’ is a topic for a separate teaching, we are able to take note of a couple of verses that ought to highlight or expose how many are living ‘wickedly’ today! In the words given to the generation that was about to enter into the Promised Land we take note of the following:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:1-2 “And this is the command, the laws and right-rulings which יְהוָה your Elohim has commanded, to teach you to do in the land which you are passing over to possess, 2 so that you fear יְהוָה your Elohim, to guard all His laws and His commands which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days be prolonged.”

The Torah teaches us to fear יְהוָה and it teaches us therefore to guard ALL His laws and commands – and so we are to be a continual hearing, guarding and doing people. Proper fear of Elohim can only be lived out when a proper guarding and doing of His commands are being lived out.

In other words when we guard righteousness we can begin to walk in the fear of Elohim and we know that Scripture gives us a clear definition of what righteousness is for us, as we see in:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:25 “And it is righteousness for us when we guard to do all this command before יְהוָה our Elohim, as He has commanded us.”

Doing His commands and walking in the True Fear of יְהוָה will keep us alive in Him!

Those who do not are warned about the coming destruction that is coming upon the disobedient – that is those who do not guard righteousness and do not walk in the fear of Elohim, no matter how self-righteous they may deem to be as they may claim to be righteous yet their actions of lawlessness simply reveal that they are practicing the opposite of what the fear of Elohim demands!

An example of this can be readily seen in the world today by many claiming believers who assume that they are righteous yet they actively practice the keeping of mad-made feasts and their complete disregard in guarding the Sabbath and keeping it as we should!

The assumed ‘change of the Sabbath to another day’ simply reveals a lack of true fear of Elohim as the corrupts teachings and dogmas of men are held higher than the Word of Elohim and by doing so, they reveal that they are not righteous but are wicked, in the eyes of Elohim as they are ‘doing what is right in their own eyes’ rather than doing what is right in יְהוָה’s eyes!!!

Shelomoh tells us very clearly in the parables of Mishlê/Proverbs 2 that when we accept the Word of Elohim and treasure up His commands, give our ears to wisdom and our hearts to understanding and seek Elohim with our all, then we would understand the fear of יְהוָה and find the knowledge of Elohim.

So many are perishing for lack of knowledge and clearly do not understand the fear of Elohim as they have cast aside the Torah of Elohim and reckon that it is no longer applicable, as they follow the delusion of the lawless and the example of Sedom and Amorah was as an example to such who do not fear Elohim and actively practice that which opposes His clear standards of righteousness.

Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes 12:13 “Let us hear the conclusion of the entire matter: Fear Elohim and guard His commands, for this *applies to all mankind!*”

What becomes abundantly clear, as one searches, studies and meditates on The Word of Elohim, is that fearing Elohim can only be done when His commands are being properly guarded; and as we can see from the above text – this applies to ALL MANKIND!

There is One Torah for ALL – those who wickedly oppose the need to submit to walking according to the Word and oppose the clear standards of set-apartness that ought to be pursued by all, shall be destroyed while the righteous shall be delivered and rescued from destruction!

I cannot emphasise enough, on how so many are living wickedly today and my hope is that those who hear the clear warning that Kěpha (Peter) is giving, will turn away from all forms of unrighteousness and pursue apartness and be set-apart as יִדְהוּה is set-apart!!! Sadly, we see how many are hearing but not understanding and are seeing but not perceiving!

In speaking of the wicked and adulteress we take note of the words of our Master in: **Marqos/Mark 13:14-15 “And in them the prophecy of Yeshayahu is completely filled, which says, ‘Hearing you shall hear and by no means understand, and seeing you shall see and by no means perceive, 15 for the heart of this people has become thickened, and their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their heart, and turn back, and I heal them.’”**

Thickened hearts, hardened ears and closed eyes is the state of those who live wickedly and actively practice the opposite of what the fear of Elohim demands!

