

Is there a “Place of Safety” in the End Time?

Focus not on where, when or how – but on WHO

By Philip Shields

www.LightontheRock.org

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Summary: Revelation 12 speaks of a place to where the Woman flees in the Wilderness. Is there a “Place of Safety” for Yahweh’s children in the coming time of worst trouble the world will have ever seen? What has the Eternal done in the past and what does He say He’ll do in the future to protect His family? Where could this “place” be? Does having a Place of Safety guarantee none of God’s children will suffer severe persecution and martyrdom before the final years prior to Christ’s return? Who could be in the Place of Safety?

(This is an approximate “transcript”. I recommend you hear the audio as well as check out this transcript.)

According to the book of Daniel and then the Son of Yahweh Himself: We’re coming to a time of unprecedented distress for God’s children and really for the whole world. Scripture calls it “the Great Tribulation” followed by “God’s wrath”. Add to that all the unprecedented God-sent natural disasters at a level we can’t even imagine. As bad as it was at various times in world history, as they say, “you ain’t seen nuthin’ yet”. Forget the cities ravaged by Attila the Hun, for as bad as they were, as bad as the Nazi pogroms were, as bad as the worst natural disasters to hit earth since there has been a man on the earth – we’re being told it’s going to be worse in the last days. And natural disasters will be of unprecedented magnitude. Scripture talks of islands disappearing, mountains crumbling, epic floods, massive hailstorms, earthquakes off the charts, intense heat, near misses and hits from “falling stars”, and on and on. Noah’s Flood was pretty disastrous, so it won’t be by a worldwide flood this time, but natural and man-made times of distress are coming such as this world has never before experienced.

Will you and I be ready for such a distressing time? I really don’t know if any of us will be fully ready and yet we’re warned to be ready (Luke 12:40) for He’s coming at a time “you think not”. But Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, that the Day of the Lord should not catch us unawares like a “thief in the night”. (Check out my blog about “the thief in the night”).

Hello everyone. This is Philip Shields, your brother in our Messiah, with another shared study for your contemplation from Light on the Rock. I believe this topic will become a very important one for you in the years ahead. It’s about something called the “Place of Safety”.

Let me start by admitting that *the phrase “Place of Safety” cannot be found in all the Bible*. Did you know that? In spite of that, I think the *concept* is a very real one. Some feel it’s wherever you are – and others feel there is a coming specific place on earth where Yahweh’s family will be hidden in the final 3-1/2 years. What does Scripture say about the concept? Let’s find out.

Growing up “in the church of God” in the 1950’s, 60’s and even 1970’s, families getting together with other believers would sooner or later get around to talking about “the place of Safety”. It all seemed very exciting to me as a boy hearing the grownups 50 years ago excitedly discuss what the end time was going to be like. Then there was an evangelist who went around

dramatically calling it “the place of final training”, explaining his reasons why that was the way he saw it. Well, now I’m almost 60, and almost all those grown-ups I listened to as a child who were excitedly talking about the place of safety – have all died, or are in their late 70’s, 80’s and 90’s now if they’re even still alive at all. We’re still here.

So here I’m the one now talking about “the Place of Safety”. I don’t know when everything is going to wrap up. And no, I’m not eager to see yet another prophetic chart trying to lay it all out, because just about all of them have been wrong so far! Whether it happens in a few years or in 20 years or whenever, *be* ready, as our Master Yeshua says in Matt. 24:44. But connected to the return of Christ is the strong hope and belief that He will protect His Bride, the called-out ones, in the Place of Safety. According to this understanding, that is to safeguard us from the last 3-1/2 years of time of greatest trouble the world has ever seen. Not a secret rapture – but a place of safety.

For many, however, this belief in the Place of Safety has almost become a doctrine you can’t tamper with; almost a god, an idol for some people. *Others have gone the other extreme and have come to disbelieve the many scriptures which do in fact show there is a coming safe place for some of God’s children in the end time.* Some, not all – and that’s part of the topic today too. So it’s going to be a good study and reminder for us all. Let’s study Yahweh’s word on it! He says though heavens and earth will pass away, His word will never pass away (Matthew 24:35).

Some of you hearing this in 2012 or later may not realize what it was like in the 1950’s and 1960’s growing up in the church. This was the time of backyard shelters, the Cuban missile crisis – and people already had their minds on having protection! There were school drills on what to do in the event of a nuclear strike. It basically was duck under your desk and kiss your behind goodbye. But this fear and uneasiness came into the body of believers too.

There were magazine articles in the 1960’s about Petra and about “The Place of safety”. Our human leader wrote letters to the church on April 15, 1956 and Sept 1, 1968 and Feb. 25, 1982 all warning that the time to flee was imminent and suggesting we would flee soon to Petra in Jordan. In one letter, the one dated Feb 25, 1982, the leader even claimed he would ask King Hussein if the church could use Petra as a place of safety. We were all urged to remain zealous, to be backing the Work so we’ll be counted worthy to escape these things as Luke 21:36 says.

