

Soldiers for Jesus Christ

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Introduction:

Just a week ago we in the Churches of God were celebrating the 8th Day. The final annual Sabbath immediately following the Feast of Tabernacles. At the same time in the nation of Israel many were celebrating Simchat Torah and Shemini Atzeret.

From Wikipedia:

Simchat Torah or **Simhat Torah** (שִׂמְחַת תּוֹרָה, lit., "Rejoicing with/of the Torah", [Ashkenazi](#): *Simchas Torah*) is a Jewish holiday that celebrates and marks the conclusion of the annual cycle of public [Torah readings](#), and the beginning of a new cycle. Simchat Torah is a component of the [Biblical Jewish holiday](#) of *Shemini Atzeret* ("**Eighth Day of Assembly**"), which follows immediately after the festival of [Sukkot](#) in the month of [Tishrei](#) (occurring in September or October on the [Gregorian calendar](#)).

The horrific events of the Hamas morning attack on Israel have now drawn all eyes to the middle east and are having a chilling worldwide impact. Today - only one week later - the world watches the events unfolding in Gaza as the Israelis prepare for retaliation, while at the same time hoping this war does not expand to engulf more nations. Or trigger other events around the world.

The speed at which Israel has been able to call 300,000 reserve military personnel back to join this fight has impressed me. It has caused me to think about what it means to be part of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the training their soldiers have.

This in turn has led me to consider that we, too, are soldiers. Soldiers of Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:1 NLT - Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:2 NLT - You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

2 Timothy 2:3 NLT - Endure suffering along with me, **as a good soldier of Christ Jesus**.

2 Timothy 2:4 NLT - Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

2 Timothy 2:5 NLT - And athletes cannot win the prize unless they follow the rules.

Specific Purpose of this Message:

Today, in light of what we see happening in Israel, I want to explore the what the bible says about us being soldiers.

Why do we need to consider this?

As Christian soldiers we need to be mentally prepared to do battle with our enemy every day, and even more ready as we see the return of Christ drawing closer.

Revelation 12:6 NLT - And the woman fled into the wilderness, where God had prepared a place to care for her for 1,260 days.

Revelation 12:7 NLT - Then there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels.

Revelation 12:8 NLT - And the dragon lost the battle, and he and his angels were forced out of heaven.

Revelation 12:9 NLT - This great dragon--the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, **the one deceiving the whole world**--was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.

Revelation 12:10 NLT - Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens, "It has come at last--salvation and power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. **For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth--the one who accuses them before our God day and night.**

Revelation 12:11 NLT - And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die.

Revelation 12:12 NLT - Therefore, rejoice, O heavens! And you who live in the heavens, rejoice! **But terror will come on the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you in great anger, knowing that he has little time."**

Revelation 12:13 NLT - When the dragon realized that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.

Revelation 12:14 NLT - But she was given two wings like those of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness. There she would be cared for and protected from the dragon for a time, times, and half a time.

[Revelation 12:6 NLT - And the woman fled into the wilderness, where God had prepared a place to care for her for 1,260 days.]

Revelation 12:15 NLT - Then the dragon tried to drown the woman with a flood of water that flowed from his mouth.

Revelation 12:16 NLT - But the earth helped her by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that gushed out from the mouth of the dragon.

Revelation 12:17 NLT - And **the dragon was angry at the woman and declared war against the rest of her children**--all who keep God's commandments and maintain their testimony for Jesus.

Let's look at some key points from the verses in 2 Timothy:

BE STRONG through the GRACE

2 Timothy 2:1 NLT - Timothy, my dear son, **be strong** through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus.

Strong = G1743 = ἐνδυναμώω endynamóō, en-doo-nam-o'-o; from [G1722](#) and [G1412](#); to empower:—enable, (increase in) strength(-en), be (make) strong.

The KJV translates Strong's G1743 in the following manner: [be strong](#) (3x), [strengthen](#) (2x), [increase in strength](#) (1x), [enable](#) (1x), [be made strong](#) (1x).