For more on this, please see the notes of the message called, ‘A HARDENED HEART DEAFENS THE EAR AND BLINDS THE EYE’, which can be found on our site (<https://atfotc.com>) under the ‘sermons 2015/2016’ menu or by simply clicking on the following link:

<https://atfotc.com/a-hardened-heart-deafens-the-ear-and-blinds-the-eye/>

The reason for me emphasising on the state of how so many are living wickedly at this time, is to highlight how this includes many who claim to be believers and due to thickened hearts, hardened ears and closed eyes, they are oblivious to the coming destruction as they assume that their 'lawless' (living without the law) lives to be somehow acceptable in the eyes of Elohim and as called out set-apart believers who guard righteousness we are called to warn these wicked ones and call them to come out and be separate, for it is the Spirit and the Bride that says 'Come!'

Perhaps I need to be even more to the point by making it clear that those who refuse to guard righteousness by not doing what the Word commands are not righteous at all but are rather wicked! Let me say it even more plainly – those who follow falsified man-made teachings that set aside the need to guard the Word of Elohim are living wickedly!

Please hear what I am saying!

Those who wilfully refuse to walk according to the Word and reject the need to keep the Sabbaths and Feasts of יהוה, are living wickedly and the example of Sedom and Amorah should be a severe wake up call to come out of darkness and walk in the light!

Wilfully breaking the Sabbath to appease others or for doing one's own desires, is a form of living wickedly – and this many need to hear, even if they refuse to hear!

Yeshayahu was told to speak to a rebellious people until destruction comes and so too do we recognise that this call for the righteous to speak has not ended!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 6:9-13 “And He said, “Go, and you shall say to this people, ‘Hearing, you hear, but do not understand; and seeing, you see, but do not know.’ 10 “Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and shall turn and be healed.” 11 Then I said, “יהוה, until when?” And He answered, “Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, and the houses are without a man, and the land is laid waste, a ruin, 12 and יהוה has removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. 13 “But still, there is a tenth part in it, and it shall again be for a burning, like a terebinth tree and like an oak, whose stump remains when it is cut down. The set-apart seed is its stump!”

Taking a message of repentance to a people who refuse to hear is certainly a daunting task, but one that is necessary – until the end!!!

Herein these prophetic words of Yeshayahu we are able to see the sure promise of a tenth part being left and this represents the righteous remnant who are found to be in Messiah and this ties in with Kěpha's words of encouragement to the righteous that just as Lot was rescued from Sedom and Amorah, so to shall יהוה rescue His Remnant Bride who have guarded their garments of righteousness amidst a wicked and lawless world!

Our need to guard righteousness is critical, lest we find ourselves drifting away and living wickedly through compromised standards of unrighteousness that is being widely taught as acceptable teachings that are being given through the twisted commands of men while the Torah of Elohim is being forsaken!

As we consider what it must have been like for Lot, we are clearly told that he, being righteous, was oppressed with the indecent behaviour of the lawless!

Today we are able to see Kěpha's words being very true, in describing how there shall be false teachers who will bring in destructive heresies and deny Messiah, causing many to follow their destructive ways as the way of truth shall be evilly spoken of as they will, with fabricated words, use people for gain! (**Kěpha Bět/2 Peter 2:1-3**)

False and evil teachings that are masqueraded as messages of light are being widely spread to a people who are marching aimlessly on a broad path that leads to destruction, and they are singing to the wicked tune of lawlessness due to hardened ears, closed eyes and thickened hearts! Heretic teachings that deny Messiah deny His authority and the need to submit thereto and the denial of Messiah, is to deny that He is Elohim and deny that He is the same yesterday today and forever and deny that He does not change!

To deny Messiah is to deny the fact that He is יהוה our Saviour!

Sadly, many have been led astray through destructive heresies that have set aside the need to guard the commands of Elohim and in the process, they have accepted the lawless teachings of men who have attempted to change the times and laws of Elohim, causing them to live wickedly, despite their false assumption of righteousness and those who continue on this destructive path will be exposed as having the wrong garments on and be thrown out to where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth!

To be very plain, I say it as such: If you are not walking in the fear of Elohim and are not guarding His commands then you are living wickedly!

What many need to hear today, even though they do not wish to hear it, is the following: If you do not keep the Sabbath you are living wickedly – it is as plain as that!