The focus on fleeing, and being ready to flee – was real, very real. I lived it, I saw it, felt it. Some felt the big departure would happen in 1972, but it didn’t. I’m not making this up. But the focus was on being part of a select group that would be taken to a secret hiding place. Looking back, the focus was on a *place*. Today there are those who continue this focus on a place. And we’re still here. So now what ?

I believe our ultimate goal is the kingdom of God, not the place of safety. I believe it’s clear, as I’ll show today, that there IS a place of safety. *But our focus should not be on any Place of safety –not on where, but our focus should be in WHOM our faith is being placed.* We should not be focusing on where we may be going, but on WHO will be leading us and protecting us. Ultimately without Him being our full body shield above us, around us and with us, there would be no safe place on earth or in the heavens.

So from start to finish I’ll focus on WHO, not where or when or how.

SO WHAT? WHY are we DISCUSSING the Place of Safety?

So, why should I be talking about it now?

1. We need to see what Scripture says. Is there a coming PLACE of safety or not?
2. Many are coming to dangerous assumptions, which can lead to dangerous conclusions
3. I think we do need to know how Father has looked after His children in the past, and what He says He'll do in future.
4. There are some *wild teachings circulating* out there we need to be wary of.
5. Finally, we need to talk about this, because ***if there's going to be a place of safety for you or me, it will be because we are in a close, loving and obedient relationship*** with our Abba and our Saviour Yeshua.

Well, the pendulum has swung to the other extreme.

- Some are teaching now that God will protect His children wherever they are and they say there is no "place" of safety.
- Some leaders teaching that a place on earth can never be a place of safety with modern missile systems and satellite tracking, etc. (Where's God's protection, though?)
- Some fringe leaders led people to Moab, Utah as the place of safety. Others have moved to Israel. Others yet speak of the place of safety in Arkansas or who knows where next.
- Some teach we'll be protected in the coming temple in Jerusalem, due to Psalms 27:5 and others, which speak of "hiding me in your pavilion" or tabernacle. But what about the verses that clearly say in the last days, if you're in Jerusalem – get out of there!? So that idea is bogus.
- Others teach we will be protected in our own cities and homes and use Psalm 91 to bolster that. Psalm 90-91 will loom large in the coming years. I'll go through much of that.
- **Others are claiming only they and their group will be in the place of safety.** I believe this is a scare tactic to keep people tithing to that group and not going elsewhere – if you can assure them they and their children will be protected from the worst ever time of trouble.

So I thought it was time for me to speak on the topic and get back to what Scripture says.

Let's get one thing out of the way first: I don't preach or believe in a Pre-Tribulation **Secret Rapture** because the Bible doesn't teach it either. We will be changed and ascend to meet Messiah in the clouds, yes – ***but it won't be secret, and it won't be before the Great Tribulation*** but *after* the Great Tribulation, according to **Matthew 24:29-31**. And the place the woman (Church) of Rev. 12 goes to is a "wilderness" (hardly descriptive of heaven) and it speaks of earth – not heaven.

Why will we need protection? Because it will be the worst of times this earth has ever seen.

Coming....the WORST OF TIMES

Daniel 12:1

At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; **and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.**

***And at that time your people shall be delivered,
Everyone who is found written in the book.***

Mark 13:18-20

18 And pray that *your flight* may not be in winter.

19 *For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be.*

20 And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

Forget the Spanish Inquisition and the many cruel prolonged tortures done in the name of God and religion. Forget the painful atrocities done by King Henry VIII's men – many burned at the stake after cruel “examinations” and tortures. Forget the Huns, forget the Nazi pogroms, forget the horrors perpetrated scores of millions in Russia and China under Stalin and Mao. It's going to be much, much worse.

Frankly, I almost envy those folks who die in the Messiah, in the faith, now – in peace, without having to go through all this. In a way, they are in their place of safety already.

Let's start with a real quick tour of how Yahweh protected His people in the past.

PLACES OF SAFETY IN THE PAST

Father and our Savior will protect the children of Yahweh in His way and His choosing. There are numerous examples of Father providing safe places – and numerous examples where He let His children frankly be witnesses for Him even as they died cruel painful deaths. Do you know what the Greek word for “witness” is? It's *martus* or *martur* – where we get the word “martyr”. So many witnesses to the truth were martyrs – as we think of its English meaning. So we can't box Him in.

Let's review some of the places of safety in the past real quickly. Notice that Father does not use the same approach over and over. He varies how He handles this issue of protection.

