

# **A PRIMER ON CIVIL DEFENSE FOR FOLLOWERS OF MESSIAH**

For a lot of years, the LORD has had me to pray a very structured prayer of protection for myself and those people that are closest to me. Through the years, words, phrases and scripture verses have been added to this prayer, as the LORD prompted me to do so. In the last few weeks, I have felt a quickening from the LORD to place a greater and greater importance to this prayer and to share it with others. More importantly, the LORD has taken each segment of this prayer and begun to reveal some deeper meanings to words that through the years had almost lost their luster because of repetition. I am not sure why the LORD has chosen this time to lead me in this direction, but it almost seems that HE would have me share these things as a primer on civil defense for the followers of Messiah.

Civil Defense used to be the buzz word for protecting the citizens of our country from man made or natural disasters. Now days, this seems to have been replaced with another term, “homeland security”. The goals of either term, however are the same, and that is to provide shelters, instructions, provisions and organization to be utilized by the population in the event of emergency. In other words, it is prudent in our personal lives and as a community or nation to perform some pre-planning for bad events that may have a good chance of occurring. When we have envisioned the likely threats and have built a framework for response when those conditions arise, we are going to rest easier and enjoy a certain level of “peace of mind”. I believe that this is what the LORD has in mind for HIS community.

One thing should be made clear, I am not advocating that we build bomb shelters, put up provisions or physically prepare in any way. Those things may be good to do, but are not the focus of my “primer”. I am advocating a preparation in the spiritual sense that results in a framework that when bad things happen our response is automatic. This results in a confidence that gives us peace, both now and during the bad times. Am I saying that bad times are coming? Well, yes and no. When asked about the signs for the end of the age, Messiah Yahshua did not answer with comforting words ..... earthquakes, wars, famine. Other scripture offers even a more bleak picture of things to come. Many Christians believe that they will be “raptured” out of this world before tribulation comes. I personally believe that we shall be here through it all and meet the LORD in the air when HE comes to establish HIS Kingdom. But, either way, I believe that it is inevitable that followers of Messiah in this life and in the here and now encounter difficult times of one type or another. We need to be prepared.

Another thing should be made clear, I am not saying that unless we say one thing or another or do one thing or another, that the LORD is not capable of delivering us from tribulation. On the contrary, the LORD is perfectly willing and able to deliver HIS people from any situation at any time and by means of HIS own choosing. No, the framework that I am proposing are promises and scriptural truths that we need to embrace so

intensely that they become a part of the fabric of our very existence. It is a framework that we should carry with us every day as a part of who we are in Messiah Yashua. So doing, HE can empower us through a peace that surpasses understanding and a boldness through confidence in who HE is. Any stores that we might put up for that rainy day can spoil and ruin, but HE is forever. Any money that we might save and put away can be stolen or lost, but HE owns all things. Any shelter from the storm that we construct can be torn down, but the shelter that HE provides is invincible.

Now, I shall attempt to establish the framework. Below in bold type is each element of the prayer as it has evolved through the years. I have also attempted to share some insight into each element as the LORD has revealed in recent weeks.

**“LORD, I pray for protection as I ask to put on the whole Armour of GOD and take up all the implements of war as described in Ephesians chapter 6 and everything that it means”.**

Ephesians 6:11-6:17 KJV

*6:11 – Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

*6:12 – For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

*6:13 – Wherefore, take unto you the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

*6:14 – Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

*6:15 – And you feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

*6:16 – Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

*6:17 – And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.*

In the above scriptures, the apostle Paul is exhorting the Elect to take up and put on the whole Armour and to take up one weapon, the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. Why? In order that we might take a stand, that we might withstand and that we might be left standing after the battle. Our clothing for battle consists of truth, righteousness, peace, faith and salvation, with our only weapon being the word of God. While these are powerful words, I can tell you that just their utterance will leave me feeling pretty naked as the enemy approaches. The key to confidence here is at the beginning of these scriptures..... *“Put on the whole Armour of God”!* Somehow we must put these things on and wear them. In order to put them on, it would be helpful to have an idea of what they look like. *Truth, righteousness and peace;* I am going to be a little light in the clothing department if I should depend upon any of these things originating with me. No, Messiah said that HE is truth, HE is righteousness, HE is our peace. Because of HIS sacrifice for us, and who HE is, we are able to put on these things that are in reality, HIM. We need to meditate on these scriptures and one piece at a time

ask the LORD to clothe us. Put on the breeches that are the truth of Messiah, the breastplate of Messiah's righteousness, the shoes that are the peace that Messiah brings, take up that shield of trust knowing it originates with Messiah and finally place the helmet of salvation, bought with the blood of Messiah, on our heads. If we truly embrace these things, and make them who we are, then we no longer stand naked before the enemy.

Now, to take up our only weapon, a sword. We are exhorted by Paul to take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of GOD. Carrying a bible around with us is not a bad idea, but it is not the sword that Paul is speaking of. The sword we are to carry is the living word, the incarnate word of GOD, Messiah Yahshua. In any situation or circumstance, if we trust HIM to do so, Messiah will fill our hand with the perfect word (or sword). Moment by moment and in the circumstance, the Spirit will give us utterance that is more powerful than anything we could imagine on our own. This is a promise of scripture and we can rest assured that it will be a powerful two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12).