Now, please hear me when I say that it is not only in the keeping of Sabbath that one is enabled or identified as guarding righteousness but we do take note that the Sabbath, and the keeping thereof, is a sign between Elohim and us – forever! (**Yehezq'ěl/Ezekiel 20:20**)

Changing the Sabbath for another day is not a righteous act but is an action that actively practices the opposite of what the fear of Elohim demands and therefore causes one to live wickedly, in the eyes of Elohim!

Those who have rejected the need to keep the Sabbath and prefer to worship along with the masses on a 'sun-day' are living wickedly and are denying Messiah!

Some are doing this ignorantly as they have been taught falsehood that has been handed down from generations past and it is therefore critical that the call to come out from all false and futile worship be given to those who are enslaved therein by the True remnant set-apart Bride of Messiah!

Others have heard the truth, yet refuse to accept it as they hold fast to the traditions of men that have set aside the Torah of Elohim and in doing so, they are not living righteously at all but are living wickedly!

Many may get very offended and saddened at what I am saying and perhaps they should, as this can lead to repentance!

Listen to what Sha'ul said to the believers in Corinth who were saddened by his words:

Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 7:8-10 "For even if I made you sad with my letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same letter made you sad, even if for an hour. 9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sad, but that you were saddened into repenting. For you were made sad according to Elohim, so that you suffered no loss from us. 10 For sadness according to Elohim works repentance to deliverance, not to be regretted, but the sadness of the world works death."

Sha'ul did not rejoice in the fact that he made some sad with his stern words in calling people out of living wickedly but rather rejoiced that they were saddened into repenting, causing them to call upon Elohim and find deliverance and life!

For most of us, it was the sadness (and possibly even anger) that we felt when being told that we have been wrong in our worship of Elohim, that actually caused us to repent from all falsehood and seek Elohim and be delivered in order to guard righteousness and walk in the fear of Elohim! Now we, who were once saddened and have repented, have been redeemed from all lawlessness by Messiah, are now calling others out and may even be causing some to be saddened into repenting!!!

Having been called out of darkness into His Marvellous Light, our Master calls and commissions us to be faithful and trustworthy ambassadors of His Reign by making taught ones who will guard righteousness amidst a wicked world!

Righteous living amidst a wicked world can and is a torturing one indeed, yet we must take encouragement in the hope we have as Kěpha reminds us of how Elohim rescued righteous Lot!!!

Lot was a righteous man!

The Greek word that is translated as 'righteous' is δίκαιος dikaios – Strong's G1342 which means, '**righteous, innocent, just, upright, keeping the commands of Elohim**'.

Lot was a man who lived an upright and obedient life in a city that was wicked and corrupt. He would have certainly learned a great deal when sojourning with Abraham and with his being mentioned in Scripture as being righteous we can certainly see that he guarded the belief in Elohim.

Our righteousness is not in our own working but that which is of Messiah, for He took our sin upon Himself in order that we may become the righteousness of Elohim:

Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 5:21 “**For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of Elohim.**”

The righteousness of Elohim is through belief in יהושע Messiah, for we have all sinned and fallen short of His esteem and through His obedience many have been made righteous – those who believe in Him! Belief in Him entails a working belief – that is a belief/faith with works of obedience – obedience to His commands as I have already mentioned what righteousness is for us (**Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:25**)!

Sha’ul reminds us in his second letter to Timotiyos that those wishing to live reverently in Messiah shall be persecuted!

Lot was a man that would have certainly been persecuted for righteousness sake yet was rescued from destruction!

While he lived a righteous life that was persecuted, he was continually oppressed with the indecent behaviour of the lawless!