- **Noah** and his 3 sons and their wives were protected by Yahweh in **a large boat, the Ark**, as their place of safety. But before they were saved from the Flood, Noah had a relationship with Yahweh. It says “Noah found grace” (Gen. 6:8) remember. You and I have a greater shot at also having divine protection if we also find grace in His sight.
- YHVH (not a “Death angel”) inspected the Hebrews' homes where Israelites had splashed the blood of their lamb above the threshold, on the door post and lintels (**Ex. 12:27**). In that case they were ***protected in their own home*** – as long as they had the blood over the threshold. I will speak on the “Threshold covenant” before long.

They were protected by the blood of the Lamb. Are you? Are you under, behind and inside the blood of the Lamb?

Psalm 91 puts it all together; showing us where our true safety and faith has to be. Let's read it carefully. Moses probably wrote Psalm 90 and perhaps also wrote Psalm 91. Perhaps he wrote it to commemorate the Passover deliverance they had during the 10th plague over Egypt. These words are timeless.

Psalm 91

1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of Yahweh, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust."

3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow (missile?) that flies by day, **6 Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.**

7 A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand but it shall not come near you.

8 Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because you have made Yahweh, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place,

10 No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.

12 In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

14 "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, **because he has known My name.**

15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; **I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.**

16 With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation (Hebrew is "Yeshua").

So these people of God in Egypt – ancient Israel – were protected in their own home, at that time, in that circumstance.

- **Israel was protected in their houses and told not to leave until morning. But Lot and his two daughters** were given protection by pulling pulled *out* of their home and Sodom and warned to flee for their lives. **In Lot's case, they were told to leave their house and not look back. (Genesis 19:17-30) or stay in their home! So sometimes Yahweh protects us where we are, and sometimes we have to get out as quickly as possible. So don't buy in to the idea that Yahweh ALWAYS will protect us just where we are. What if Lot hadn't obeyed?**

Genesis 19:12-17

12 Then the men [angels] said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city — take them out of this place! 13 For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of Yahweh, and Yahweh has sent us to destroy it."

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for Yahweh will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.

15 When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." **16 And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the**

hands of his two daughters, Yahweh being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. 17 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."

We need to be talking to our immediate family now that when the time comes to flee, if you tell them that you know it's time to flee, it is not something you will ever be joking about.

- **Elijah also had to leave -- and** was hidden beside a brook and fed by crows (1 Kings 17:2-7). He knew his Provider and his Guarantor of safety. Then after that, *his* place of safety was in Zarepath, with the widow for some time – right in the heart of Jezebel's homeland! (**1 Kings 17:8-16**). Where was Zarephath? It was where Jezebel was from, the center of Baal worship. Who would have thought that was even possible?

So if Yahweh wants to, we could be "hidden" in the midst of our enemies – if He so chooses. Another example: Moses, the promised deliverer to bring Israel out of Egypt, was hidden in plain sight right in Pharaoh's own house! But is that what Yahweh will do in the last days?

- **Elisha** and his servant were protected right where they were by an invisible army of God's angels in fiery chariots surrounding the city they were already in (story in 2 Kings 6). We also have Yahweh's angels over and around us, if we had eyes to see. In times when we have no way to escape, we do have angels around us who can protect us right where we are, if God so wills it. But remember, Yahweh many times did allow his children to be martyrs.
- The Messiah himself was protected as a toddler, by dreams to Joseph warning him to flee to Egypt (Matt. 2:13). Jesus' family fled their homes to their place of safety – which was in Egypt. So sometimes Yahweh protected his family where they were and sometimes He made them leave. Jacob and his family had a type of divine protection from the worldwide famine by moving to Egypt – to Goshen. We'll see what He says about the last days soon.
- ***Even in His own ministry, the very Son of God who could have called legions of angels any time He wished, showed us the example of not staying around in dangerous situations.*** Here are a few of the many examples: **Matthew 4:12; 12:14-15; Luke 4:29-31; John 7:1; 10:39-40; John 11:53-54.** So Messiah's own example is not to be stupid: get out of dangerous situations when you can. Don't hang around if you can get away from people who want to kill you.
- **Often, believers had to simply "get out of Dodge", time and again,** rather than just sit and be killed (see **Acts 8:1**). **Paul often had to flee.** He was let down over the city wall in a basket (Acts 9:24-25) because it was too risky to go through the gates. See also **Acts 14:6-7; 17:10**. Paul had to leave town many times, in peril of His life. Yes, we have a great Protector, but He also gave us a mind to think and legs to run with! ***My belief is that before the FINAL place of safety, end-time believers will have to flee for their lives several times before being put into the final Place of Safety 3-1/2 years before Messiah's return.***

Matthew 10:21-23

21 "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. 23 **When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.**

- The early church in Jerusalem was given notice before General Titus arrived to burn the temple. They were told to leave and go to Pella and were spared the annihilation and crucifixion of scores of thousands of Jews. Those who obeyed the voice -- were spared.

