A CALL FOR THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD OF MESSIAH TO LOVE!

Yohanan/John 21:15-23

24th of the 11th month 2020/2021

Shalom all,

Mattithyahu/Matthew 9:36-38 "And having seen the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, as sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then He said to His taught ones, "The harvest truly is great, but the workers are few. 38 "Pray then that the Master of the harvest would send out workers to His harvest."

As a result of idolatry that has been highly promoted by false prophets and diviners of evil, many have wandered away from the truth and are left stranded without a Shepherd, as we

see from Zekaryah/Zechariah 10 and our need to ask TTT for rain.

With rain comes the promise of a harvest and we take note that our Master has indeed come down like rain and here, in these words of our Master and Elohim, ジロデア Messiah, we take note of the urgent need for workers to be sent out, and herein lies the call for true servants of Messiah to stand up and work the harvest fields!

In this message, which I have titled as, 'A CALL FOR THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD OF MESSIAH TO LOVE!' I would like to encourage your ears to hear our Master's call and equipping of your life, so that you can be found to be about His business, when He comes!

Kěpha tells us, in his first letter, what the goal of our belief is:

The deliverance of lives!

Kěpha Aleph/1 Peter 1:9 "obtaining the goal of your belief: a deliverance of lives." The Greek word that is translated as 'goal', as in 'goal of our belief' is τέλος telos – Strong's G5056 which means, 'an end, toll, continually, finished, fulfilment, goal, outcome' and this word carries the understanding of setting out for a definite point or goal. This word τέλος telos – Strong's G5056 is also used in:

Romiyim/Romans 11:4 "For Messiah is the goal of the 'Torah unto righteousness' to everyone who believes."

Sadly, we take note of how most translations have rendered this word as '**end**', with the false teaching that the obligation to walk in the Torah of Elohim has come to an end because Messiah has fulfilled all!

While our Master is indeed the goal and end purpose of the Torah, we know that this does not set aside our obligation of obedience, as a royal and set-apart priesthood! As we pursue and walk, in complete set-apartness, we must recognise what the goal of end purpose of our belief is!

It is the deliverance of lives!

The Greek word that is translated as 'deliverance' is $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho i\alpha s\bar{o}t\bar{e}ria - Strong's G4991$ which means, 'deliverance, salvation', and comes from the word $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho s\bar{o}t\bar{e}r - Strong's$ G4990 which means, 'a saviour, deliverer', which comes from the root word $\sigma\omega\zeta\omega s\bar{o}z\bar{o} - Strong's G4982$ which means, 'to save, restore, make whole, heal'.

This Greek word $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\dot{\imath}\alpha$ soteria – Strong's G4991 is used in the LXX of

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 63:8, used to translate of the Hebrew word אלושָׁיעַ Moshiya, which is translated as '**their Saviour**'!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 63:8 "And He said, "They are My people, children who do not act falsely." And He became their Saviour."

Why I am sharing this with you, is to highlight that we are to be TRUE WITNESSES of who our Saviour is, and for more on this please see the article called "**YHWH our Saviour** – **YHWH our Messiah!**" on our site (<u>https://atfotc.com</u>) which can be found under the '**articles**' menu, or by simply clicking on the following link: <u>https://atfotc.com/yhwh-our-saviour-yhwh-our-messiah/</u>

There are many who are breathing out lies, as they are not bearing the true witness of the True Witness, by denying that לתושל Messiah is the very manifestation, in the flesh, of

the esteem of הוה, our Master and Elohim!

Those who deny that לתושע Messiah came in the flesh, are of the anti-messiah and are betrayers who are breathing out lies!

The goal of our belief is to be a true witness of Messiah and make His Kingdom known to many who are stranded and without a Shepherd!

This call is an urgent call, as it requires a focused approach on the proper service of a royal priesthood that shines the Light of the Truth in a darkened world, where depravity is increasing at an alarming rate and many are wandering about like sheep that have no Shepherd and are not being fed and nourished with the Truth; and they do not even know it, as most have been blinded by false traditions and the empty ear tickling teachings of man, that are not able to equip a proper serving priesthood!

In this call for the royal priesthood of Messiah, which we are, to love, I would like to take a closer look at the words that our Master spoke to Kěpha, after His resurrection.

Please read Yohanan/John 21:15-23

This passage is certainly a very well-known one and is a great passage that can encourage and equip us to stand up and be the royal set-apart priesthood that we are to be, especially as we take a closer look at this discussion that takes place between Messiah and Kěpha.