The Greek word that is translated as ‘oppressed’ in Kēpha Bet/2 Peter 2:7 is καταπονέω kataponeō – Strong’s G2669 which means, ‘**to wear down, tire down with toil, exhaust with labour, to treat roughly, afflict or oppress with evils**’ and this word comes from the two root words:

1) κατά kata – Strong’s G2596 which is a preposition which carries the meaning, ‘**down, against, according to**’ and

2) πόνος ponos – Strong’s G4192 which means, ‘**toil, labour, pain, great trouble**’, which is only used 3 times in the renewed Writings, all of which are found in the Book of

Ḥazon/Revelation:

Ḥazon/Revelation 16:9-11 “**And men were burned with great heat, and they blasphemed the Name of Elohim who possesses authority over these plagues. And they did not repent, to give Him esteem. 10 And the fifth messenger poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his reign became darkened. And they gnawed their tongues from pain. 11 And they blasphemed the Elohim of the heaven for their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their works.**”

In the verses quoted above, we take note of how the evil refuse to repent and blaspheme Elohim as they ‘gnawed their tongues in pain’, which shows us how the lips of the wrong talk intently of their trouble and pain, so much so that they blaspheme Elohim and are unwilling to repent!

When sin has finally been dealt with and the wrong are no more and the former things have gone, we take note that there will be no more ‘pain’:

Ḥazon/Revelation 21:4 “**And Elohim shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying. And there shall be no more pain, for the former matters have passed away.**”

With Lot being ‘**oppressed**’ we may be able to identify a little with what he suffered as it was an exhausting thing to see the indecent behaviour of the lawless and it pained him greatly! How pain stricken are you at times, when you see the indecent behaviour of the lawless? Does it bother you as it did Lot?

The promise we have in **Hazon/Revelation** is that the pain of seeing the indecent behaviour of the lawless will be ended when our Master and Elohim comes and wipes every tear away and restores righteousness when effects of the former matters of wicked and sin have passed away!

The Greek two words that are translated here as ‘**indecent**’ are

1 - ἐν en – Strong’s G1722 which is a primary preposition denoting a fixed position (in place, time or state) meaning, ‘**in or on, with, by**’; and

2 - ἀσέλγεια aselgeia – Strong’s G766 which means, ‘**licentiousness, sensuality**’.

Licentiousness means, ‘***lacking legal or moral restraint, disregard sexual restraint, disregard for strict rules of correctness***’.

Sensuality means, ‘***gratification of the senses or indulgences of the appetite, devoted to or preoccupied with the senses or appetites, deficient in moral, spiritual, or intellectual interests***’.

Those who are deficient in spiritual or intellectual interests have no regard for the order and instructions of Elohim and they therefore are against the appointed and established order of Elohim and can be easily led astray to doing whatever ‘feels’ right in their own eyes!

Many are being led astray because they do not know or properly understand the Scriptures and as a result, they are being led astray by crafty doctrines of man that do not follow the clear order, pattern and witness of the Word of Elohim.

The Greek word that is translated a ‘**lawless**’ here in **Kěpha Bět/2 Peter 3:7** is ἄθεσμος **athesmos** – Strong’s G113 which means, ‘**lawless, unprincipled men, wicked**’, and is understood as ‘**one who breaks through the restraint of law and gratifies his lusts**’. This word comes from the two root words:

1) α alpha – Strong’s G1 which is the first letter in the Greek alphabet that is used as a negative prefix, and

2) θεσμός thesmos which means, ‘**law, custom**’ and is a derivative of the word τίθημι **tithēmi** – Strong’s G5087 which means, ‘**to lay up, lay aside, appoint, establish**’.

Therefore the ‘**lawless**’ is being described here as one who is against that which has been established and appointed!

This word ἄθεσμος **athesmos** – Strong’s G113 is used twice in Kěpha’s second letter, with the other verse being:

Kěpha Bět/2 Peter 3:17-18 “You, then, beloved ones, being forewarned, watch, lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the delusion of the lawless, 18 but grow in the favour and knowledge of our Master and Saviour יְהוֹשֻׁעַ Messiah. To Him be the esteem both now and to a day that abides. Aměn.”

Sha’ul warns us of the coming of lawlessness and those who do not receive a love for the truth are handed over the delusion in order for them to believe the lies!

Tas’loniqim Bět/2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, 10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness in those perishing, because they did not receive the love of the truth, in order for them to be saved. 11 And for this reason Elohim sends them a working of delusion, for them to believe the falsehood, 12 in order that all should be judged who did not believe the truth, but have delighted in the unrighteousness.”

