

OBEDIENCE CALLS FOR CONFIDENT COMMITMENT

Nehemyah/Nehemiah 10

20th of the 3rd month 2021/2022

Shalom family,

Praise our Mighty Sovereign and Saviour, יהושע Messiah, for we recognise His great and wonderful loving-commitment towards us, in that He forever remains true and lovingly committed to The Covenants of Promise made with Abraham, Yitsḥaq and Ya'aqob, of which we were once strangers to and having no expectation and without Elohim in the world, yet now 'in' Messiah יהושע we have been brought near by the Blood of Messiah.

His steadfast commitment and love toward us, ought to continually cause us to be steadfast and lovingly committed toward Him, in guarding to do all that He has commanded us to do, amēn!

After all, we have been bought at a price and our love toward our Saviour, Redeemer and Mighty King, should be clearly evident in our daily commitment toward Him; as we know that Yoḥanan tells us that "love for Elohim is to guard His commands", which are in no way heavy!

We all desire, I am sure, to be obedient each and every moment of our lives, yet why is it that we often find our actions falling short of the earnest confession of our lips? In a message called, "**OBEDIENCE CALLS FOR CONFIDENT COMMITMENT**", I would like us to be challenged and stirred to make every effort in ensuring that our commitment to walk in His ways is continually reinforced with great confidence, and will be clearly evidenced through our continual obedience without compromise.

Please read **Nehemyah/Nehemiah 10**

The setting for this chapter is as follows:

The walls of Yerushalayim had been rebuilt and along with Ezra, Nehemyah was restoring the true order that obedient Torah living calls for; and this was certainly needed, as true commitment to יהוה had been lost as a result of their disobedience, which caused them to be sent into Babelonian and Persian captivity.

This chapter is a wonderful picture of renewal, and in the two preceding chapters before this, we see that **Chapter 8** starts off by telling us what took place on the Day of Trumpets, after the construction of the walls had been completed and family lines had been established and how the people had responded to the Torah with all their heart, mind and will!

We are able to identify with this, as we too have responded by applying our mind, using the very intellect and ability that He has given us to be diligently available to hear and receive the Word that we are to guard to do.

And so, we renew our minds daily and recognise that understanding the Torah begins with **being available to hear the Torah and giving attention to the Torah!**

We also respond to the Torah with a rejoicing heart, as Yirmeyahu said in:

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 15:16 “Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart. For Your Name is called on me, O יהוה Elohim of hosts.”

Are you rejoicing, as His Name is called upon you?

We also respond to the Torah with our ‘will’ as we pledge to obey – that is to **HEAR-GUARD-DO** His Word, as we ‘pledge our allegiance’ to the Torah, to His Word, and to His Loving instructions!

I gave a message on this chapter 8, a few years back called, ‘**Responding to the Torah**’, looking at these three ways that we are to be responding and encourage you to go and check out the notes online!

In **Chapter 9** we see that having come through their first Yom Teruah and Sukkoth together in ages, on the 24th day they fasted and acknowledged their rebellion and confessed their sins and the crookednesses of their fathers.

They were commanded to stop mourning on Yom Teruah, the first of the 7th month, and then they discovered the instructions for Sukkoth and carried them out faithfully, without their being any mention of Yom Kippur which falls in between them.

As soon as they were permitted to fast after the feast of rejoicing, we find them doing so with great urgency, possibly to fulfil the obligations for Yom Kippur, which may have been missed.

But also, after hearing the Torah read during the Feast of Sukkoth and experiencing a taste of the Kingdom and its joy, the reality of how short they had fallen, had now weighed heavily on them.

Many were still in exile, and the city was not yet complete, although the walls had been rebuilt; and so, where they stood, they recognized that fasting, prayer and intercession was the logical next step.

At the end of **Chapter 9**, we see the pledge of their commitment to The Torah being put in writing, with the rulers, the Lēwites and the priests setting their seal on it.

And then, we come to **Chapter 10**, which we have just read and see how they acted upon their prayers and confession of their mouths and what was written, and committed themselves by making an oath to walk in the Torah.

84 men had set their seal on the pledge of all the people, as they were very serious about their trustworthy pledge to walk in the Torah.

The Hebrew word that is used in **Chapter 9:38 (10:1 in Hebrew text)** for ‘trustworthy

pledge’ is the noun אֱמֻנָה amanah – Strong’s H548 and means, *‘faith, support, agreement, firm regulation, binding written agreement – of a covenant or financial support’* and is used only twice in Scripture with both occurrences in this book.

The second occurrence is in **Chapter 11:23**, as the commandment was given for the ‘support’ of the singers.

This word אֱמֻנָה amanah – Strong’s H548 comes from the primitive root verb אָמַן aman – Strong’s H539 which means, *‘confirm, support, establish, faithful, believe’*.

We see a sure commitment being given by a people who were so confident in their commitment, that they put it in writing and we recognise that this serious commitment is evidenced by the fact that all 84 names of those who set their seal on their binding pledge, were forever written as a record in the Scriptures, to be a binding witness for us all.

For their names to be found recorded in the Tanak, is clear evidence of how serious they were and יְהוָה therefore has set their names forever in His Word!