Kěpha was a man who had suffered a great deal of discouragement and shame, for denying Messiah 3 times before His death, and in this interaction that takes place, we are able to see a powerful restoration taking place and a clear commitment to love and serve the Master without wavering, just as he had done before!

How many times have you felt extremely discouraged and unable to properly serve the Master as you should, due to many wrong choices that have caused you to compromise your belief, when faced with extreme pressures from crippling circumstances or the corrupt influence of bad company that you may have kept?

This passage can, in many ways, be a powerful mirror before each and every one of us, as we look intently into the mirror of the Word and be sober in our estimation of our love for the Master!

Kěpha was the one who confessed that ジロコア is the Messiah, the Son of the Living Elohim!

It was on this clear confession that our Master said He would build His assembly. $K\check{e}pha$ was one of the 3 that had witnessed the transfiguration of Messiah and he also had

his taxes paid by the miracle of \mathcal{VU} providing their temple tax from a fish's mouth.

Kěpha was the one who made the very bold statement that he would never stumble: Mattithyahu/Matthew 26:33 "And Kěpha answering, said to Him, "Even if all stumble in You, I shall never stumble."

"I will never stumble, even if everyone else does, I will not", is what Kepha said and then גרושע" told Kepha that he would deny Him that very night and he boldly said that he would not, and so did all the taught ones say the same thing!

This '**rock**' of a man crumbled that very night and he was devastated when he heard the cock crow after he had denied the Messiah 3 times and he wept bitterly! Have you ever felt so distraught for making bold statements of faith, only to find that you blow your witness so quickly?

In one breath you are proclaiming great praise and confidence in your walk of setapartness and the next you find yourself in denial, as your belief in the Master is brought to question under trying circumstances which cause you to stumble!

Can you consider for a moment what this night must have been like for Kěpha? He was extremely bold until the test of his boldness came and he failed and left that place as a defeated man.

In this passage that we have in **Yoḥanan/John 21**, we see a complete restoration of belief taking place, along with a very bold confession of love for the Master!

This time Kěpha confirmed his love for Messiah 3 times, as opposed to denying it and was even told what kind of death he would face and this did not deter his renewed boldness in the Master who came to confirm his calling!

As you read this entire chapter you can see the renewed zeal and confidence that Kěpha had as he plunged into the sea when they saw ジロルア standing on the beach. In this short conversation that the Master had with Kěpha, we are able to see some powerful lessons that can equip us in being bold ambassadors of His Kingdom. This was not only a reinstatement of Kěpha's role of shepherding and feeding the flock of Messiah, but it was also a call to a royal priesthood in the order of Malkitsedeq!

Before His death and resurrection, Messiah had called them, when He was in the role of the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world and now, after His resurrection and the sprinkling of the heavenly tabernacle with His own blood, as High Priest forever, the body of Messiah could now be ordained to serve as a royal priesthood!

This was not only a reinstatement of Kepha but was also a clear call to care for, encourage, equip, strengthen and build up the body of Messiah in the most Set-Apart belief!

As we look at the 3 times that Messiah asked Kěpha if he loved Him, we are able to glean some valuable insight and wisdom in allowing the Word to be the very mirror that continually asks us if we love our Master!

Kepha was called and questioned about his love and commitment to the Master, after they had been fishing.

What is worth taking note of, is that the first time that Kěpha was called to follow Messiah, was when he was casting nets into the sea to catch fish.

Once again, Kepha was being called to be a fisher of men and take care of them as a good servant of Messiah!

Let us take a brief look at the three times Kepha was asked if he loved Messiah! 1) "Do you love Me more than these?"

The Greek word that is used here for 'love' is the verb $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\dot{\alpha}\omega$ agapaō – Strong's G25 which means, 'to love, welcome and entertain, be fond of, to be contented at or with a thing'.

While many may think that they know what love means, Scripture makes it very clear to us what '**the love for Elohim**' is:

Yoḥanan Aleph/1 John 5:2-3 "By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and guard His commands. 3 For this is the love for Elohim, that we guard His commands, and His commands are not heavy"

Here in this letter, the Greek word that is translated twice as **'love'** in **verse 2** is the verb $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\dot{\alpha}\omega$ **agapao** – **Strong's G25** and the Greek word that is translated as 'love' in verse 3 is $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\dot{\alpha}\pi\eta$ **agape** – **Strong's G26** which means, '*brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence, love feasts'*, and comes from the verb $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\dot{\alpha}\omega$ **agapao** – **Strong's G25**, as already discussed above.

