

THE ARMOR OF GOD

A STUDY
IN EPHESIANS
6:10-20

BIBLICAL GUIDANCE
FOR THE BATTLES OF LIFE

“THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE
ARE NOT CARNAL,
BUT MIGHTY THROUGH GOD
TO THE PULLING DOWN OF STRONG HOLDS.
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.”
2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-5



CHAPLAIN SERVICES

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is the greatest book ever written to enable a successful battle with the stresses, anxieties and darkness of this world. Its counsels and history are especially adapted for a world in which fear and trouble runs rampant. God wants us to be at peace—first of all with Him and then, as much as is possible, with those around us.

This set of lessons is designed to acquaint you with one of the great passages of the New Testament concerning Christian warfare, Ephesians 6:10-20. As you will notice there are three things which the passage brings to light that we should *know*. And there are seven things which we are to *do*.

And if there is one thing that is emphatic about this passage it is that the armor of God is a kit or set of implements—it must be used in its entirety. *All of it* must be used together.

This brief set of studies is an introduction to the necessary 'tools' or 'weapons' that enable us—through Christ—to be "more than conquerors" in the battles of life.

May God bless you as you "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:12) by putting into practice the counsels of His Word.

CHAPLAIN SERVICES





THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON ONE:
BE STRONG IN THE LORD

"Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Ephesians 6:10).

One of the main features of the gospel that Paul preached is called "in Christ". To note just the verses in Ephesians he says that we are "blessed" in Christ (1:3); we were "chosen" in Christ (1:4); we are "accepted" in the Beloved (1:6), another name expression describing Jesus Christ; we are to be "gathered together" in Christ (1:10); even now we "sit together" in heavenly places in Christ (2:6); we are "created" in Christ unto good works (2:10); we are "made nigh" or brought into the family of God in Christ (2:13).

There are many more verses like this where great emphasis is placed upon our standing being directly related to our relationship to Jesus. To put it simply—in the words of Jesus—"without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Notice that in the text (Eph 6:10) strength is connected with being "in the Lord and in the power of His might".

We need to ask ourselves about almost everything: "Is this thought...? Is this music...? Is this entertainment...? Is this purchase...? Is this food...? leading me toward a closer relationship with Christ or is it taking me away from Him? The Bible says: "whatsoever ye do" do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31) and "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col 3:17) and do it "heartily as to the Lord" (Col 3:23).

Scripture makes clear that our strength is nothing without God. We need to rely upon Him. This is done by believing His promises and by carrying out their counsels.

Exodus 15:2

The LORD is **my strength** and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.

2 Samuel 22:33

God is **my strength** and power: and he maketh my way perfect.

Psalms 18:2

The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, **my strength**, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

Psalms 19:14

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Psalm 22:19

But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

Psalm 28:7

The LORD is **my strength** and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Psalm 31:4

Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily [secretly] for me:
for thou art **my strength**.

Psalm 62:7

In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of **my strength**, and my refuge, is in God.

Isaiah 12:2

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is **my strength** and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Isaiah 27:5

Or let him take hold of **my strength**, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.

2 Corinthians 12:9

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for **my strength** is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

*Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the Gospel armor,
each piece put on with prayer,
Where duty calls or danger,
be never wanting there.*

--George Duffield, Jr.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON TWO:
PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

Put On...

Put on means to *decide*. Successfully fighting in this battle means to choose. Joshua said: “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve;...but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

Choice is all through Ephesians 6:10-20. Jesus said, “Without me, ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). He wasn’t trying to discourage action. Just the opposite. Paul had it right when he said: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil 4:13). All through scripture our choice is protected. It is sacred.

Our passage says: Be strong in the Lord...Put on...stand...we wrestle not against flesh and blood (this is simply saying we do wrestle against the forces of darkness... Wherefore, he reasons, take unto you the whole armor of God...that ye may be able to withstand...and having done all, to stand. All of these words piled up are action words. They are decision words. And without a firm decision—and in fact, many decisions—we will not be putting on the armor of God.

The armor may all be at hand. There may be abundant resources available and at our fingertips. But, and this is the point—those resources must be used.

The Whole Armor of God

There is also an emphasis on the *whole* armor of God. That is all of the armor. It is a kit and must be embraced in totality to be effective as we fight our spiritual battles. It is mentioned two times (6:11, 6:13) and in both instances we are commanded to put on all of the armor. One missing piece might mean disaster. It is similar to Jesus’ quotation in the wilderness of temptation: “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4).