Now I know you all know how excited I get when I see a list of names in Scripture, and here we have a list of 86 names, with 2 of them being mentioned as being fathers of two of the 84 who set their seal on the pledge/commitment to walk in the Torah.

Now, while this is a great list and recognising the tendency to see any possible message they may be contained herein, I chose to simply just list their names and meanings for you without trying to extract a meaning that may or may not be there.

One thing is certain, and that is that as we look at all the meaning of the names, we can clearly see how we serve an awesome and lovingly-committed Elohim, who despite our backgrounds, has called us unto Himself and given us the seal of His love toward us, in His own Blood!

Let us therefore run through the list of names, as I feel that the fact that they are mentioned in Scripture, deserves our need to reflect on these ardent and committed men who put their name on the line!!!

THE PRIESTS:

Nehemyah - נְחֵמְיָה - Strong's H5166 which means, '*יהוה comforts*';

And he was the son of Hakyah - חֲכַלְיָה - Strong's H2446 which means, '*יהוה whom enlightens or wait for יהוה*'

Tsidqiyah - צִדְקִיָּה - Strong's H6667 which means, '*יהוה is my righteousness*';

Serayah - שְׂרָיָה - Strong's H8304 which means, '*Yah is ruler*';

Azaryah - עֲזַרְיָה - Strong's H5838 which means, '*יהוה has helped*';

Yirmeyah - יִרְמְיָה - Strong's H3414 which means, '*יהוה has appointed*';

Pashhur - פִּשְׁחוּר - Strong's H6583 which means, '*liberation*';

Amaryah - אֲמַרְיָה - Strong's H568 which means, '*יהוה has promised*';

Malkiyah - מַלְכִּיָּה - Strong's H4441 which means, '*My king is יהוה*';

Hattush - חֲטוּשׁ - Strong's H2407 which means, '*assembled*';

Shebanyah - שְׁבַנְיָה - Strong's H7645 which means, '*increased by יהוה*';

Malluk - מַלְלֻךְ - Strong's H4409 which means, '*counsellor*';

Harim - חֲרִים - Strong's H2766 which means, '*dedicated*';

Meremoth - מֶרְמוֹת - Strong's H4822 which means, '*elevations*'

Obadyah - עֲבַדְיָה - Strong's H5662 which means, '*servant of יהוה*';

Dani'el - דָּנִיֵּאל - Strong's H1840 which means, '*my El is judge*';

Ginnethon - גִּנְתוֹן - Strong's H1599 which means, '*gardener*';

Baruk - בָּרוּךְ - Strong's H1263 which means, '*blessed*';

Meshullam - מְשֻׁלָּם - Strong's H4918 which means, '*friend/man of peace*';

Abiyah - אֲבִיָּה - Strong's H29 which means, '*יהוה is my father*';

Miyamin - מִיָּמִין - Strong's H4326 which means, '*from the right hand*';

Ma'azyah - מַעֲזִיָּה - Strong's H4590 which means, '*consolation of יהוה*';

Bilgai - בִּלְגַי - Strong's H1084 which means, '*my cheerfulness*';

Shemayah - שְׁמַעְיָה - Strong's H8098 which means, '*heard by יהוה*';

The Lēwites:

Yēshua - יֵשׁוּעַ - Strong's H3442 which means, '*saved, deliverance*'

son of Atsanyah - אֲצַנְיָה - Strong's H245 which means, '*יהוה hears*';

Binnui - בִּנְיִי - Strong's H1131 which means, '**built up**';

of the sons of Hēnadad - הֶנְדָּד - Strong's H2582 which means, '**favour of Hadad**';

Qadmi'el - קַדְמִיֵּאל - Strong's H6934 which means, '**El is the ancient one**';

And their brothers:

Shebanyah - שְׁבַנְיָה - Strong's H7645 which means, '**increased by יהוה**';

Hodiyah - הוֹדִיָּה - Strong's H1941 which means, '**my majesty is יהוה**';

Qelita - קְלִיטָא - Strong's H7042 which means, '**crippled**';

Pelayah - פֶּלַיָּה - Strong's H6411 which means, '**יהוה does wonders**';

Hanan - חָנָן - Strong's H2605 which means, '**favour/ he is merciful**';

Mika - מִיכָא - Strong's H4316 which means, '**who is like him**';

Rehob - רְחוֹב - Strong's H7340 which means, '**broad place**';

Hashabayah - חֲשַׁבְיָה - Strong's H2811 which means, '**יהוה has considered**';

Zakkur - זַכָּרוֹר - Strong's H2139 which means, '**mindful**';

Shērēbyah - שְׁרַעְבִּיָּה - Strong's H8274 which means, '**יהוה has scorched**';

Shebanyah - שְׁבַנְיָה - Strong's H7645 which means, '**increased by יהוה**';

Hodiyah - הוֹדִיָּה - Strong's H1941 which means, '**my majesty is יהוה**';

Bani - בְּנִי - Strong's H1137 which means, '**built**';

Beninu - בְּנִינוּ - Strong's H1148 which means, '**our son**';

The leaders of the people:

Parosh - פַּרְעֹשׁ - Strong's H6551 which means, '**flea**';