Messiah asks Kepha whether he loved Messiah more than 'these', and here we can take note that the 'these' that Messiah is speaking of, can refer to:

1) The fish that he had caught, which can represent for us one's career or work;

2) His friends – he was back to fishing with some of the other guys.

We know from Scripture that Kěpha was a leader that many had followed and with him going back to fishing, others may have followed him too and highlights for us the power of influence that we can have on others or what others can have on us and here, Kěpha may have been called to question whether he loved Messiah more than his friends!

This is a valid question, as we see how many are easily influenced by their friends who turn away from following Messiah, which can often cause their love for Messiah to be brought into question.

3) His family – Kepha may have gone back to the family business that he was originally called from, in order to follow Messiah.

Luqas/Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, and his own life too, he is unable to be My taught one."

While this may sound harsh, the same question of whether we love Messiah more than '**these**', is asked to all of us as we realise that we can never allow family, friends or career to be that which hinders our love for the Master; and by that, I mean that we must never allow family, friends or work/career to cause us to neglect our ability to love Elohim, by the proper guarding His commands!

Many may claim that they love Messiah "**more than these**", as Kěpha did, yet they often find themselves breaking Sabbath or any other commands for the sake of family, friends or work and so, they reveal, by their actions, that they do not love the Master **more than these**!

Kěpha answers Messiah with an emphatic, "Yes, Master, You know that I love You." The Greek word that is translated here, in his response, for 'love' is $\varphi t \lambda \dot{\epsilon} \omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368 which means, 'to love, kiss' and comes from the primitive word $\varphi t \lambda o \zeta$ philos – Strong's G5384 which means, 'beloved, dear, friend'.

While many have tried to find the significance in the different use of these words for love $(\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\dot{\alpha}\omega \ agapa\bar{o} - Strong's \ G25$ and $\varphi\iota\lambda\dot{\epsilon}\omega \ phile\bar{o} - Strong's \ G5368$), it is difficult to do so, as both are interchangeably used in reference to Elohim's love for man, as well as man's love for Elohim.

This Greek word $\varphi_1\lambda\dot{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368 is used in the words of our Master, in: Mattithyahu/Matthew 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." The idea of $\varphi_1\lambda\dot{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368 also highlights companionship and as one who associates familiarly with another.

It becomes very clear here, by our Master's words, that He make it clear that our companionship and association with Him must exceed that of others. And by that, I mean that many often tend to compromise their obedience for the sake of their close family or friends that they know on a more intimate level than others that they will generally associate with within the body.

What our Master was making abundantly clear is that we are to be so closely associated with Him that we would not dare to compromise our walk in any way, not even for very close family who are provoking us to do so, in their vain attempts at challenging our love.

With Kěpha answering the Master's question of his love ($\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\dot{\alpha}\omega$ agapaō – Strong's G25) for the Master, he responds by declares that he indeed does love ($\varphi\iota\lambda\dot{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) and was basically saying to the Master that He knew how close Kěpha was to Him and that His association with the Master exceeds that of any other, making it clear that He would certainly never deny Him again!

The answer that Messiah then gives Kěpha is, 'Feed My lambs'.

The Greek word that is translated here as 'feed' comes from the word $\beta \delta \sigma \kappa \omega bos k\bar{o} - Strong's G1006$ which means, 'to feed sheep, to pasture and tend while grazing'. The Greek word that is translated as 'lambs' comes from the word $\dot{\alpha}\rho\nu i\rho\nu$ arnion – Strong's G721 which means, 'lamb, little lamb'.

This word is used 30 times in the Renewed Writings (N.T.) and we take note that it is used for the first time here, in this text from **Yoḥanan/John 21:15**, and the other 29 times it is used in the Book of **Ḥazon/Revelation**, with 28 times it being used in reference to The

Lamb, ארושע Messiah and once in reference to the beast who had two horns, like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

When we consider the use of this word, being primarily of Messiah, then there is no doubt that what is meant here, by the phrase 'My lambs', is the "assembly/body of Messiah" as being the object of the loving care of \mathcal{VUTT} Messiah, that must be properly lived out by His taught ones!