Stand

The opposite of “stand” is “fall.” And this, God would keep us from doing. To stand is to have victory. To stand is to hold your ground and not turn back. There’s an old song that goes like this:

*O Christian, awake! 'tis the Master's command;
With helmet and shield, and a sword in thy hand,
To meet the bold tempter, go, fearlessly go,
Then stand like the brave, with thy face to the foe.*

---Fanny J. Crosby

Exodus 14:13

And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

Proverbs 19:21

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Isaiah 32:8

But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

1 Thessalonians 3:8

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

Colossians 4:12

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Corinthians 1:24

Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

1 Corinthians 2:5

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.



THE ARMOR OF GOD LESSON THREE: *THE ENEMY*

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

Know Your Foe

He is the enemy of God and man who prowls the world “seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Jesus described him as a “murderer from the beginning, [who] abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44). He is a deadly thief, Jesus said, that comes “to steal, and to kill, and to destroy” (John 10:10).

The devil is a fallen angel whose name used to be Lucifer—light bearer—but who is now known as Satan or the devil, the adversary. Isaiah 14:12-14 says: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! . . . For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . I will be like the most High.”

He is described as one who “sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty”. He was “the anointed cherub that covereth”. He was the highest of the angel hosts in heaven. He was perfect in his ways since his creation “till iniquity was found” in him. His “heart was lifted up because of [his] beauty...” He “corrupted [his] wisdom by reason of [his] brightness. . . thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more” (Ezekiel 28:12-19). Here is the origin of terrorism and its ultimate end.

The Bible declares that “There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev 12:7-9). These are the hosts of wickedness arrayed in battle against which the inhabitants of earth. This is the Enemy and his angels.

The Wiles of the Devil

These wiles are the enemy’s tricks and traps. They are the circumstances that are set up to trip up God’s people. But God “disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise” (Job 5:12). And again in Ps 37:7 we are encouraged to “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.” Through the protection of the armor of God—we can experience this: “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor 2:11).

We Wrestle...Against Principalities

Note the words: “principalities and powers”—these were terms used in ancient times for the leader of a territory—like a governor; “rulers”—literally ‘world ruler’; these terms combined with the final expression “spiritual wickedness in high places” indicates that a conspiracy of darkness arrayed against the children of God. The “spiritual wickedness” involves the hosts of evil angels united with Satan to resist any advance move of God’s kingdom. The evil one roams “to and fro in the earth” (Job 1:7). With the armor of God we are prepared to discern his traps and resist them when we are confronted with his temptations.

Finally this text makes clear that people are not our enemy. While they may be the tools of the Devil we must ever keep in mind that God is seeking to win even bad people that seem to be so much against us. This is why we are told by Jesus to “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matt 5:44). God can change enemies into friends.

The Evil Day

While the exact expression is used only here and in Amos 6:3, the idea of times of stress is common in the pages of Scripture. Usually it involves heartbreak and grief such as the time of Job’s trials. It can also involve persecution and calamity inflicted by God’s enemies (Ps 69). Scripture makes clear that before the return of Jesus at the close of history there will be a “time of trouble” unprecedented in human history (Dan 12:1 cf Matt 24:21). The times of trial and temptation that we experience day to day are to prepare us for the great test ahead.

Zechariah 3:1-2

And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

Psalms 94:16-17; 22

Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. . . But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

Acts 10:38

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Ephesians 4:26-27

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 John 3:10

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON FOUR:
GIRD YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH

“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.” Ephesians 6:14a

On the literal battlefield the belt provides freedom of movement and thus increased mobility. Regarding the spiritual belt Peter says “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [lifestyle]; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Peter 1:13-16).

The new life that is to be girded with truth is in contrast with the “loose” life of the past. It is to be marked with sobriety, alertness and readiness for whatever circumstances may arise. This is the spirit that Jesus taught with regard to His followers living in the last days: “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning” (Luke 12:35).

These girded loins direct us to the intensity of life’s battles and the concentration needed to be victorious. Often the attacks come at unguarded moments. Examples of the danger of attempting to fight in the battles of life without the belt of truth are many.

King David—the victor in many a battle—was sadly defeated in regard to immorality’s attack. His affair with Bathsheba is left on record as a warning to all of the tragedies that await unguarded moments (see 2 Samuel 11 and onward).