Paḥath-Mo'ab - פַּחַת מוֹאָב - Strong's H6355 which means, '**pit of Mo'ab**';

Ėylam - עֵילָם - Strong's H5867 which means, '**eternity**';

Zattu - זַטִּי - Strong's H2240 which means, '**brightness of him**';

Bani - בְּנִי - Strong's H1137 which means, '**built**';

Bunni - בְּנִי - Strong's H1138 which means, '**built**';

Azgaḏ - עֲזָגָד - Strong's H5803 which means, '**gaḏ is mighty**';

Bēbai - בְּבַי - Strong's H893 which means, '**my cavities**';

Aḏoniyah - אֲדֹנִיָּה - Strong's H138 which means, '**my master is יהוה**';

Biḡwai - בִּגְוַי - Strong's H902 which means, '**in my bodies**';

Adin – אֲדִין – Strong's H5720 which means, '*delicate*';
 Atēr – אֲטֵר – Strong's H333 which means, '*binder*';
 Hizqiyah – חִזְקִיָּה – Strong's H2396 which means, '*יהוה is my strength*';
 Azzur – עֲזִיר – Strong's H5809 which means, '*he that assists*';
 Hodiyah – הוֹדִיָּה – Strong's H1941 which means, '*my majesty is יהוה*';
 Hashum – חֲשֹׁם – Strong's H2828 which means, '*rich*';
 Bětsai – בִּצְיִי – Strong's H1209 which means, '*conqueror*';
 Hariph – חָרִיף – Strong's H2756 which means, '*a plucking off*';
 Anathoth – עֲנָתוֹת – Strong's H6068 which means, '*answers to prayer*';
 Nēbai – נוֹבֵי – Strong's H5109 which means, '*fruitful*';
 Magpi'ash – מַגְפִּיעַשׁ – Strong's H4047 which means, '*moth killer*';
 Meshullam – מְשֻׁלָּם – Strong's H4918 which means, '*friend*';
 Hēzir – חֲזִיר – Strong's H2387 which means, '*swine*';
 Meshēyzab'ēl – מְשִׁיזְבָּאֵל – Strong's H4898 which means, '*El delivers*';
 Tsadoq – צָדוֹק – Strong's H6659 which means, '*righteous*';
 Yaddua – יָדוּעַ – Strong's H3037 which means, '*knowing*';
 Pelatyah – פֶּלְטִיָּה – Strong's H6410 which means, '*יהוה delivers*';
 Hanan – חָנָן – Strong's H2605 which means, '*he is merciful*';
 Anayah – עֲנִיָּה – Strong's H6043 which means, '*יהוה has answered*';
 Hoshēa – הוֹשִׁיעַ – Strong's H1954 which means, '*salvation*';
 Hananyah – חֲנַנְיָה – Strong's H2608 which means, '*יהוה has favoured*';
 Hashshub – חָשׁוּב – Strong's H2815 which means, '*considerate*';
 Halloḥēsh – לוֹחֵשׁ – Strong's H3873 which means, '*whisperer*';
 Pilḥa – פִּלְחָא – Strong's H6401 which means, '*slicing*';
 Shobēq – שׁוֹבֵק – Strong's H7733 which means, '*free*';
 Reḥum – רַחֻם – Strong's H7348 which means, '*compassion*';
 Hashabnah – חָשַׁבְנָה – Strong's H2812 which means, '*יהוה has considered*';
 Ma'asēyah – מַעֲשֵׂיָה – Strong's H4641 which means, '*work of יהוה*';
 Aḥiyah – אֲחִיָּה – Strong's H281 which means, '*brother of יהוה*';
 Hanan – חָנָן – Strong's H2605 which means, '*he is merciful*';

Anan – עֲנַן – Strong’s H6052 which means, ‘*cloud*’;

Malluk – מַלְלִיק – Strong’s H4409 which means, ‘*counsellor*’;

Harim – חָרִים – Strong’s H2766 which means, ‘*dedicated*’;

Ba’annah – בְּעַנְיָה – Strong’s H1196 which means, ‘*in affliction*’.

A long list indeed, yet the rest of the people were just as committed as their leaders. The names that are listed here are those who set their seal on the written trustworthy pledge:

Nehemiah/Nehemiah 9:38 “And because of all this, we are making a trustworthy pledge, and write it. And our rulers, our Lēwites, our priests set their seal on it.”

In the Hebrew text, this verse is **verse 1** of **Chapter 10**.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘set their seal’ in **9:38** and **10:1** comes from the primitive root verb חָתַם *hatham* – Strong’s H2856 which means, ‘*to seal, affix a seal, seal up*’, and it is from this root that we get the Hebrew noun for ‘seal’, which is חֹתֶם *hotham* – Strong’s H2368 which means, ‘*a seal, signet ring*’.

Why I mention this, is that we can be reminded that the names of the 12 tribes of Yisra’el were to be engraved on the shoham stones of the High Priest’s garments, like the engraving of a signet – חֹתֶם *hotham*!