**Lord, I pray for protection by the blood that was spilled on the execution stake of Messiah and the great victory that was won there.**

This element of the prayer begins a series of three taken from Rev. 12:11. “ *And they (the overcomers, the elect) overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the lamb*”. The spiritual concepts here are simple, but the realities of embracing this is complex. First, there was two spillings of blood on the execution stake. The first spilling occurred during the crucifixion and resulted in the blood of salvation being poured out for us all. The second spilling occurred after Messiah said “It is finished” and the Roman soldier thrust a spear into HIS side. The spear unleashed a supernatural gushing of the blood and water of the covenant, John 19:34, Heb. 9:19-22. I believe that when we come to the LORD, we are covered in the blood of salvation and washed in the blood of the Lamb of GOD. I do not believe that since coming to salvation, that the blood that was poured upon me has faded one little bit. The problem is that *I faded with time*. One of the most effective weapons that Satan has at his disposal is our sin consciousness. Let's face it, we are pretty rotten creatures. It is not a hard sell for the adversary to come and whisper in our ears “ You think your something special, just look at the thoughts you have, the things you have done, the things you want to do. Why, your not worthy of anything, you are nothing, and certainly not worthy of knowing GOD”. Our adversary is right about one thing; we are not worthy. But, praise be to GOD, HE is worthy. The LORD in HIS infinite wisdom has provided us with a High Priest in the Heavenly Tabernacle that will purge us of this sin consciousness through sprinkling with the blood and water of the covenant and release us to move on and upward in our walk into the Living GOD. Heb. 9:13-14 says “ *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; How much more shall the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to GOD, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living GOD.*” In Hebrews 10:22 it states that our hearts are sprinkled from an “evil conscience”. And, praise be to GOD, the LORD has provided us with a way into the heavenly tabernacle (See Hebrews Part I & II on this web site) to be continually cleansed by the blood and water.

**Lord I pray for protection as the word of my testimony is in harmony with your word.**

This element of the prayer continues with the second portion of Revelation 12:11. “ *And they (the overcomers, the elect) overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony*”. So, it is recorded here that the elect overcame by the word of their testimony. The word used here is Strong’s number 3141, “*marturia*” and is variously translated as witness, testimony, record or report. Also, interestingly enough, the word can represent an office or position committed to the prophets of testifying of future events. I believe that this prayer element is strongly tied to the sword of the Spirit that was previously discussed, but there is more involved here than relying on the Spirit of Messiah to give us utterance in that special time.

Our witness or testimony before the world is all encompassing. It is how we conduct ourselves every minute of every day. The places we go, the things we do, how we conduct business, how we interrelate to the people around us and how we honor our commitments both at home and in the world. In essence, it is who we are, both publicly and privately. How many high profile Christian leaders have had their testimony destroyed by revelations of various indiscretions, that they sought to hide? When our testimony is tarnished, we leave a gaping hole in our defenses and we leave the Body open for attack. How do we handle situations when our witness is compromised and the Spirit is condemning us? In three words...fix it quickly. Repent and ask GOD for forgiveness. Then move quickly, if possible in the situation, to correct the indiscretion. Apologize for the words or actions, make restitution, remove yourself from the circumstance, etc. If we are really attempting to make the elements of this prayer a part of who we are, Messiah can quickly repair the breach in the wall. We just know that HE is a forgiving GOD. We just know that we are one of HIS elect and that nothing shall change that, even the screaming accusations of the adversary.

What we have to say is not only how we live. Our words testify to our condition. If we are overcomers then our words will reflect it. Our testimony is not just talking about the past in our life but what the Lord is saying about us moment by moment. As we speak out his prophetic revelation we testify about his purpose. Many people love the Lord and live good lives, but you never hear much from their mouths about their ongoing relationship with God. I used to think it was just insecurity about speaking but I believe more and more that they don't speak because they have nothing to share. No testimony, no overcoming life.

Also, I believe that Messiah may require our very public verbal or written testimony from time to time and place to place; the time and place of HIS choosing. Messiah has equipped many of HIS servants with abilities to write with skill and ease. He has equipped others to speak or preach with great power and persuasion. Still others, HE has equipped for compassionate and effective counseling. So equipped, it is easy for us to become ensnared in our own abilities and find our testimony to be one about Messiah, but not of Messiah. This is an extremely difficult road to follow, and invariably we are going to stray from the path from time to time. We must leave our gifts open before HIM at all

times. When a preacher is anointed, I believe he knows it. There is no feeling in the human experience that can compare. He needs to go with the moment and allow the Spirit to move him to wherever HE leads. When the anointing leaves he should be silent. The same principle applies to anointed writing. As skilled as we may think we are, it is impossible to duplicate the work of the Spirit. I personally do not want in my possession any counterfeit works of the Spirit. I think scripture calls these “dead works”.

**LORD, I pray for protection, as I do not claim my life, even unto the death.**

This element of the prayer continues with the third portion of Revelation 12:11. “ *And they (the overcomers, the elect) overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not claim their lives even unto the death*”.