- I. to be strong, endue with strength, strengthen
- II. to receive strength, be strengthened, increase in strength

- III. in a bad sense
 - A. be bold, headstrong

ENDURE HARDNESS:

2 Timothy 2:3 KJV - Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:10 KJV - Therefore I **endure all things** for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

2 Timothy 1:8 KJV - Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but **be thou partaker of the afflictions** of the gospel according to the power of God;

2 Timothy 3:11 KJV - Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what **persecutions I endured**: but out of [them] all the Lord delivered me.

2 Timothy 4:5 KJV - But watch thou in all things, **endure afflictions**, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

1 Corinthians 13:7 KJV - Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, **endureth all things**.

Hebrews 6:15 KJV - And so, after he had **patiently endured**, he obtained the promise.

Hebrews 10:32 KJV - But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Hebrews 11:27 KJV - By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Hebrews 12:2 KJV - Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him **endured the cross**, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

James 1:12 KJV - **Blessed [is] the man that endureth temptation**: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

DONT BECOME ENTANGLED...

2 Timothy 2:4 KJV - No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of [this] life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

2 Timothy 2:4 NLT - Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

Entangled = G1707 = ἐμπλέκω emplékō, em-plek'-o; from [G1722](#) and [G4120](#); to entwine, i.e. (figuratively) involve with:—entangle (in, self with).

The KJV translates Strong's G1707 in the following manner: [entangle \(one's\) self with](#) (1x), [entangle therein \(with G5125\)](#) (1x).

- I. to inweave
- II. of a thing: to entangle, involve in

2 Peter 2:20 NLT - And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before.

Mark 4:18 NLT - The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, Mark 4:19 NLT - but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced.

2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV - Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

Ephesians 6:11 KJV - Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

We MUST know who our enemy is!

Ephesians 6:12 KJV - 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].

Ephesians 6:13 KJV - 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.

What does it mean to "take unto you" and "put on"? Does this mean we need to know how to use the armor, too? And how well?

We need to be in shape for battle.

We need to be prepared mentally - KNOWING we are equipped for the battle.

1 John 4:1 KJV - Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1 John 4:2 KJV - Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

1 John 4:3 KJV - And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

1 John 4:4 KJV - Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: **because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.**

1 John 4:5 KJV - They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

1 John 4:6 KJV - We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Philippians 4:11 KJV - Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, [therewith] to be content.

Philippians 4:12 KJV - I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

Philippians 4:13 KJV - **I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

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

Ephesians 6:15 KJV - And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

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

Ephesians 6:17 KJV - And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

We have record of how Jesus used the "sword" when he was tempted of Satan:

Matt 4:1-11

Luke 4:1-13

We see that Jesus prepared for this challenge match

- He fasted
- We can assume he also prayed a lot while fasting
- He KNEW the scriptures.

We also see some of the tactics of our enemy:

- Creating doubt - "IF you be the Son of God..."
- Taking scriptures out of context or misapplying them

We also know other things about our Adversary

- He's a liar and murderer
- He deceives
- He uses others as his mouth piece (the serpent)
- He appeals to vanity

Ephesians 6:18 KJV - **Praying always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Conclusion:

As we see war, and will see more war, let us use it to motivate us in our study and diligence to live as dedicated soldiers of Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 1:18 KJV - This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

1 Timothy 1:18 NLT - Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord's battles.

1 Timothy 1:19 NLT - **Cling to your faith in Christ**, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.

Hebrews 3:14 NLT - For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.

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#### Additional Resources

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat\\_Torah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat_Torah)

<https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/our-soldiers/from-civilian-to-soldier-the-combat-training-process/>

<https://www.vox.com/2015/12/30/10674432/israeli-defense-forces>

So much of what seems like physical training in the army is ultimately just mental. The purpose of physical hardship during basic training, I would learn, was not to get soldiers into better physical shape, though that is a happy side effect, but to teach the soldier that his own body will lie to them about limitations and that even so he must push through it. Other times physical limitations are real limitations, and I would learn that too.