The Greek word used here, in the **LXX** (Septuagint – Greek translation of the Tanak – O.T.), of this verse in **Nehemiah/Nehemiah 9:38** and **Nehemiah/Nehemiah 10:1** for ‘sealed’ is σφραγίζω *sphragizō* – Strong’s G4972 which means, ‘*to seal, put a seal on, set*’, and we gain a better understanding of what these actions of rulers, Lēwites and priests shadow picture for us, when recognising the work of redemption that our Master has done for us and the price that His blood has paid for us, to have the seal of our inheritance secured in Him!

Here are a couple of verses where we can find this word σφραγίζω *sphragizō* – Strong’s G4972, which I am sharing in order to get a better picture, in terms of what we are looking at here:

Eph’siyim/Ephesians 1:13-14 “in whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the Good News of your deliverance, in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Set-apart Spirit of promise, 14 who is the pledge of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His esteem.”

In Sha'ul's introduction to the believers in Ephesos, he was making clear that we not only have, through **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ** Messiah, redemption and forgiveness, but that we have also been sealed with the Set-Apart Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession is fulfilled at His second coming!!!

Eph'siyim/Ephesians 4:30 "And do not grieve the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

This trustworthy pledge that was written and sealed, marked a clear declaration of commitment and is a wonderful shadow picture of the Trustworthy Word of our Elohim and Saviour, who has, by His Spirit, written His Word upon our hearts and sealed us for the day of redemption, to which we are to respond with our commitment to being trustworthy, as we guard to do all that our Master has commanded us to do, through His Written Word, that He Himself show complete commitment and trustworthiness to, through the shedding of His own Blood, that we can be cleansed, set-apart and sealed by Him!

What is commitment?

A dictionary definition describes commitment as:

'an act of committing to a charge or trust; or 'an agreement or pledge to do something', and is 'the state of being obligated or emotionally impelled'.

True **'commitment'** is about staying true to one's pledge or agreement and recognising the obligation that one has, to do what you have committed yourself to, in its fullest form, without neglect or compromise.

As we accept to walk in Messiah, we also commit our ways to Him and commit to walk according to the instructions that **יְהוָה** has given us by the hand of Mosheh.

Tehillah/Psalm 37:5 "Commit your way to יְהוָה, and trust in Him, and He does it."

Mishlê/Proverbs 16:3 "Commit your works to יְהוָה, and your plans shall be established."

Commit your way and your works to **יְהוָה**:

The Hebrew word that is translated here as **'commit'** comes from the root word **גָּלַל galal** – **Strong's H1556** which means, **'roll, roll away, commit, trust'**.

This root word **גָּלַל galal** – **Strong's H1556**, in essence, means to roll some object on, upon, away, in, against, from, together, unto, or down.

This figure is used for rolling oneself on **יְהוָה** and therefore, it means to completely trust **יְהוָה**, or to commit one's behavior or life to **יְהוָה**, or remove such non-material things as reproach and contempt.

To commit to יהוה, takes a *'rolling away'* of those things that have held us back from walking fully and confidently committed in Him.

A derivative of this word is גִּלְגָּל **Gilgal – Strong's H1537** which means, *'a wheel, rolling'*, and this is the place where Yehoshua circumcised Yisra'el after entering the Promised Land, as יהוה *'rolled away the reproach of Mitsrayim'* from Yisra'el and were separated unto יהוה.

By the Blood of Messiah, we too have had the reproach of Mitsrayim *'rolled away'*, in order that we may be separated unto יהוה, as a set-apart people that are being steadfast and committed to walking in the Light of His Torah!

Now that He has rolled away the reproach, we can commit our behaviour to יהוה!

That is: to commit our way and works to Him.

The Hebrew root word that is translated as *'way'* in Tehillah/Psalm 37:5 is דֶּרֶךְ **Derek – Strong's H1870** which means, *'way, road, distance, journey'* and comes from the primitive root word דָּרַךְ **darak – Strong's H1869** which means, *'to tread or march'* and therefore, speaks of our walk, and our every step that we take!

And this we are to commit to יהוה.

This word דֶּרֶךְ **Derek – Strong's H1870** is used 13 times in Tehillah/Psalm 119, which we know speaks primarily about the love for His Torah and 13 being the numerical value for the Hebrew word אֶחָד **ehad – Strong's H259** meaning *'one'*, we recognise that committing our every step to Him causes us to become as one in Him!

The Hebrew word that is translated as *'works'* in Mishlê/Proverbs 16:3 is מַעֲשֵׂה **ma'aseh – Strong's H4639** which means, *'a deed, a work, act, good work, labour, activity, accomplishment'*.

The Book of Acts, which we know is referred to in Hebrew as 'Ma'asei', is a book that the records the acts of the emissaries and speaks of the deeds or acts that the apostles/emissaries did and records their *'acts'* of obedience.

We are to commit all we do to יהוה, having nothing hinder us.

Therefore, our walk and works are unto Him and all that stands in the way of confident commitment to obedience must be rolled away!

Kēpha Aleph/1 Peter 4:19 "So then, those who suffer according to the desire of Elohim should commit their lives to a trustworthy Creator, in doing good."