In Luke 9:24 Messiah states “ *For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for MY sake, he is the one who will save it*”. There is several ways to loose one’s life. It’s not necessarily a physical death. Scripture speaks of denying one’s self and dying to self. When we came to Messiah in salvation, we died with HIM on that execution stake. The problem is to keep the “old” nature (man) dead. He keeps rearing his ugly head and trying to revive himself in our lives. It is important to the framework that we are attempting to build, to once and for all to resolve this issue. We are dead to the world and the things of the world, but alive to Messiah. This is a foundational truth of our walk with GOD, and we can claim this, embrace it, take it into ourselves and make it an integral part of who we are. As we recite this element of the prayer, we are not making a statement of what we are willing to do, but of what we have already done.

One of the most fundamental differences between the saved and the unsaved should be our view on the death of the physical body. The most exciting and moving experience of my walk with the LORD came at my father’s passing. My father knew the LORD very intimately, and in his last week had held on while family and friends came and paid their last respects. It was awful for him as he was very uncomfortable and I prayed that the LORD would take him days before HE finally did. On the day of his passing, as I traveled to the hospital, the LORD came and told me that it was time. When I arrived, I asked my mother and sister who had been there all night, to go home. I called my eldest son to come to the hospital, and shortly after he arrived, we stood before my father holding his hands as he passed, very peaceably. I was able to commend his spirit to the living GOD, YHWH, and to pass my father from this worldly existence into the merciful hands of YAHSHUA. I could feel the Spirit of GOD in that room as he passed. There were no tears of grief, only tears of gratitude that my father was now in a place of safety, comfort and joy. The world’s view of death is generally much different, usually punctuated with grief, pain and great sorrow.

You might say, “Well yes, but there are sometime tragic circumstances that bring great pain and sorrow”. Tragic circumstances are generally in our own minds and not

necessarily in the mind of GOD. Does HE not have foreknowledge of the falling of a single sparrow? Shall not every follower of Messiah pass from this life into HIS loving hands. In scripture, we see the Apostle Paul while in Roman bondage, debating himself over whether he wishes to live or physically die. On the one hand, he wishes desperately to be with the LORD (which is much better), and on the other he wishes to continue to serve Messiah in this world. This is quite a dilemma, and one that could only occur because Paul had already died on the execution stake with Messiah.

**LORD, I pray for protection as your Spirit within me bears witness to your Spirit in the world.**

In the framework of protection we are endeavoring to construct, this prayer element is very important. These are our senses as we walk in the world. We cannot walk by the sight of our physical eyes, or walk listening with our physical ears. The things of the Spirit cannot be discerned by these means. I realize that there is nothing occurring right now that is not in the will and plan of GOD. But, some things HE is doing, and some things HE is allowing to be done. We want to be a part of what HE is doing in the world. We are admonished in scripture to “test the spirits” and to be discerning in the things of the spirit. How do we do this? By constantly being in tune with the Spirit of GOD within us and trusting in it’s guidance.

I have heard many believers speak of being in a particular place or circumstance and having a very “creepy” and uncomfortable feeling. I believe that this is likely due to the Spirit of GOD raising the alarm, and in a lot of worldly places we “get the message” and respond accordingly. But, what about those times that we are seemingly in a spiritual setting or circumstance? Are we still as “in tune” with the Spirit as we are in the worldly setting? If we are not, we could be allowing ourselves to walk down a different path than the one we desire and to allow our Armour to drop and become vulnerable to the attack of the adversary. Our enemy can be very subtle and disarming. We must walk always in every circumstance by the eyes and ears of the Spirit.

**LORD, I pray for protection through your empowerment of all of these things in the Holy Name of Messiah Yahshua.**

This final prayer element is the power that surrounds our protection framework and should need little explanation. There is great power in HIS Name. At its’ mention, all of creation bows down. HIS name should be on our lips and in our hearts continually. Without HIS empowerment, our prayers are left as hollow words and our framework collapses.

Now that we have discussed each element of our prayer framework, let’s see it all together:

**LORD, I pray for protection as I ask to put on the whole Armour of GOD and take up all the implements of war as described in Ephesians chapter 6 and everything that it means.**

**I pray for protection by the blood that was spilled on the execution stake of Messiah and the great victory that was won there.**

**I pray for protection as the word of my testimony is in harmony with your word.**

**I pray for protection, as I do not claim my life, even unto the death.**

**I pray for protection as your Spirit within me bears witness to your Spirit in the world.**

**LORD, I pray for protection through your empowerment of all of these things in the Holy Name of Messiah Yahshua.**

Taken together the prayer framework seems to be very simple. But I think you can agree from the above explanations that this is not the case. As stated previously, I am not advocating the repetition of this prayer when bad times come upon us. I haven't come up with a magic bullet that we can let loose when we think there is a need. There is nothing wrong with reciting this prayer, only we need to take these words and everything that they stand for and make them a part of who we are. Then we can have peace, knowing that whatever happens, we have been included in GOD's civil defense plan for HIS people.