Having said that, I DO believe there is an end-time Place of Safety, but our confidence must never be in a place – but in the ONE who is our Safety, in Yeshua Himself, our Redeemer.

In the same way, we don't need to all the details of when, how, what exactly will happen, where safety is to be provided. We MOSTLY need to know with WHOM we walk and live.

Very important: Do not buy in to the teaching of those who preach we can stay wherever we are in the final 3.5 years. Believing that teaching can really cause you to delay and not flee when you should – to your peril. Be willing to run for the hills without delay when the Holy Spirit lets you know it's time to do so. Be mentally ready to immediately leave your home, your city, your country, even your loved ones – when Father makes it clear to do so. Don't forget: Jesus hid himself and fled! Paul left cities! Elijah fled. What would make anyone feel they are better than those?

If you were not in your home, and realized you had to get out of the area right now – what would you feel you had to go back to your home for? I want you to search your heart for the answer. Your cell phone? Your Ipad? Your pets? Your jacket? Your keys? Your medicines? How about your spouse, your kids, your grandkids – or do you trust Yahweh will provide for them? Honestly I think that would be such a hard thing to obey if you felt your grandkids were someplace but you were supposed to leave. Perhaps Lot's wife in turning around was intending to go back for the grandkids as she heard the fire and explosions behind her (**Genesis 19:26**). No, I do not buy into the notion that she looked back because she wanted to go back to Sodom and was already missing it. No. It was already raining down fire and brimstone, like a volcano eruption or something. You've heard of people rushing into burning buildings to save a child or even a pet. Don't be harsh to Lot's wife. We might not have done any better. Yeshua said "Remember Lot's wife" (**Luke 17:32**).

What is it that will make you disobey the command to not go back into your house? I realize that is directed at those in Judea, but I believe the principle – of trusting God and not having to go back home first—will be thrust on us over and over again.

Mark 13:14-23

14 "So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not" (let the reader understand), "then ***let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.*** [so no- the place of safety is not a future temple!]

15 Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 17 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 And pray that your flight may not be in winter [or the sabbath – Matt 24:20] 19 For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation

which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. 20 And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

21 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it. [Some will say He's in the desert – Matt 24:26]. 22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and **show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.** 23 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

I agree this far with some teachers: if we are people of faith, and close to Father, we shouldn't have to worry or be afraid, but don't be foolish either. When Father says it's time for His children to leave Sodom, then let's leave, now, without lingering, without having to be pulled out of the city as the angels did Lot and his wife and 2 single daughters (Gen. 19:16).

NOTE this: I believe that fleeing will someday be a matter of obedience, not just a matter of faith. Deciding not to flee may not be so much because you have great faith – but may simply be disobedient stupidity or even fear. Do I need to be clearer? Remember Lot's wife (Luke 17:32).go back and read the 10 verses before and after "remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:20-37). Where will we flee to? That will be revealed.

MARTYR – OR WITNESS?

Having said that, I'll repeat: Father protects His children when and how He chooses. Other times, He lets His children be a witness of their courage, their commitment, their faith in Yahweh.

I've been speaking of being a "**martyr**". Did you know that the word "martyr" did not originally mean someone willing to sacrifice His life, though it came to mean that? "**Martyr**" *originally meant "witness"*. MOST of the New Testament words translated "witness" come from the Greek word Strong's # 3144 "*martus*" or 3140, 3141 "*martureo*" or "*marturia*" -- all from which we get the word Martyr. (Rev. 1:5 for example, "I am Jesus Christ, the faithful *martus* – witness".)

But when we are willing to witness to name of Yeshua, or Jesus Christ, or Yahweh, or to the truth of God's word – in the future that witness could mean our death.

WILL ALL the zealous Children of God be spared ALL the Persecution and Trouble?

But the fact is, even before the final 3-1/2 year place of safety, I think almost all God's children will experience various levels of severe persecution and hardship as well as come close to the natural disasters – the drought, the famines, the diseases, the plagues, the tornadoes, tsunamis, earthquakes and so on that are coming! All Israel went through the first 3 plagues of Egypt, remember – before God set apart the land of Goshen. Israel also suffered the water turning to blood, the plague of frogs and then biting gnats.

It's going to be a rough, rough time in the years ahead and I don't think most of God's children have any clue about how rough.

How do we get ready? The main preparation we should be making is in tightening up our relationship with Father and our Husband. The preparation is making sure we have plenty of oil in our lamps to go the distance, to have an enduring light of God's spirit no matter how long it takes. You'll recognize I'm speaking of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25. We "watch and pray therefore" that we be counted worthy to escape these things (Luke 21:36) – and the watching has to

do with watching our relationship with our Husband Yeshua and with our brothers and sisters. It isn't about watching world news as much as it is watching our Father and our Savior. We'll be talking more about that in a few minutes.