The Greek word that is translated here as 'commit' is παρατίθημι paratithēmi – Strong's G3908 which means, *'to set before, present, commend, commit, show to be true, entrust, be responsible for'* and is the construct of the following two words:

- 1) παρά para – Strong's G3844 which is used as a primitive participle meaning, *'from besides, by the side of, by, besides, near'*, and
- 2) τίθημι tithēmi – Strong's G5087 which means, *'to lay up, lay aside, appoint, establish'*.

Our Master's Word has been firmly established and appointed for us to be committed to, as we commit our lives to Him who is a trustworthy Creator and Saviour, in doing good!

Today, we find so many people that are afraid to confidently commit, as they do not want to feel 'obligated' to do that which is required of them, as they would rather 'keep their options open', so to speak, in order to decide what to do, based on whatever suites them at any given moment, and so, committing their way and works completely to יהוה becomes hindered, simply because 'self' has not been *rolled away*.

How about you, are you confidently committed to יהוה?

Or are there some of your ways and works that are slightly off track?

Confident commitment carries the obligation of doing what has been committed to and not backing out in any way; and so, we are to be fully confident in our commitment to walking in, and staying in, Messiah, The Living Torah.

In **Nehemyah/Nehemiah 10** we see the record of a people who were confidently committed to יהוה.

Let us therefore take a closer look at what they committed to:

1 – They were committed to total submission

Committed to a total submission to the Torah and all the commands of יהוה.

I love how **verse 28** puts it: in telling us that all who had *knowledge and understanding* were committed.

Hoshĕa/Hosea tells us that people are perishing for lack of knowledge and so, without true knowledge and understanding, one cannot confidently commit to being obedient.

After all, how can you commit to something that you have no proper knowledge or understanding of?

As I mentioned earlier, that in **chapter 8** we see how the people responded to the Torah and made themselves available to listen, in order to hear, guard and do what they heard, and after keeping The Feasts and doing what they heard, their understanding grew!

Understanding comes in the doing of the knowledge that we hear, ... the knowledge of Elohim that we make ourselves available for!

If anyone is not earnestly seeking His Kingdom and His Righteousness, then how will they find knowledge and if they have no knowledge, how will they get understanding.

These committed people made a clear choice to follow His Torah and observe to do all His commands.

Wise and understanding people will confidently commit!

We get knowledge and understanding from His Word:

Mishlê/Proverbs 2:6 “For יהוה gives wisdom; out of His mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

Mishlê/Proverbs 18:15 “The heart of the understanding one gets knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.”

Ya’aqob/James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of Elohim, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it shall be given to him.”

There is absolutely no excuse for us to not be a wise and understanding people, who can confidently commit to being separated from the nations and live obediently unto our King! What we recognise here, is that true commitment takes the Word very serious. Sometimes I think that many people that are claiming to live according to the Way (which is a Torah observant living in Messiah) are not as serious about the obligation that true commitment demands from us and therefore, their expression of faithfully loving יהוה with all their heart, soul and strength, is hindered through a lack of discipline in seeking out knowledge and applying that knowledge through diligent obedience, in order to correctly enhance their understanding of ‘how’ we are to love our Maker and one another.

Here, in this **Chapter 10 of Neḥemyah/Nehemiah**, these people entered into a curse and an oath.

Today, so many people neglect to understand, or take note of, the curses that are contained within the Torah, and simply love to lay claim to all of the blessings that are in the Word, while they live lawless lives and neglect to walk in the Truth, through a clear and obvious lack of knowledge.

A major part of the prayers of repentance that we see in Neḥemyah/Nehemiah, contains the acknowledgement of the faults and crookedness of the fathers who had gone before, and the same is required today, as we seek to confidently commit to a life of total obedience, in loving Elohim with all our heart, soul and strength.

These people were serious about their commitment and so should we be too:

Bemidbar/Numbers 30:1 “When a man vows a vow to יהוה, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he does not break his word, he does according to all that comes out of his mouth.”

2 – They were committed to being separated!

In verse 28 we see the phrase, ‘... and all those who separated themselves...’.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘separated’ comes from the root word בָּדַל *badal* – Strong’s H914 which means, ‘*to be divided, sever, separate, came over, make a distinction*’.

When we are separated from the world, we are to make a clear distinction between that which is of the world and that which is of Elohim and our lives should clearly shine that distinction, revealing a clear mark of commitment to separation.

Although we are in the world we are not of the world and so, we are to sever those things of darkness from our lives that have no place in the light of His Truth.

The first time that this root word בָּדַל *badal* – Strong’s H914 is used in Scripture, is right back in:

Berēshith/Genesis 1:4 “And Elohim saw the light, that it was good. And Elohim separated the light from the darkness.”

Elohim separated the light from the darkness!!!

Kēpha Aleph/1 Peter 2:9 “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a set-apart nation, a people for a possession, that you should proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

יְהוָה declared the end from the beginning! He has separated light from darkness and we have been called out of darkness and therefore, we should live as such, as we walk as children of light:

Eph’siyim/Ephesians 5:8 “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Master. Walk as children of light”

In learning to walk as children of light, we see that this word בָּדַל *badal* – Strong’s H914 is also used in the following verses, where it is translated a ‘distinction’:

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 10:10 “so as to make a distinction between the set-apart and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean”

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 11:47 “to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the living creature that is eaten and the living creature that is not eaten.”