On the other hand we have the example of Joseph who met the enemy’s attack in the arena of moral purity with courage and fidelity: “There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:9).

In this age, many are the ways that the enemy attempts to attack us. Especially must our focus be guarded lest we become diverted by inappropriate themes on the internet, TV, radio or books. We are to be girded up for this battle with the belt of truth and thus prepared to meet the foe.

Thank God, if we have made mistakes in the past, through the gospel forgiveness is offered! “For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee” (Psalm 86:5). “ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

Jesus came, not to condemn, but to save (see John 3:17; also Matthew 1:21 and Luke 19:10). He said to the woman guilty of committing adultery: “Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more” (John 8:11). Christ, the divine Lawgiver, did not minimize the commandments of God but extended a hand of mercy and grace.

We should not despair about our past mistakes but rather learn from them that we need to take the buckler of truth. And the Lord Jesus makes clear that *He* is the truth. This piece of armor that surrounds us, like all of the others, is found in a loving relationship with our Savior. “He is a buckler to all those that trust in him” (Ps 18:30).

Psalm 40:11

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

Psalm 101:3

I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

Psalm 119:37

Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

Proverbs 4:23-27

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. . . Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.”

Isaiah 11:2-5

And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. . . And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

1 John 2:21

I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON FIVE:
THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

“Having on the breastplate of righteousness.” Ephesians 6:14b

Righteousness is God’s goodness put to the account of those who trust in the promise of the gospel. “This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD” (Isaiah 54:17b). Christ is our righteousness (1 Cor 1:30).

This has always been true throughout salvation history. “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jer 23:6). Notice that there is salvation and safety in the Lord our righteousness.

And yet righteousness is not simply a passive matter. “All thy commandments are righteousness” (Ps 119:172). Righteousness is right-doing. It is love and love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom 13:10). “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev 22:14).

Without a doubt this armor is spiritual but the link between the spiritual and the physical is very close. We must have this piece of armor—righteousness—right-doing through the presence and power of Christ—literally covering our vital organs. There are many diseases today, such as heart disease, lung cancer, emphysema, diabetes, and others which need right-doing. Let’s be forthright here—wrong-doing—the opposite to righteousness, is doing horrific damage to the human body. The enemy is aiming at our heart. He’s aiming at our lungs. He’s aiming at our kidneys and blood vessels. He’s aiming at our pancreas. He’s aiming at our stomachs and intestines. Literally! We need the blessings of right-doing! Right now!

This thought is also presented by the apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:8: “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” All of these elements, faith, love and righteousness form the breastplate. (We’ll also see faith emphasized farther on in this series.)

The breastplate protects the heart—the whole person—inside as well as outside; literally as well as spiritually.

Proverbs 4:23

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Deuteronomy 5:29

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

Psalm 4:7-8

Thou hast put gladness in my heart. . . I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

Psalm 19:8

The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart.

Psalm 28:7

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Psalm 31:23-24

O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful. . .
Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

Psalm 34:18

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Psalm 37:31

The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

Psalm 66:18-20

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Psalm 119:2

Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

Psalm 119:11

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Psalm 139:23-24

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON SIX:
THE SHOES OF THE PREPARATION

“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”
Ephesians 6:15

The feet must be clothed with shoes adequate for battle. Like much of the body without the right kind of clothing the feet are in danger of being unable to function. Can you imagine a soldier in Afghanistan or Iraq, suited up for battle and trying to go out without his or her boots on? Of course not! The soldier’s boots are almost a part of him. (When a soldier has fallen in battle, you will see his boots, helmet and weapon displayed as a way of showing respect for the dead.)

The soldier of the cross must have his/her boots on! This is essential protection for the battlefield.

The expression is intriguing: our feet are to have the protection of **“the preparation of the gospel of peace”** (Eph 6:15). Here the feet are linked to the gospel of peace. And there is an element of preparation involved in these boots. In Romans 10:15 we read: “And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” Notice the first part of the verse—‘how shall they preach, except they be sent?’

This sense of being sent, I believe is the effective preparation that we must put on our “feet” each day. We have the privilege of being “sent” each day on a mission for Jesus. To continue the military metaphor—we are going out on a patrol—looking, not for the enemy, but for the lost.

We carry the glad tidings of the gospel of peace. We are peacemakers in the highest sense of the word, children of God by the new birth (Matthew 5:9). We have been called to a life of peace (1 Cor. 7:15). We are to be spiritually minded which is “life and peace” (Rom 8:6). This life we are to share with others—going out of our way to give the message of the gospel of peace.