*Now I want to make the point that many, many of God's children will be persecuted, attacked, betrayed, tortured and killed for His name's sake – and some of that will go on before the final 3-1/2 years of safety. **I advise you not to buy in to the teaching that only the lukewarm Laodiceans will be the ones having a hard time of it.** That's probably largely the case for the final 3-1/2 years, but I'm convinced that before the final 3-1/2 years, we *all* will be tried and tested and have to endure a lot of what the world goes through as well – just as Israel did.*

Look at it this way: *when there were famines in the land, Jacob and his family had to deal with it too.* When there are earthquakes, hail, floods, tsunamis, hurricanes and tornadoes – we pray for protection but we will be part of some of that too. But I also feel this will toughen us up, refine us and make us better children of God if we go through all this in faith. Now add some element of persecution on top of that and you get the beginning of the picture.

Mark 13 is the equivalent to Matthew 24. In this passage Yeshua is describing the conditions prior to His coming (Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:3).

Mark 13:8-13

8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. *These are the beginnings of sorrows.*

9 ***"But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.*** 10 And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. 11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12 ***Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.*** 13 ***And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.***

Luke 21 reminds us it will be like in the day of Lot – when everything seemed normal, then BAM! And we won't have time to dither. And those who do – could be disobeying, as Lot's wife.

Anyway, I'm personally convinced that *all* of us will go through *some* level of severe persecution ***before*** the final 3-1/2 years. Be ready mentally for it! **Notice Daniel 7:24-25.** Especially verse 25 seems to say that *before* the final 3-1/2 years, there will be serious persecution on ALL the children of God.

Daniel 7:24-25 NKJV

24 The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones,
And shall subdue three kings.

25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
Shall persecute (KJV: wear out; ASB – "oppress") the saints of the Most High and shall intend to change times (the holydays?) and law. ***Then*** the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. [But he's wearing out the saints even before that]

BANNING Yahweh's name?

It's going to become dangerous to be true believer. ***It's going to be life-threatening to mention, preach, identify with or witness to names like Yahweh, Yeshua, Jesus or Christ.*** Why else are we told we suffer ***for His name's sake?*** Read Psalm 9:10; Psalm 91:14; John 17:3; Isa. 52:6; and so many which state those who know His name have a special place in His heart.

Be sure to hear my sermons about the Creator's name. He has a name. It's a sacred, holy name. Those who know the name of the Creator, use it and who know Him will have a special place.

Psalms 91:14-16 Yahweh speaking:

4 "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;

I will set him on high, because he has known My name.

15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble;

I will deliver him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him, And show him My salvation (Hebrew: Yeshua)."

One thing I know for sure about this topic: Those who are in this just to save their own skin – their own lives – shall lose their lives (Luke 17:33). *The Place of Safety is not our goal.* The place of safety is *not* where our eyes are to be looking.

Do you want to be in the Place of Safety in the final three and a half years? Then you and I need to know Him now. We need to be in frequent contact with Abba. He likes that. He loves hearing from His children. "Call up" your Abba more often. Be building that relationship. *If you know Him, He will know you and hide you in the day of trouble.* So we first have to display absolute love, trust, obedience and affection for our Abba before we can have any confidence we're going to any Place of Safety in the future.

Malachi 3:16-18

Then those who feared Yahweh spoke to one another, and Yahweh listened and heard them; So a *book of remembrance* was written before Him for those who fear Yahweh

And who meditate on His name.

17 "They shall be Mine," says Yahweh of hosts,

"On the day that I make them My jewels.

And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."

18 Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked,

Between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

We first look to Yahweh as our Hiding Place and He takes it from there.

I don't need to know *what* the Place of Safety is, I don't even need to know *where* it is. I don't need to know *when* it will be, or how I'll get there. I don't even need to understand the why behind having a place of safety.

But there is something I must absolutely know: I have to know who is my place of safety! Once I know WHO ---- the what, where when, why and how will fall into place.

As we read the verses shortly, note 2 things:

- Those in a close, "knowing" relationship with Him – that's the first thing – are the ones most likely to be protected

- Notice the times that the protection seems **coupled with knowing His name**. (See my previous sermons on “What is God’s Name?”. Very important 2 part series.) Whatever that means, we can’t ignore the scriptures say those most pleasing to Father know His name and honor it.

Even with an actual Place of Safety, all safety ultimately is in Yahweh

As I’ve been saying, it’s about knowing Who – not where. It’s WHO we’re with – not how we get to a place. The Creator will save us easily enough in HIS time and HIS way.

YAHWEH is our hiding place – and if He decides to put me and you into a specific place in the wilderness like Rev. 12 states, then I don’t need to worry about the how and when or even where. HE will take care of that. So quit being overly enthralled with when, how or where.