Kěpha was basically being told to teach and equip others to love the Master as he does, by feeding the lambs with the clear understanding that Messiah must be put first in order to properly extend that love correctly towards others!

Kěpha is then asked a second time by the Master whether he loves Him, to which he responds positively too, with the same declaration of his intimate association with the Master ($\varphi \iota \lambda \acute{e} \omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) and he is then told by the Master to "shepherd My sheep".

The Greek word that is translated here as '**shepherd**' is $\pi ot \mu \alpha i \nu \omega$ **poimaino** – **Strong's G4165** which means, '*act as a shepherd, care for, tend, feed*'.

We take note that while the word $\beta \delta \sigma \kappa \omega bosk \bar{o} - Strong's G1006$ means 'feed', the word $\pi ot \mu \alpha i \nu \omega poimain \bar{o} - Strong's G4165$ implies the whole office of the shepherd, in the proper guiding, guarding and governing of the flock, as well as leading it to nourishment.

The Greek word that is translated here as '**sheep**' is $\pi\rho\delta\beta\alpha\tau\sigma\nu$ **probation – Strong's G4263** which means, '*sheep, sheepfold*' and is understood as being any four footed, tame animal that is accustomed to graze. This word is derived from the word $\pi\rho\sigma\beta\alpha i\nu\omega \text{ probain}\bar{o}$ – Strong's G4260 which means, 'to go forward, go before, walk ahead'.

This second charge that was given to Kěpha, was not only to feed the little lambs, but also to shepherd the sheep and this highlights for us the need to nurture new converts and lead them to the good teachings of the Word, while also strengthening the more mature and seasoned ones, who already know how to walk ahead!

The third time that Kěpha is questioned about his love for Messiah, we see Messiah now asking Kěpha is he does love ($\varphi\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) Him.

Twice Kěpha was asked if he loved ($\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\dot{\alpha}\omega$ agapaō – Strong's G25) the Master and he responded with an emphatic yes, saying that he does love ($\varphi\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) the Master and now in this 3rd time, with the Master asking Kěpha if he loved Him, we see Kěpha's declaration of his love ($\varphi\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G53680 being tested as the Master asked him if he loved ($\varphi\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) Him, to which Kěpha answered with a 3rd positive affirmation of his love ($\varphi\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) for the Master.

Kěpha was grieved at the Master questioning his loyalty and commitment. The Greek word that is used here for 'grieve' is the verb $\lambda \upsilon \pi \acute{\epsilon} \omega \ lupe\bar{o} - Strong's G3076$ which means, 'to grieve, to distress, cause sorrow, offend', and this comes from the word $\lambda \acute{\upsilon} \pi \eta \ lupe - Strong's G3077$ which means, 'pain of body or mind, grief, sorrow'.

I find this a very interesting account, from which we are able to learn a great deal, when we too are looking intently into the Mirror of the Word and allowing the clear question of our commitment and devotion to our Master to be raised, and it may even bring about a bit of pain within us, when we are being confronted with the reality check of making the bold statement of our belief before our Master, who sees all and sees anything that may be in our hearts that needs to be dealt with.

Kěpha is then instructed to 'feed the sheep'.

The Greek word that is used for 'feed' is the same word used when told to 'feed the lambs', which is $\beta \delta \sigma \kappa \omega \ bos k \bar{o}$ – Strong's G1006 and the same word is used here for sheep - $\pi \rho \delta \beta \alpha \tau o \nu$ probation – Strong's G4263.

What we see here, is that a powerful progression is used here, in order to draw out of Kěpha the depth of his love for Messiah, despite being saddened by this continual questioning.

This was an ordination of stewardship, as a faithful servant of Messiah who is committed to leading others to Messiah, as well as strengthening and equipping those who are already in Messiah!

And this can only be done when one's commitment to obedience to the Master is confirmed!

There is great encouragement that we can take from this event, that took place between Kěpha and our Master, as we see the invitation and call to follow being restored, after Kěpha had denied the Master 3 times.

The 3 times that Kěpha declared that he loved ($\varphi \iota \lambda \acute{\epsilon} \omega$ phileō – Strong's G5368) also highlights a great lesson for us, in recognising how we are able to identify the confession of Kěpha's commitment to walking in close companionship with the Master is made abundantly clear and in many ways, this can cause us to recognise how our walk must reflect this bold confession, as we take note of the concept of 3 times, being linked to the obedience of keeping the Feasts of $\pi \lambda \pi$, 3 times a year, which would collectively include all 7 of the Feasts!.