This is a sober warning against not loving the Truth, as it is Elohim who will send the working of a delusion to those who will not love His Torah and love the guarding of His commands! Delusion is a very powerful thing indeed, for the one who is handed over a working of delusion does not know that they are being led astray!

How then can we watch and be on guard?

By loving the Truth and guarding the commands of Elohim! Dawid loved the Torah and ran in the way of the commands of Elohim, and so should we, as His Beloved Bride!

Tehillah/Psalm 119:97 “O how I love Your Torah! It is my study all day long.”

Can you echo the same words of this psalmist or is your love for the Torah drowned out by the delusion of being against that which has been established and appointed by Elohim?

If one does love the Torah of Elohim then the necessary daily meditation and study will be a pleasure, yet so many today argue that they just cannot find the time to get in to the Word as their lives are so busy with many things!

When one loves something then they make sure they have time for it!

Anyone who claims to love יְהוָה and love His Torah yet does not actually spend time studying it on a daily basis is at risk of falling from their assumed steadfast position! Let us take a quick look at a couple more of the very expressive words of Dawid:

Tehillah/Psalm 119:47-48 “That I might delight myself in Your commands, which I have loved; 48 that I might lift up my hands to Your commands, which I have loved; while I meditate on Your laws.”

Tehillah/Psalm 119:112-113 “I have inclined my heart to do Your laws forever, to the end. 113 I have hated doubting thoughts, but I have loved Your Torah.”

Tehillah/Psalm 119:126-127 “It is time for יְהוָה to act! For they have broken Your Torah. 127 Therefore I have loved Your commands more than gold, even fine gold!”

Tehillah/Psalm 119:165 “Great peace have those loving Your Torah, and for them there is no stumbling-block.”

Tehillah/Psalm 119:167 “My being has guarded Your witnesses, and I love them exceedingly.”

These are just a few verses in a powerful Tehillah of praise for the Torah of Elohim and then we take note of the words of Dawid in:

Tehillah/Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the man who shall not walk in the counsel of the wrong, and shall not stand in the path of sinners, and shall not sit in the seat of scoffers, 2 but his delight is in the Torah of יְהוָה, and he meditates in His Torah day and night.”

These words highlight for us the blessing of not association with wrong crowds and are therefore not being led astray by evil and wicked company, as the one who watches over and delights in the Torah of Elohim remains steadfast and is able to keep standing and be on guard against falling!

Being oppressed by the indecent behaviour of the lawless, righteous Lot was tortured in his being day after day when seeing and hearing the lawless works of the wicked! How tortured are you by what you see and hear today?

If the works of the lawless do not torture you then it may be a warning sign that you have slipped or drifted from steadfastness and have allowed compromise to settle in your life in order to get by with everyone and have therefore let your light be hidden due to the fear of man and the conflict that arises when righteousness and lawlessness clash!

The Greek word that is translated as ‘tortured’ is βασανίζω *basanizō* – Strong’s G928 which means, *‘tortured, battered, pain, straining, be harassed or distressed, vexed with grievous pains (of body or mind)’*.

The Greek word translated as ‘being’ is ψυχή *psuchē* – Strong’s G5590 which means, *‘breath, soul, heart, mind, life, being’*, which is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ ‘nephesh’ H5315 which is *‘a soul, a living being, the inner being of a man’*.

Sha’ul tells us that though we walk in the flesh we do not battle according to the flesh:
Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 10:3-6 “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not fight according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons we fight with are not fleshly but mighty in Elohim for overthrowing strongholds, 5 overthrowing reasonings and every high matter that exalts itself against the knowledge of Elohim, taking captive every thought to make it obedient to the Messiah, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is complete.”

Can you begin to understand what Lot went through by being tortured in his being day and night? This was not something he could be physically but was rather a continual raging battle within himself, as he, being righteous, was tortured by the depravity of seeing and hearing the lawless works of the wicked!

The Greek word that is translated as ‘lawless’ here in Kēpha Bet/2 Peter 2:8 is not the same as that which is used in **verse 7**, but rather it is the word ἄνομος *anomos* – Strong’s G459 meaning, *‘lawless or without law, transgressors’*.