These shoes of the gospel are part of the armor of God. They are part of our armor that is used in active warfare for Jesus Christ. Shoes are for walking and their function is an essential part of our protection. Working for Jesus is part of our protection.

Reaching out to supply the needs of others is part of God’s healing ministry to each one of us!

Psalm 126:1-6

When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them. The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. **He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.**

Please notice the connection between light and health breaking forth helping some needy person—

Isaiah 58:6-11

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? **Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily:** and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. . . And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; **then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:** And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Romans 12:18-21

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, **live peaceably** with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. **Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.**

1 Corinthians 7:15

. . .God hath called us to peace.

Colossians 3:15

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Romans 15:33

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON SEVEN:
THE SHIELD OF FAITH

“Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

Ephesians 6:16

Above all. Here is a piece of armor that is of supreme importance. “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Heb. 11:6

The shield of faith. This piece of protective “equipment” has the power to put out—quench—fiery darts. These are those things, often they take the form of words, sometimes they come in the shape of circumstances. At times they come out of nowhere. This verse lets us know that they come from the wicked. That is the devil and his agents is behind these attempts to annoy and terrify us and destroy our peace.

God consistently tells us to fear not. From Genesis 15:1 to Revelation 1:17 that is God’s message to the faithful—“Fear not”. The shield of faith is to believe in the Word of God and rest in Him (Ps 37:7).

Faith is so important in the experience of a Christian. This is how we lay hold upon the great salvation made available for each one of us—“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is everywhere in scripture. Faith is what was lost in the Garden of Eden when our first parents doubted God and believed a lie. This is the legacy of the Fall of mankind. We naturally tend to doubt. But God implants a new principle of faith in our hearts. Faith, as the verse just said, is a gift of God too!

By faith we see the goodness of God that leads us to repentance (Rom 2:4). By faith we receive the gift of repentance that causes us to turn away from our sins to receive the gift of forgiveness (Act 5:31). And as we open our hearts to the Lord our faith will grow. “We walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). And as we continue to choose to believe—we will see the reward of the faithful! “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor 13:12).

As with so many of these pieces of armor this one also is found IN JESUS. In fact it is “the faith of Jesus” that we are to keep (Rev 14:12). What Paul says applies to each born again believer: “the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20).

2 Samuel 22:2-3

The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

Psalm 3:2-3

Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. **[Note: Here is a fiery dart!]** Selah. But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

Psalm 28:7

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Psalm 33:18-20

Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death. . . Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.

Psalm 115:9-11

O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.
O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.
Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

Philippians 3:7-8

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON EIGHT:
THE HELMET OF SALVATION

“And take the helmet of salvation.”
Ephesians 6:17a

The helmet of salvation. Just as the helmet protects the head of a person in battle, so the salvation of Christ is a protection to the Christian from the assaults of the evil one. This helmet is the sense of God’s saving work for this lost world and in a personal sense for what God has done for us individually. We are not saved in groups but one by one.

The redeemed and all the inhabitants of heaven and the universe declare:
“Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb (Rev 7:9-10).

When the aged prophet held up the baby Jesus he said: “mine eyes have seen thy salvation” (Lk 2:30). When the adult Jesus came to Jericho and told Zacchaeus that He would come home to dinner with him, He said: “This day is salvation come to this house” (Lk 19:9). Salvation is in a person. When we put on the helmet of salvation we are expressing the closeness of our Savior to us in our heart and mind. We are heart to heart with Him.

There was a time in the Lord’s experience on earth when many of His disciples ceased to follow Him. He asked the twelve if they too were going to leave Him. “Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

God would have us experience the assurance of salvation. “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:13). This is Bible assurance.

God’s ability to save is never to be in doubt. If we have on the helmet of salvation we shall be protected from any extremes about our salvation. Our assurance will be strong and balanced because it is based on Christ and His power to save, guide, and keep us to the very end.

Hebrews 7:25

He is **able also to save** them **to the uttermost** that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Titus 3:5

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy **he saved us.**

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 10:6-9

But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, **thou shalt be saved.**

Romans 10:10

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

*“When the mind dwells upon self, it is turned away from Christ, the source of strength and life. Hence it is Satan's constant effort to keep the attention diverted from the Saviour and thus prevent the union and communion of the soul with Christ. The pleasures of the world, life's cares and perplexities and sorrows, the faults of others, or your own faults and imperfections--to any or all of these he will seek to divert the mind. Do not be misled by his devices. Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, he too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. **We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved.** All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. **Talk and think of Jesus.** Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears.”* Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, 71-72.