It is יְהוָה who has separated us from all peoples, to be a set-apart nation unto Him and therefore we are called to make a clear distinction between what is clean and what is not, and so by the hearing of His Torah and the obedience of keeping His Times and laws we are called to active separation from that which is not pleasing to Him!

Qorintiyim Bēt/2 Corinthians 6:17 “Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate, says יְהוָה, and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you.”

Being separated involves a ‘coming out’ from among that which foreign and contrary to the Torah and the ability to properly separate oneself from that which is common or profanes!

The Greek word that is used here in **Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 6:17** for ‘separate’ is **ἀφορίζω aphorizō – Strong’s G873** which means, *‘to mark off by boundaries, ostracise, separate, set-apart’* and comes from the two words:

1 - ἀπό apo – Strong’s G575 which is a preposition and primitive particle, meaning, *‘from, away from, against’* and

2 - ὁρίζω horizon – Strong’s G3724 which means, *‘predetermined, fixed, appointed, to mark off by boundaries’*.

What is very clear throughout Scripture is that we are called to come out and be separate. If we do not heed this call to come out and be separate then we may find ourselves among those whom the Messengers of יהוה will ‘separate’ from the congregation!

Mattithyahu/Matthew 13:49-50 *“Thus shall it be at the end of the age: the messengers shall come forth, and separate the wicked out of the midst of the righteous, so and shall throw them into the furnace of fire – there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”*

The choice is very clear – separate yourself from all foreign worship and its practices or you will be separated for destruction and thrown into outer darkness!

Mattithyahu/Matthew 25:30 *“And throw the worthless servant out into the outer darkness – there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

In being seriously committed to separating themselves from the peoples of the lands unto the Torah of Elohim, they were strengthening each other to enter into a committed covenant walk, that embraces the Torah, with all of its blessings and curses.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘strengthening’, in **Nehemyah/Nehemiah 10:29**, comes from the root word **חָזַק ḥazaq – Strong’s H2388** and carries the meaning, *‘to grow firm, fasten upon, strengthen, take hold of’* and can have the concept of, *‘grasp between your ears’*.

In Scripture, we are repeatedly told to be strong and courageous!

When we ‘grasp between our ears’ what we ought to, then יהוה will strengthen us to be ‘courageous’, which is the root word - **אָמַץ amats H553** – means *‘to be alert both physically and mentally, be fully alert – awake and not asleep, be steadfast’*.

‘Be strong and courageous’, is a term we have come to know, especially when we reflect on the book of Yehoshua – well, it is these two words that are being used each time - **חָזַק ḥazaq** and **אָמַץ amats**

What we can learn from this, is that for us to be **‘strong and courageous’**, in Messiah, we need to ‘grow firm’ in the Torah and have the commands of Elohim fastened upon our hearts, as we take hold of the Truth and walk in it with boldness, being fully alert and steadfast in walking in the Truth.

And, it is through the ‘command/s’ of the Torah (Mosheh), that we are commissioned, appointed and strengthened **‘in’** Messiah!

Strengthening each other to walk in the Torah of Elohim, which was given by Mosheh!

This is extremely important for us to be doing today, as we have seen through the misguided teachings of falsehood, that so many people have been severely weakened due to the casting aside or doing away with the Torah.

We are to walk in the Torah and strengthen each other to do so!

The Hebrew word that is translated as **‘walk’**, in **Nehemyah/Nehemiah 10:29**, comes from the root word **יָלַךְ yalak** - **Strong’s H3212** which means, **‘to go, walk, come, depart, proceed, move, go away’**, and can also have the meaning to **‘carry (as in a burden)’**.

In Yeshayahu/Isaiah, we see the clear call to walk in the light of **יְהוָה**:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 2:5 “O house of Ya‘aqob, come and let us walk in the light of יְהוָה.”

When Yeshayahu was describing the coming reign of our King, he urged all to be urgent in their walking in the Truth and Light of the Torah of **יְהוָה**.

The urgency of this command is clear, in saying **‘come and let us walk’** and we see the repetition of the root word **to walk**, in the intensive form, literally commanding the following, **‘walk, let us walk!’**, as we see the Hebrew text being written as follows:

בֵּית יַעֲקֹב לְכוּ וְנִלְכֶּה בְּאוֹר יְהוָה:

The phrase that is translated as **‘come and let us walk’** is written as follows:

לְכוּ וְנִלְכֶּה
leku venelekeh

In this phrase we see the repetition of the root verb **יָלַךְ yalak** - **Strong’s H3212**

This call to **‘come and walk in the light of יְהוָה’** identifies that there is no time to be sitting still and waiting for The Day to come, as we are to be about walking in Him, right now!

This urgency in commanding and calling for an active walk was due to the current circumstances that had plagued Yehudah.

Yehuḏah had grown comfortable in their circumstances and, as a result, were being filled with all the wrong stuff!

Yeshayahu was calling the people to walk in the light and as he looked around, he saw what could be described as 'dark living' by a people who claimed to follow יהוה!

They were strengthening each other to be committed to obedience!