A derivative of this word is the Greek word used for 'lawlessness', which is ἀνομία **anomia** – Strong's G458 meaning, '*lawlessness or lawless deeds, unrighteousness*'.

Yohanan makes it very clear to us that sin is lawlessness!

Yohanan Aleph/1 John 3:4 "*Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.*"

The Greek word for sin is ἁμαρτία **hamartia** – Strong's G266 which means, '*sin, failure, miss the mark, to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honour, to do or go wrong*', and also carries the meaning of, '*wandering from the law of Elohim, violate the law of Elohim*'.

While many may claim that they do not need to adhere to or keep the Law of Elohim, we take note that Messiah did not redeem us from keeping the law but actually redeemed us from all lawlessness!

Titus/Titus 2:11-14 "*For the saving Gift of Elohim has appeared to all men, ¹² instructing us to renounce wickedness and worldly lusts, and to live sensibly, righteously, and reverently in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed expectation and esteemed appearance of the great Elohim and our Saviour יהושע Messiah, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for Himself a people, His own possession, ardent for good works.*"

The word 'redeem' here is λυτρόω **lutroō** – Strong's G3084 which literally means, '*to release by paying a ransom, redeem*' – in other words Messiah has paid the price for us and released us from lawlessness by paying the ransom for our lives with His Blood.

Sha'ul tells us in:

Romiyim/Romans 6:18 "*And having been set free from sin, you became servants of righteousness.*"

In other words, we can see that The Master יהושע Messiah has redeemed us and set us free from all lawlessness and sin, in order that we never wander from or violate the Torah.

I WILL REPEAT THE WORDS OF YOHANAN:

Yohanan Aleph/1 John 3:4 "*Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.*"

This verse spells it out very plainly for those who seem to miss the fact that to not walk in the Torah is sin!

It is as though Yohanan was spelling out this fact very bluntly and straightforward for those who struggle with a Greek mind-set and see no need to walk in the Torah – well right here in the Greek it is clear – If you are lawless (that is to walk contrary to the Torah) then you are indeed sinning!

ἁμαρτία hamartia – Strong's G266 is **ἀνομία anomia** – Strong's G458

This is a very sobering verse as it is clear that everyone who is born of Elohim does not sin but guards themselves – how? By hearing, guarding and doing the Torah!

What he is, in effect, saying here, is that anyone who is born of Elohim does not keep wandering from the law of Elohim! So many confessing believers who claim to be born of Elohim continue to wander from the need to walk in the Torah and this means only one thing – they have not been born of Elohim!!!
Redeemed from lawlessness and cleansed to be a lawful and faithful Bride – that is our call in Messiah!!!

When we understand this very simple truth then we can see plainly what Yoḥanan is saying in:

Yoḥanan Aleph/1 John 5:17-19 “**All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death. 18 We know that everyone having been born of Elohim does not sin, but the one having been born of Elohim guards himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. 19 We know that we are of Elohim, and all the world lies in the wicked one.**”

When we guard righteousness, we are guarded against the deception of the lawless one!

The Greek word that is translated as ‘unrighteousness’ is **ἀδικία adikia** – Strong’s G93 which means, ‘*unrighteousness, iniquity, wrong, deed violating law and justice*’.

Ok... **unrighteousness** is **sin** - **ἀδικία adikia** is **ἁμαρτία hamartia** – that is pretty clear!

DO you see this?

SIN is LAWLESSNESS and UNRIGHTEOUSNESS is SIN! Which means that UNRIGHTEOUSNESS is LAWLESSNESS!

That means that RIGHTEOUSNESS is to be LAW ABIDING!

Seeing and hearing lawless works will be something that tortures the righteous day and night, yet we must hold firm our calling and stand steadfast in not falling from our secure position in Messiah as we hold firm to the truth that יהוה knows how to rescue the reverent ones from trial and keep the unrighteous (lawless sinners) unto a day of judgement for punishment!