Our confidence must be in HIM, not in a place, even if there is an actual place where His children will be assembled together. If we are to be safe anywhere on earth, it will be because of Him and His divine protection from any harm—not because we found a safe place. There is no such safe place on earth anymore without Divine protection.

I will just add this too: the notion that only one corporate group would be there is preposterous in my view. The true “children of God” are those led by His spirit and evidencing a life of love for one another and even our enemies. It’s best we start coming together. Listen to my sermon series in 2009 on “One Body”, about Yahweh’s children coming together and not splitting into ever more and more divided groups!

So let’s look at a few scriptures on knowing WHO we are to look to for protection:

Psalms 32:6-7

*6 For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You
In a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters
They shall not come near him.*

7 YOU are my hiding place; YOU shall preserve me from trouble;
You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.

Remember the wording in Ps. 32:6-7 that when the flood of great waters come, they shall not come near him. We’ll read shortly in Revelation 12 how Satan sends “a flood” against God’s children. Is it a literal flood, or an army, or something else?

But the main point being made in all of these is that we first have to have relationship *with Him* before the safety comes.

Psalms 31:3 says “for YOU are my Rock (my Sela, my Petra) and my fortress...”

Psalms 57:1

*Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You;
And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,
Until these calamities have passed by.*

Psalms 62:5-8

5 My soul, wait silently *for God alone, For my expectation is from Him.*

6 He *only* is my rock and my salvation; HE is my defense; I shall not be moved.

7 In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength,

And my refuge is in God.

8 *Trust in HIM at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him;*

God is a refuge for us.

Psalm 32:7 – *“YOU are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble...”*

Psalm 27:5, 10

5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion;

In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me;

He shall set me high upon a rock. (Now v. 10)

10 When my father and my mother forsake me,

Then Yahweh will take care of me.

There are many, many more psalms and scriptures which continue the theme --- Elohim is our refuge and hiding place. Focus on who – and the where and when will be taken care of.

I don't feel that means we just forget about the concept of the place of safety – but that we realize the One we will marry will provide for His fiancée though He will allow us to go through some of the hard stuff to refine and purify us.

THE MAIN SCRIPTURES USED TO SHOW THE PLACE OF SAFETY

Some of these verses are dual for the holy nation of God – His believing children – and in some cases to the physical nation of Israel as well.

Zephaniah means “Yahweh conceals” or some say “Yahweh treasures”. Zephaniah tells us to gather together as we are hidden. In Zephaniah 2 we will ready of Yahweh's anger in the last days.

Zephaniah 2:1-4

Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together, O undesirable nation,

2 Before the decree is issued, or the day passes like chaff,

Before Yahweh's fierce anger comes upon you,

Before the day of Yahweh's anger comes upon you!

[now notice who might be spared... notice their qualities]

3 Seek Yahweh, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice.

Seek righteousness, seek humility.

It may be that you will be hidden in the day of Yahweh's anger.

Did you catch that? Verse 3—those who will be hidden are the meek, the just, those seeking righteousness and humility.

Luke 21:36

Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Rev. 12 is the single “clearest” passage about there being a specific Place of Safety, although the words – “Place of safety”-- are nowhere in scripture. But again, I personally put the caveat that our REAL place of safety is in trusting Father, knowing Him, being close to Him and loving Him – and then letting Him do what pleases Him and what He needs and wants to do.

Revelation 12:7-17

7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 **So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

11 ***And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. [This is put in the context of it being an honor to die for our Master. It is not here put in context of punishment at all.]***

12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.

14 ***But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to HER PLACE, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [3-1/2 YEARS] from the presence of the serpent.***

15 So the serpent *spewed water out of his mouth like a flood* after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.

16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, ***and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

In verse 14:

- **2 wings of great eagle** – that can include walking, or any supernatural open doors of deliverance. Yahweh says even of Israel, “I bore you out of Egypt on eagles’ wings” –Ex. 19:4 --and yet they walked out. But then it does say here in v 14 “that she might FLY to her place...” so perhaps there will be a very supernatural aspect to this. Perhaps there’s also an illusion to Isa. 40:31.
- **“To the WILDERNESS”**. The Greek is *eremos* – which means a lonesome, desolate place. This surely can’t be heaven. Heaven is not a wilderness. Rev. 12:14 calls it “the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God.” Yeshua will not leave his fiancée without provisions and protection.

- **“to HER place”** -- Perhaps a place the people of God have gone before? Ancient Mt Sinai/Horeb? This is also where the notion of Petra came in, as some taught that Israel under Moses spent considerable time there, but I don’t know if that can be proved. Many of the scriptures that refer to the Rock, use the Hebrew form *Sela*, which was also the Hebrew name for Petra. Bedouin tradition does say Paul spent some time there, as well as in Mt. Sinai. See also **Gal. 1:17** where Paul says he spent time in Arabia. Father will show us where it will be and He will get us there somehow, His way. The how and when and where I don’t worry about. I do concern myself with WHO I need to know.
- She is supernaturally sustained for 3-1/2 years. It says “*where she is nourished for a time, times and half a time*”. Nourished. Supernaturally provided bread or even manna? Water from the Split rock again? Perhaps. Although Yahweh likes to show He’s not bound to do things the same way each time.

