

Messianic Rabbi: Should Believers Take Part in Civil War Against a Tyrannical Government?

This week, like everyone else in the USA, I have had many conversations concerning the election and its repercussions. The discussions, at least in some way, all included the possibility of civil war and, if not civil war, at least armed riots.

That led to the discussion of what believers in Yeshua should do if armed conflicts begin and whether or not we should we join the battle.

Let me say at the start I hope and pray that we never have an armed conflict again where brother raises arms against brother within our nation.

In response to the above discussions, I began to pray, search the Scriptures and search my heart concerning the question. As a rabbi, I felt that I needed to have an answer to a question of such importance.

In my study I looked through biblical text and history. It was easy to find references to Israel rising to battle both against outside forces and in civil war. But while that shows that civil war among the people of G-D has taken place, it didn't answer my question: "Should believers in Yeshua participate in a civil war or a war against a tyrannical government?" But I didn't only want to know if believers fought in such conflicts; I wanted to know if their participation in the fighting appeared to be blessed by G-D.

As I studied, I realized that we do have a historical example

of Jewish believers in Yeshua rising up against tyranny during what is known as the Bar Kochba rebellion. For those unaware, the Bar Kochba rebellion took place between the years 132 and 136. It was an uprising of Israel against the Roman empire, and history is clear that believers in Yeshua fought alongside non-believers in these battles.

It is also clear that at the start of the rebellion Israel was very successful in battles. In fact, these Jewish warriors were able to drive Rome out of Jerusalem and Israel and for a short time become an autonomous nation. In other words, G-D was blessing Israel in their fight against Roman tyranny and paganism.

However, this all changed once Rabbi Akiva proclaimed Bar Kochba as Messiah. The believers in Yeshua who would not accept anyone as Messiah other than Yeshua left the army of Israel and the war dramatically reversed, leading to the Roman defeat of Israel.

So, it is very clear that a believer in Yeshua can arm themselves and fight against tyranny and paganism. We can rise up and fight to preserve our freedom to worship and live out our faith against those who would attempt to take those rights away.

But it is also clear that we cannot do so marching under the banner of any messiah other than Yeshua. I watched this year as more and more people who believe in Yeshua as their Messiah walked closer and closer to at least appearing to bestow upon President Trump a messianic mantle.

Let me stop for a moment and say I am a biblical conservative, and I voted for President Trump this election. I did so strictly because of his policies. There is no way I could possibly ever vote for the ungodly policies put forth by the Democratic Party. So, I am not anti-Trump as president.

But I have seen believers write things like "Trump is our only

hope,” which at least borders on messianism. I write this today because the answer to my initial question is “Yes, believers can arm themselves and fight against tyranny, but we must check our hearts to make sure whose messianic banner we are fighting under.”

I hope and pray we never have another civil war, but if we do, the historical evidence shows if we choose another Bar Kochba to exalt and proclaim as the savior of our values and rights, we will lose the battle. {eoa}

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