*“Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. **Talk and act as if your faith was invincible.** The Lord is rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency.”* Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 146



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON NINE:
THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

“And [take] the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.”

Ephesians 6:17b

The sword of the spirit. This is the Word of God. It is called the sword of the Spirit for at least two reasons. The Word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit. It “came not by the will of man but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21). The scriptures come from heaven through godly men that were inspired by the Spirit with what to write and how to write it. The Bible is truly a supernatural book.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim 3:16-17).

It is also the sword because it cuts. “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). On the day of Pentecost when Peter preached the Word to great crowds of people, the Book of Acts recounts: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37).

This is the sword that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (Rev 1:16; 2:16; 19:15, 21).

This is the same sword that Jesus used in His battles with temptation. In the wilderness when faced with spiritual decisions, He said: “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4); “It is written **again**, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matt 4:7); “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt 4:10). Three times when confronted face to face with the adversary Jesus held up the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God.

This Word Jesus has committed to His followers: “I have given them thy word” (John 17:14).

This piece of the armor of God is given us for taking offensive action against evil. It is not a literal sword of steel. It is the sword of truth for fighting the battles of faith.

How are we to take the sword? We must read the word: “Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read. . .” (Isa 34:16). We are to memorize the word: “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Ps 119:11). Like food, we are to take the Word into our heart and mind (see John 6:53, 63). We are to personalize or internalize the word of God and make it a part of our life experience: “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts” (Jer 15:16).

Psalm 12:6

The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Psalm 17:4

Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.

Psalm 33:6, 9

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

Psalm 119:103

How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Psalm 119:130

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.



THE ARMOR OF GOD
LESSON TEN:
PRAYING ALWAYS

**“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,
and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication
for all saints; and for me
that utterance may be given unto me,
that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,
for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that there in I may speak boldly,
as I ought to speak.”**

Ephesians 6:18-20

The importance of prayer may be impossible to overstate. We are to “pray always with all prayer and supplication”. We are never to be far from prayer because it brings us into direct contact with God. And like soldiers on the battlefield we need to be in touch with God and each other. The expression ‘all prayer’ means all kinds of prayer. Public prayer (see Luke 18:13). Private prayer (see Mark 1:35). Silent prayer (Nehemiah 2:4). Prayer is talking with God about Him, yourself—anything and everything that concerns your life. No matter how big or small, God is interested in your telling Him about it. And as this passage indicates we should also be concerned for our spiritual leaders—the pastors and teachers of the gospel whose ministry blesses us.

Pray as you walk. Pray as you work. Pray more than you have been. Pray for your friends. And pray for your enemies. Pray for your family. Pray for victory in any area where you sense that something is controlling you and hurting your spiritual life. Pray for success in Christian work.

In your prayers begin with good things you know about God. Tell Him of your affection for Him. This well-known acronym will be helpful in shaping your prayers: **A C T S**.

A = Adoration. Tell God what and why you think He is great and awesome. “Great is our God above all gods” (2 Chron 2:5).

C = Confession. Tell God where you have slipped and fallen.
He is ready to forgive (Ps 86:5).

T = Thanksgiving. Tell the Lord what pleases you about the gifts He gives. “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name” (Ps 100:4).

S = Supplication. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil 4:6). We are told by Jesus Christ to ask (Matt 7:7). And we will not be disappointed. If we do not receive

exactly what we want it is because God loves us too much to give us that which is not for our best good. But tell God what you need and want. Ask according to His will (see 1 John 5:14). Have a prayer list and refer to it.

Prayer is part of the Armor of God. And so prayer is to be made an important part of our life throughout the day. It is emphasized that these prayers are to be made “in the spirit”—the Holy Spirit. These are not to be casual prayers. They are to come from our heart with all sincerity. Our life, with its purposes, problems, perils, and blessings, is to be bathed in prayer.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Pray without ceasing.

Psalms 55:17

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

Jeremiah 33:3

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Daniel 6:10

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Lamentations 2:19

Arise, cry out in the night: . . .pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children. . .

Exodus 17:10-13

So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek. . . And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek. . .

Philemon 1:22

But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

James 5:15

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

1 Peter 4:7

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

NOTES




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