Isaiah 33:14-16

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;

Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites:

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?

Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly,

He who despises the gain of oppressions,

Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes,

Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed,

And shuts his eyes from seeing evil:

16 **He will dwell on high; His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks;**

Bread will be given him, His water will be sure.

Rev. 12:15 – the FLOOD that comes after the Woman:

I believe so many scriptures refer to mighty attacking armies as a “flood” or as “water”, that this could very well be people, armies or attacking forces. **See Isa. 8:7; Isa. 59:19; Rev. 17:5; Jer. 46:8; 47:2-3; Daniel 9:26.** You can look all those verses up yourself.

But my point is this: we don’t need to know *what* “the flood” is. ***We just need to know Who*** our Protector is: It’s our Husband the Son of God. He says in His Word that somehow He takes care of this “flood” and the earth opens up and swallows up the flood. That’s all we need to know.

We’re still in Rev. 12:17 now. In verse 17, the Dragon is Satan – Rev. 12:9.

- The woman = the true church of God.
- Went to make war against *the rest of* the offspring, the other believers who will NOT be in the place of safety.
- ***“Who keep the commandments and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”.***

What is “the testimony of Jesus Christ”? It is THOSE people Satan goes after, as well as commandment keepers.

- **Rev. 19:10** says “the testimony of Jesus Christ *is the spirit of prophecy.*” But which prophecies? Is it speaking of someone who loves to delve into prophetic things? *The ‘spirit*

of prophecy' is showing that all prophecy points to the Master Yeshua. If you wish, study these: (Luke 24:25-27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 10:43; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2 Pet 1:19-21).

- **1 John 5:10-11** – says “*testimony*” is to *believe in the Son of God* and that we have eternal life in Him. Obviously being willing to speak of our Messiah as the blind man in John 9 did. “All I know is, I was blind – but now I see” (v.25). Though his parents were afraid to testify of the great miracle Jesus did for their son, the son willingly witnessed of his healer. So they threw him out of the synagogue, the man’s church abandoned him, but Yeshua heard about it and brought him into HIS fold. Then we read of John 10, the good shepherd.
- **Rev. 20:4** – implies it has to do with a willingness to voice your oneness with the Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah.

One important point: apparently keeping the commandments and holding to the testimony of Jesus Christ wasn’t enough to protect those “remnant” offspring of the woman! Perhaps they weren’t zealous enough? Could this be where Revelation 3 comes in?

To the church of Philadelphia in Revelation 3:10-12:

Revelation 3:10-12

10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, [first the obedient relationship] ***I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world***, to test those who dwell on the earth. [NEXT He gives the time frame: just before His return.]

11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

Laodiceans

On the other hand, many have contrasted the Philadelphian attitude to those of the lukewarm and sassy Laodiceans, and have taken what was said to them to be indicative that those who do go through severe trial and even beheading, are the Laodiceans. I personally believe many of those being killed for the name of Messiah will be Laodiceans, but not all. I’ll leave that to Yahweh to figure out what He wants to do. Please also note that *repentant* Laodiceans have a high reward, sitting on the King’s throne with Him.

Laodicea means “the people decide” or “the people judge”. This is a group that likes to have a say in everything. Notice even Yeshua says to them, “but YOU say...”. This group is not humble, but mouthy. They even mouth off to the King of Kings. They certainly mouth off to ministers and other brethren. Yes, I’ve done that too, and repent of it. I hope you will too.

Revelation 3:14-21

These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, **I will vomit you out of My mouth.** 17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

18 **I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire**, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. **Therefore be zealous and repent.**

20 Behold, **I stand at the door and knock.** If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

All I know is this: I think we should all hope and pray that we are *not* like those mouthy Laodiceans. Pray we not be sassy, lukewarm, asleep, spiritually naked. And if we are proven to be Laodiceans, then we must go the distance this time, and repent and give up our lives for our Master if need be. *I do NOT subscribe to the idea circulating out there that it's fine to be a "happy Laodicean".*

Note verse 18. These Laodiceans need to be refined in the fire. Connect that wording with what is said in Daniel 11:35 and Dan. 12:9-10. We're all purified by fire of God's tests and trials and his word, so hopefully He is coming to know us well now so we won't have to go thru the time of worst trouble ever. We will be called to step out in faith – time and again – and we should learn all that now.