The Greek word that is translated as ‘rescue’ is **ῥύομαι rhuomai** – Strong’s G4506 which means, ‘*deliver, rescue, draw to oneself*’ and this word we see being used in the words of our Master when teaching us how we should pray, as seen in:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 6:13 “**And do not lead us into trial, but deliver us from the wicked one – because Yours is the reign and the power and the esteem, forever. Amēn.**”

In the constant wrestle that we see being waged between the flesh and the spirit we see from Sha’ul’s words the following:

Romiyim/Romans 7:24-25 “**Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks to Elohim, through יהושע Messiah our Master! So then, with the mind I myself truly serve the Torah of Elohim, but with the flesh the torah of sin.**”

We can give thanks to Elohim for it is our Master and Elohim, יהושע Messiah, who is the Only One who is able to deliver and rescue us!

He knows how to rescue the reverent ones!

The Greek word that is translated as ‘**reverent ones**’ comes from the adjective εὐσεβής eusebēs – Strong’s G2152 which describes a ‘**pious, devout, reverent man**’.

These words are a construct of two words:

1 - εὖ eu – Strong’s G2095 which is an adverb meaning, ‘**good, well done**’ and

2 - σέβω sebō – Strong’s G4576 which is a verb that means, ‘**to worship, revere, Elohim-fearing**’.

A derivative of this word is the Greek word that is translated as ‘**reverence**’, which is the noun εὐσέβεια eusebeia – Strong’s G2150 and carries the meaning of, ‘**well-directed reverence**’, and at its root it carries the meaning, ‘**to be true and to adore, speaking of one’s devout worship and being dutiful in one’s obedience**’.

This word, applied to a believer, denotes a life that is truly acceptable unto Messiah, indicating a proper attitude toward יהושע Messiah, who saves him.

So, a true reverent one who exercises true reverence, even in the Greek understanding, is one who exhibits a ‘**good and well done, Elohim-fearing worship**’!!!

εὐσέβεια eusebeia reflects both an attitude and a way of life, that is well pleasing to our Master, through the continued display of complete set-apartness without compromise! When we understand what true reverence toward Elohim means, we will find that we will do our utmost to give no room for compromise, and forever strive for perfection in the Master, no matter where we find ourselves or in what circumstances we may be in and no matter the torture we go through when seeing and hearing the lawless works of the wicked around us!

The Greek word that is translated here for ‘**works**’ is ἔργον ergon – Strong’s G2041 which means, ‘**works, labour, business, employment, behaviour, deeds**’, and we can be reminded of the words of our Master to the assembly in Sardis:

Hazon/Revelation 3:1-2 “**And to the messenger of the assembly in Sardis write, ‘He who has the seven Spirits of Elohim and the seven stars, says this, “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 “Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before Elohim.”**

Messiah was telling this assembly, “**I know your works... and they have not been found to be complete before Elohim!**”

In **Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:16** יהושע Messiah tells us that we are the light of the world and that we must not hide the light, but that we should shine the light of His Truth in everything we do, and that our light should shine before all men, so that they see our good works and praise our Father who is in the heavens!

Guess what the very next words of the Master are, after telling us to let our ‘good works’ be seen by all....:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to complete.”

The clarity of His Word is made plain in telling us that we shall be unable to let our good works be seen by all if we destroy the Torah and the Prophets!

In other words, ‘works’ that are done without the perfection of the Torah are not deemed to be good works by our Elohim, no matter how good they may seem in the eyes of the flesh! To the assembly in Sardis Messiah says that their works have not been found complete before Elohim!

The Greek word translated as ‘complete’ is πληρώω plēroō – Strong’s G4137 which means, **‘to make full, complete, accomplish’**.

This is the same word used in **Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:17**, and this means, in essence, to fully meet what is required, and not to finish and be done with!

We cannot change His Word to suite ourselves and try to fashion and shape it to fit into our comfort zones – His Word is the same yesterday, today and forever and He does not change and so we should not attempt in any way to change that which He has given us through His written Word!

Lawless works are works that will be rejected and while many may come the Master and say that they did many works in His Name, He will tell them that He does not know those who work lawlessness!