The Greek word that is translated in the LXX (Septuagint) for 'strengthening' is ἐνισχύω **enischuō** – Strong's G1785 which means, '**to strengthen, grow strong, receive strength, make strong**' and is the construct of the following words:

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) ἰσχύω **ischuō** – Strong's G2480 which means, '**to be strong, have power, strong enough, healthy**', and has the understanding of having sufficient strength, ability and power, both physically and morally.

Our ability to be strong and able to be faithful witnesses of our Master and His coming reign, comes through Him empowering us through His Living Word, as we submit and obey and guard to do all He has commanded us to.

The Master tells us that many will not be strong enough, as we see this word ἰσχύω **ischuō** – Strong's G2480 being used in His words, in:

Luqas/Luke 13:24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, because many, I say to you, shall seek to enter in and shall not be able."

Here this word ἰσχύω **ischuō** – Strong's G2480 is used in the negative sense, of highlighting how so many seek to enter the narrow gate, yet will not be able to nor have the strength to do so, all because it is not Messiah who is empowering them!

Pilipiyim/Philippians 4:13 "I have strength to do all, through Messiah who empowers me."

This is a very powerful verse, which speaks great volumes, as it highlights for us the true reality that we are unable to do all without Messiah!

If He is not empowering us, we cannot do it all, yet when we allow His Word to empower us and lead us, we can do all.

In Sha'ul's letter to the Philippians, the Greek word that is translated as 'strength to do' comes from the word ἰσχύω **ischuō** – Strong's G2480.

Once again – the '**how to**' of being strong in the Master, or '**being strengthened**' in the Master, is in our ability to '**stay in**' Him and guard to do all He commands us to!

And this we get to encourage each other in doing, as we each get strengthened in the Truth and strengthen each other to be committed to a set-apart and obedient walk!

These guys in **Nehemyah/Nehemiah 10** were serious about walking in the light of the Torah and had separated themselves from the darkness of the world and were committed to not touch what is unclean, and they recognised that even their marriages were not to be mixed with the nations:

Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 6:14 “**Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness? And what fellowship has light with darkness?**”

When we are confidently committed to walking in obedience, then we will ensure that we are ‘separated’ from darkness, even while we sojourn here amidst a dark world, so that our path of walking in righteousness shall be like the light of dawn, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.

Mishlë/Proverbs 4:18-19 “**But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wrong is like darkness; they do not know at what they stumble.**”

These guys were committed to not being mixed in marriage and they committed to setting the Sabbath and the Sabbath years apart.

Yehezqël/Ezekiel 20:12 “**And I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, to know that I am יהוה who sets them apart.**”

They were also committed to supporting the House of Elohim.

From **verse 32-39** we see the phrase, “**House of Elohim**” being used **8 times**, and as we know, that the number 8, in Scripture, is often a number that speaks of the eternal and everlasting and this was just another key aspect of their confident commitment that they were making, in ensuring that the House of Elohim was supported and that the work and upkeep of the service was maintained.

Verse 39 sums it up by saying:

“**...we should not neglect the House of our Elohim.**”

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘neglect’ comes from the root word **עָזַב azab** - **Strong’s H5800** which means, ‘**to leave, forsake, loose, loosen, abandon, leave behind, neglect**’.

Mishlë/Proverbs 3:3 “**Let not loving-commitment and truth forsake you – bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart**”

Anyone who claims to serve יהוה without walking in, and giving heed to follow, His Torah, commands and instructions, are not serving Him in Spirit and Truth and have, by default of their lawlessness, forsaken Him.

And those who claim that the Torah/Law of Elohim has been done away with, are sadly riddled with the leaven of the hypocrisy of man’s theologies and dogmas, that seeks only to serve self rather than the Giver of Life, while claiming the opposite!

This commitment to not neglect the House of Elohim, was a clear declaration of committing to ensuring that the House of Elohim and its service would be properly restored, which highlights a clear act of putting יהוה first, as He should be!

They imposed upon themselves to take up 1/3rd of a sheqel of silver every year, for the service of the House; and this was during some very tough economic times and we know that by the time of Messiah, this was back to being ½ a sheqel. They also cast lots for the wood offering, and I love the picture that we see in this, as we each must take up our stake daily and serve one another.

They committed to giving of the first fruits – that is: a giving of your best and putting יהוה first in all, as the first fruit offering was measured according to the blessing of יהוה on the individual and revealed true devotion and trust. They also committed to paying their tithes.

Although all of these commands that they had imposed upon themselves, are what we find as requirements in the Torah, what we do see here, by their commitment to imposing them upon themselves, is that their hearts were in it and it was not a matter of ‘doing the letter of the law’ but rather, they confidently committed to walking in Spirit and in Truth, as they clearly understood the heart of Torah!

This is a wonderful book of encouragement, especially for us today who are, through knowledge and understanding, separating ourselves from darkness and turning to the Torah and confidently committing to walk in true loving obedience.

As mentioned, the name of **Nehemyah/Nehemiah** means “**יהוה comforts**” and he was the son of Hachalyah which means “**whom יהוה enlightens** or **wait for יהוה**”, and by this we can see that as we wait on Him, through diligently seeking Him, He comforts those He enlightens.