Daniel 11:35

35 And some of those of understanding shall fall, **to refine them**, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

Daniel 12:9-10

9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 **Many** shall **be purified, made white, and refined**, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

The coming Beast Power/Anti-Christ: Making war against the saints:

Revelation 13:4-8

4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? **Who is able to make war with him?**"

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months (3.5 yrs). 6 *Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His **tabernacle**, and those who dwell in heaven.* 7 **It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.** And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

It is the coming military-religious union called the beast, ridden by a fallen church depicted as a harlot—who will be the ones fighting the saints. By the way, is it possible instead of an end-time temple, there will first be a tabernacle, as the word in Rev. 13:6 hints at? But he goes after the saints. We've presumed these are the "offspring of the woman, who keep the commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus Christ". But is it only them? Is that fair to conclude that?

I'm still left with the question: what makes us end time folks -- who frankly have had it incredibly easy so far -- think we get to be spared any suffering and trials for His name's sake while our spiritual forefathers went through hell and back to prove their devotion?

Revelation 17:4-6

4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name was written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 I saw the *woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs (witnesses) of Jesus*. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

There's going to be a lot of saints' blood spilled. I don't see a lot of hints that those saints are the slackers among God's people – not by that time at least. If you are counted worthy to be beaten and suffer shame for his name's sake, I hope you will take that task and calling with great honor.

The early apostles felt it an honor to be beaten and persecuted for Yeshua's name (Acts 5:41). Yeshua Himself teaches us to rejoice when we suffer for His name's sake (Matthew 5:10-12). In the Sermon on the Mount He teaches us we "are blessed when reviled falsely, for so they persecuted the prophets".

This will test what is really important to us. Now I know, in context, sometimes the scripture is referring to the actual day when every eye sees the King Yeshua. Other scriptures speak of fleeing when we see armies surrounding Jerusalem – or when we ourselves are in a dangerous setting or situation. Others still speak of intermediate flights due to persecution. I get all that. I'm trying to *convey a principle here: when we have to go, we have to move quickly, without a minute delay.*

Are we going to run back into the house for our laptop, or our cell phone? If we do, that could be our death sentence. *The enemy can track us more easily when we have a cell phone on us.* Or maybe, like **Lot's wife** – will we turn around, perhaps to go get our kids and grandkids who are in the conflagration?

We are warned by our King to remember Lot's wife. Yeshua says, "Don't worry about food and clothing. Life is more than that" (Matt 6:25). When it comes time to flee, *we go* – without hesitation. Just GO! The fleeing could be because of a dirty bomb, a volcano erupting, God's Spirit telling us of a looming earthquake – who knows what reason it will be – but MOVE!

Luke 17:28-36

8 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

31 *"In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."*

Read Luke 21:12 again – *Before* the great signs in heaven we will be persecuted and thrown into prisons. That means there will be official statements made about your guilt and need to be imprisoned. You will be lied about. We better be ready in our minds for this. It's coming. It *will* happen. You and I could be jailed for our beliefs – and for His name's sake. Be prepared for that. Then perhaps some will be spared the worst of the worst persecution and tribulation that is coming.

Be watching for more and more suspicious “natural deaths” of people who are not cooperating with the powers that be. Experts can make murder look like death from natural causes. I believe we'll start to see more and more of these suspicious deaths. I could list many names. Just be watching. Also be watching for more and more assassinations or “accidents” of those who don't cooperate.

But let's keep reading.

Isa. 65:12-14 Here Yahweh contrasts the vast differences between those He is protecting and blessing – vs. those who are being punished.

Psalm 121:1-5

- 1 I will lift up my eyes to the hills — from whence comes my help?
- 2 **My help comes from Yahweh**, Who made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 **Yahweh is your keeper (protector); Yahweh is your shade at your right hand.**

Isaiah 65:12-14

Therefore I will number you for the sword, and you shall all bow down to the slaughter;
Because, when I called, you did not answer;
When I spoke, you did not hear, but did evil before My eyes,
And chose that in which I do not delight."
13 Therefore thus says Adonai Yehowih,
"Behold, My servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry;
Behold, My servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty;
Behold, My servants shall rejoice, but you shall be ashamed;
14 **Behold, My servants shall sing for joy** of heart
But you shall cry for sorrow of heart and wail for grief of spirit.

Proverbs 29:25

The fear of man brings a snare, **But whoever trusts in Yahweh shall be safe.**

Matthew 25 – fill up the oil in your lamps and take some extra oil too. It's about your relationship with Yahweh. Only He can provide you with the Holy Spirit. Go to Him and be asking for more. Your close relationship is your strongest chance of being protected from the time of trouble.

It's all about relationship. Spend the rest of your life in more prayer, more study, more service, more love for all people. Come together with all the children of God – be one body in your own practice. And pray that you be counted worthy to escape all these things coming upon the whole world. *May Yahweh bless you and keep you and cause His face to shine upon you.*

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