Mattithyahu/Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Master, Master,’ shall enter into the reign of the heavens, but he who is doing the desire of My Father in the heavens. 22 “Many shall say to Me in that day, ‘Master, Master, have we not prophesied in Your Name, and cast out demons in Your Name, and done many mighty works in Your Name?’ 23 “And then I shall declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me, you who work lawlessness!”

I sincerely hope that many will hear these words of our Master before it is too late, so that they can turn from their lawless words and works and begin to guard the commands of Elohim and walk in righteousness, for then they shall have the full assurance that He will deliver them from the coming destruction!

What we can see from the words in Kěpha’s second letter is that there shall be a clear separation of the righteous and the unrighteous! The righteous shall be rescued while the wicked shall be gathered for judgement and destruction!

While it may certainly be a torturous thing to see and hear the lawless works of the wicked each and every day, let us not lose heart in doing good, for we have the sure expectation in our Master that we must hold firm to until the end.

These words that we have explored in Kěpha's second letter can either be taken as words of encouragement or words of warning, or both!

Encouragement to those who are guarding righteousness and are meditating daily on the Word and seeking to continual please Elohim with the reasonable worship of a set-apart life, while a sobering and stern warning to those who are neglecting the call to come out and be separate.

This is a warning against those who persist in doing lawless works and continue to live wickedly by actively practicing the opposite of what the fear of Elohim demands!

This is an encouragement and call for endurance to those who are making themselves ready and are properly dressed in righteousness as this is a call to keep standing armed in the Truth and after having done all, to keep standing and not let the lawless words and actions of others deter you from your steadfast position in Messiah!

As you consider these words, how are you standing?

Have you allowed the torture of lawless deeds and the oppression of indecent behaviour to cause you to falter in your need to stand firm in the Truth?

Have you buckled under the pressure of the lawless deeds of the those who are living wickedly and have somehow lost the will to fight the good fight and find that you cave in to the pressures of family or friends who continue to live wickedly as they reject the need to walk in the Torah and you lack the strength to be bold?

Then take heed of these words, from the Scriptures that we have been looking at and renew your mind with the truth that יהוה knows how to rescue the reverent ones from trial – and trust in Him who fights for you as you take a firm stand in the belief/faith being clothed with the full armour of Elohim and be encouraged to stand!

As a true reverent one, perhaps the torture of lawless deeds and words and the oppression of indecent behaviour has caused you to back off from speaking up and if this is the case then let these words ignite in you a renewed zeal for our Master as you take a firm stand in the Truth, being ready always to give an answer for the hope you have and never be ashamed of the Good News: יהושע Messiah, as you proclaim His Name in both word and deed, having words and deeds that reflect one that has been redeemed from all lawlessness!

What is worth taking note of, as we learn from the example of Lot is that the Hebrew name Lot - לוֹט - Strong's H3876 means, '**covering**' and so we are able to recognise how we, through the Blood of Messiah have been covered and are fully protected in Him, as we stay in Him!

Our sure hope amidst the torture of seeing and hearing lawlessness is that we have a mighty Elohim who knows how to rescue us from trial and as we hold firm the belief to the end let us encourage one another with this truth!

Ἰβ'rim/Hebrews 3:12-15 "Look out, brothers, lest there be in any of you a wicked heart of unbelief in falling away from the living Elohim, ¹³ but encourage one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened by the deceivableness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Messiah if we hold fast the beginning of our trust firm to the end, ¹⁵ while it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

As we consider the pressures that we shall face for living reverently in Messiah, let us be trustworthy until death and never let go of our steadfast duty of manifesting the fragrance of our King! Hear this call for endurance as you hear what the Spirit is saying to us as an assembly that seeks to manifest the powerful fragrance of our Master and Elohim!

Maybe you have been facing some intense pressures and even some crippling times of poverty, and have been disgusted by the blasphemous and wicked living of "whitewashed wanna-be believers" who may honour the Master with their lips yet their hearts are far from Him as they continue in living lawless lives. Know this – our Master knows what you have been going through and He knows all you have been doing, and He is calling us all to endure and be trustworthy until the end, for our reward is in the heavens!

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