May we truly be a people who are confidently committed to the obedient love that The Living Torah, our Master and Saviour, יהושע Messiah, calls for, and be separated from all darkness, so that we may truly proclaim His praises, in every step that we take and in every move that we make, by completely walking in Him and working unto Him with our all!

Are you confidently committed to obedience or has there been some hesitation to total commitment in the way of set-apartness?

Learn from the pledge that these people took and commit your ways and your walk to Him, and let us take the lead of confident commitment, in order that those who will still return to the Torah, we will be able serve with complete joy, as they see the Light of His Torah shining ever brighter in us, as a growing and glowing family in Messiah, as He sets His seal upon us, amēn!

Timotiyos Bět/ 2 Timothy 2:19 “However, the solid foundation of Elohim stands firm, having this seal, “יהוה” knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the Name of Messiah turn away from unrighteous-ness.”

Obedience to the Torah calls for a confident commitment – hear the call!!!
Let your calling upon the Name of Messiah truly reflect a life that has completely turned away from unrighteousness and turned to walking in a confident commitment of obedient set-apart living, before the face of the Master!

As we consider this long list of names that are record for us in Scripture, may this be a reminder of the witness that this text gives us, in seeing how it is the Master who writes our Names in the Book of Life, as His treasured possession that is held firmly in His Hand. When our Master sent out the 70 taught ones, two by two, they came back with encouraging reports of what they had done in His Name, and rejoiced greatly at the power they had seen in using His Name, for even the demons were subject to them in His Name. He then told them not to rejoice over this, but rejoice that their names have been written in the heavens.

Luqas/Luke 10:20 “But do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names have been written in the heavens.”

Having our name written in the heavens is a reference to having been born from above, in the Master, having now been grafted into the Covenants of Promise, by His Blood, and now being a part of His body. This we certainly rejoice at, yet we must be on guard against boasting in ourselves and not in Elohim and find that our names get blotted out for not keeping our eyes on that which is above, for we are to mind the matters above and not those on earth, which is a clear picture of not looking to the things of the flesh but keeping our commitment of walking in the Spirit, steadfast as a trustworthy servant and ambassador of the reign in the heavens!

Those who forsake the fountain of living waters, יהושע Messiah, will be blotted out from the heavens and be written in the earth, which is a clear picture of judgement!

Ḥazon/Revelation 3:5 “He who overcomes shall be dressed in white robes, and I shall by no means blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I shall confess his name before My Father and before His messengers.”

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 17:13 “וַיִּהְיֶה כֵּן, the expectation of Yisra’el, all who forsake You are put to shame. “Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken וַיִּהְיֶה, the fountain of living waters.”

All those who turn away from וַיִּהְיֶה and depart from walking in His Torah, shall be written in the earth and have no access to the coming reign of Elohim!

Hazon/Revelation 20:15 “And if anyone was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

The reason for me highlighting these verses that clearly speak about being written in or blotted out, is to help us understand the clear witness that we are seeing in **Neḥemyah/Nehemiah 10**, with the recording of the names of the rulers, priests and Lēwites that had set their seal on the written commitment to obedience, so that we too can be reminded of the importance of our commitment to obedience, which calls for a confident commitment that will keep standing firm amidst the chaos of many who are riddled with compromise and instability.

May this chapter in Neḥemyah/Nehemiah cause you to reaffirm your confident commitment to obedience, in order to ensure that as you stay in the Master, He will stay in you and your name not be blotted out of the heavens, but rather that you can confidently rejoice in the fact that you are written, in Him who is seated in the heavenlies, giving you the strength to overcome!

We are the House of Elohim; now let us all be reminded of the importance of strengthening each other to keep walking in the way of set-apartness and rejoice in our Master who gives us strength to do all!

One of the key aspects of restoration that we see being identified in this chapter, is the clear commitment to guarding the Sabbath, which is the clear sign that we belong to Elohim and that we are His House/Dwelling Place!

They had allowed a form of compromise to set in, which was now being addressed and the commitment to not compromising the Sabbath was being confidently declared!

Guarding the Sabbath is key to the guarding of the rest of the Torah, for in guarding the Sabbath, where we collectively hear Mosheh being read, we are equipped and strengthen to walk in the light of the face of the Master, every day and not be hindered by the darkness that surrounds us, but rather we let the light of the path of set-apartness shine brighter and brighter to the perfect day of our Master’s return!

As you consider this message and teaching, let me ask you once again:
Are you confidently committed to obedience?

May the example of those who set their seal on their commitment strengthen and encourage you to do the same as you make your bold and confident boast in our Master and Elohim, יהושע Messiah, and guard righteousness as a trustworthy witness that shines the brightness of His perfect Torah that lights our way in a darkened world!

This is time for the true set-apart ones to stand firm and be empowered by Messiah!

I will close with the words of Kěpha from both of his letters:

Kěpha Aleph/1 Peter 5:10-11 “And the Elohim of all favour, who called you to His everlasting esteem by Messiah יהושע, after you have suffered a while, Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. 11 To Him be the esteem and the might forever and ever. Aměn.”

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 יהושע Messiah. To Him be the esteem both now and to a day that abides. Aměn.”

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