This confession of love, was a commitment to a walk of belief in the Master and the bold stand that he would never deny the Master ever again!

This can also teach us about proper set-apartness and stewardship and the responsibility that we have in understanding the goal of our belief, which is **the deliverance of lives** and the need to make taught ones of the nations, as pictured through the feeding and tending of lambs and sheep, which we will only be able to do successfully if we make sure that we show our love for the Master through our obedience to His Word and be on guard to never deny Him for anything or anyone!

This is a clear lesson of stewardship and the responsibility that we have toward each other in the body!

While Kěpha was certainly a good leader and was recognised as such, amongst the taught ones, we see that in these instructions that he is given here, to feed the lambs and shepherd and feed the sheep, Kěpha is taught that his calling does not give him license to dominate or rule over others in a vindictive way, but that he is called to serve in love, with the deliverance of lives always being the clear goal of the belief in Messiah!

While many may argue that this was a call given only to Kěpha and not to the others, we must take note that the clear commission that is given to all of the taught ones of the Master, is to go and make other taught ones of the nations and to do that successfully, we must also allow our Master to question our love for Him and take heed to His instructions of feeding and shepherding others too!

When we look in to the mirror of the Word, we must allow the question **"Do you love Me?"** to come through each time and in the process of answering truthfully, we must recognise the proper manner that displays the skills of a set-apart one who can rightly divide the Truth, by walking in complete obedience to the commands of our Master and Elohim, ジビリア Messiah. Many of us may find that we have also been like Kěpha, who had made big and bold statements of faith/belief, only to find that our words and actions did not quite line up with that confession, when faced with the test of obedience.

This passage ought to encourage each and every one of us to, dust of any patterns of unbelief from the past and pursue apartness, expressing our zealous love for our Master and Elohim, in a committed obedience to His Torah, with the proper response to the urgent call to feed and shepherd others in the Truth!

There are some today who are teaching that this passage identifies various levels of love or different kinds of intimacy in relationships, where one is only capable of having a certain kind of love toward a select few and toward others another level of love is extended. While this may sound acceptable and can in many ways present a phycological approach to human behaviour, what I do firmly believe is that the context of this passage a challenging question of whether a true love for the Master is being declared and loved out. While love for Him is to obey His commands, we take note that this we do because of the declaration and confession of our commitment to walking with Him and are doing so because of the intimacy and companionship that we have in the Master, who no longer calls us servants, but friends, because He has made know to us His teachings!

Many become friends with the world and their love for the world shows a clear denial of the Master as they make themselves enemies of Elohim.

Our Master is not a respecter of persons, and His love that He shows toward each and every one of us, in His Body, is the same and we know that he disciplines those that He loves:

Hazon/Revelation 3:19 "As many as I love, I reprove and discipline. So be ardent and repent."

The Greek word that is translated here as 'love' is $\varphi \iota \lambda \dot{\epsilon} \omega$ phile \bar{o} – Strong's G5368. We again see this word being used in:

Hazon/Revelation 22:14-15 "Blessed are those doing His commands, so that the authority shall be theirs unto the tree of life, and to enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are the dogs and those who enchant with drugs, and those who whore, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and all who love and do falsehood."

The reason for me quoting **verse 14** here too, is to simply highlight the clear message that we see being given in Scripture and the clear understanding that we can glean from the conversation between Kěpha and our Master.

This passage once again highlights the connection between love for Elohim and love for the world. The doing of the commands is the true love for Elohim and love toward others, while those who love and do falsehood are the disobedient ones and the ones who choose others over Elohim. Those who neglect to do the commands show that they love and do falsehood and reject the Truth, for the Torah is Truth and without a proper walking in the Torah, one cannot truly love the Master as we should!

So, what is being clearly presented to us, in this interaction between Kěpha and the Master, after His resurrection, is a clear commission to obedience, to which Kěpha said yes to and now his love for the Master was made clear and he would never waiver in unbelief again!

This time when $K\check{e}pha$ was told the kind of death he would face; he does not waver in unbelief!

What is also interesting to take note of, is in the question that Kepha asks the Master about the **'taught one that 'taught one that 'taughto 'taughto' 'taughto' 'taughto' 'ta**

He was basically asking Messiah about how Yoḥanan would die or if he too would face what Kěpha would face and Messiah makes it clear that it should not matter to him about what would happen to others, as what should matter most is that he followed Messiah continually!

This teaches us the vital lesson of how we all are to work out our deliverance with fear and trembling and not try to assess the battles that we face against each other, for we each may face different kinds of battles and sufferings!

What is important is that we all follow Messiah, by guarding to do His commands, for that is the truest and only acceptable expression of love that can be shown towards Him and others in the body of Messiah!

The Greek word that is translated as 'follow' in verses 19 & 22 is $\dot{\alpha}\kappa o\lambda o\upsilon\theta \dot{\epsilon}\omega$ akoloutheo – Strong's G190 which comes from the 2 words:

1) A, α alpha – Strong's G1, which is the first letter of the Greek language and is used here as a participle of union, along with the word

2) $\kappa \epsilon \lambda \epsilon \upsilon \theta \circ \varsigma$ keleuthos, which means, 'a road, or way' and therefore, this word $\dot{\alpha} \kappa \circ \lambda \circ \upsilon \theta \epsilon \omega$ akoloutheo expresses the intention to 'follow closely or going behind someone who leads the way' or 'to attend, to accompany, to go with or follow a teacher'.

To follow Messiah is not for those who just want to go for a stroll in order to see what happens! No... to follow Messiah is a commitment to walk and live as He walked and lived, as a perfect example for us to follow!

You cannot follow the Master if you are not girded about with truth and have not put-on righteousness, as you will be unable to walk as He walked!

As we consider the reinstatement of Kěpha and the restoration of his bold faith, we too must consider carefully how we answer our Master's question of our love for Him and hear the call for the true royal priesthood of Messiah to stand up and serve, feeding and shepherding others, as we do build each other up in the Most Set-Apart faith! To serve as one should, can only be done when one loves as they should and love for Elohim is to obey His commands and is how we serve in proper love!

This is a call for the royal priesthood of Messiah to love Messiah and show it as the deliverance of lives becomes the goal of our belief!

Sha'ul ends his letter to the believers in Ephesos with the following words:

Eph'siyim/Ephesians 6:24 "Favour be with all those who love our Master ンロンコン Messiah, undecayingly! Aměn"

Let the mirror of the Word cause us to make an honest assessment of our love for the Master and be encouraged to love him '**undecayingly**'!!!

The Greek word that is translated as 'undecayingly' is $\dot{\alpha}\phi\theta\alpha\rho\sigma$ ia aphtharsia – Strong's **G861** which means, 'incorruptibility, imperishable, purity, sincerity, incapacity for corruption'!

What this word actually signifies for us, is the ability to walk upright and in integrity, without wavering in unbelief.

We have all had moments where unbelief got the better of us and may have found ourselves saddened by our lack of belief, especially when it was needed.

The harvest is great and the workers are few!

Will you love Messiah undecayingly and go and work the harvest field, as you feed and shepherd the lambs and sheep of Messiah, leading them to His Truth!

This equipping call and reinstatement of the belief of Kěpha, is one that highlights the urgency of the True remnant Bride of Messiah to let the 'love test' of our Master be positively passed, by the proper love being shown in the obedience to His commands. Many people often question our love, when seemingly confronted with the reality that we will not engage in partaking together with them in lawless or compromised ways and so, we can also be on guard against many asking the same question as our Master does... for it comes down to who do you love most!

Do you love the Master more than these ...?

Then hear the equipping call to obey and not let the same question that is presented by those in the world to cause you to drop your guard and compromise your obedient walk in any way.

Our love for the Master and for one another, is confirmed in our active obedience to His Word and not letting anything else hinder our called for set-apartness, and doing so, we also realise that many may in fact respond negatively to our commitment to obedience ad display a hatred toward us by declaring that we are not showing love.

Do not let these false accusations cause you to be rocked from your steadfast position in Messiah, as we can learn from these events that we have looked at, on how Kepha had now learnt the clear lesson to never deny Messiah again!

When one gives in to the whims of others who are questioning your love for them because you will not compromise in your obedience to the Word, you may be in danger of being in a place of denial, if you do give in to their whims, where your love for the Master and others is put into question, against the clear plumbline and mirror of His Word. Let us take encouragement from Kěpha's discussion with the Master and hear the call for pure set-apartness and belief to not be compromised in any way, as we take up the call of a royal priesthood in Messiah and love Him undecayingly, for this is how we shall be equipped to serve as we should!!!

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