

January, 26, 2020 ~**Ephesians 6:10-17,**
The Armor of God's People

Read **Ephesians 6:10-12...** We are to find our strength in God. He has provided spiritual armor that we might take our stand against the devil's schemes. Paul uses a military term that speaks of holding a critical position while under attack, there is no retreating, just standing firm to the end.

Our battle is not against people, but the devil, the flesh and the godless system of this world that opposes God. Satan is the ultimate enemy of God's people, and he wants to confuse, separate and destroy our witness.

Satan is the top General over the forces of evil in the heavenly places [the realm of demons and angels], engaged in a spiritual war. Note: Angels served Christ (Matthew 4:11), they also serve us (Hebrews 1:14).

The word *struggle* = close quarter battle, i.e., hand to hand combat (like a wrestling match); and so, we must take our positions and ready ourselves against these attacks, not so much against us physically, but on our thoughts, emotions, and the convictions we hold.

There are no special techniques for standing against that which we cannot see; but **James 4:7** declares, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," i.e., stand firm!

God gave us His Spirit to indwell us, guide us, comfort us, confront us, grow us, mature us, encourage and empower us.

During that last evening before His arrest (John 13-17) Jesus said to His disciples in **John 14:16-17**, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."

1John 4:4, "...greater is He [God's Spirit] who is in you than he [Satan] who is in the world."

Satan is powerful, but he is only a created being and therefore, he is subject to God; one day he and his demons, along, with all unbelievers, will be cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Matthew 25:41, "Depart from Me... into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels."

Revelation 20:10, "And the devil... was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also..." **15**, "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

But God's children are victorious.

1John 5:1, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

1John 5:5, "Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

No matter in what role or function you serve God, as a husband, a wife, a parent, a child, an employee, an employer, brother or sister in Christ—God has equipped you to escape the corruption of this world and the deceptive schemes of the devil, so that you might honor and glorify God victoriously!

2Peter 1:3-4, "His [God's] divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."

Philippians 4:13, "[We] can do all things through Him who strengthens [us]." **19**, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Read Ephesians 6:13-15... Since our battle is against spiritual forces, we must put on spiritual armor, that we might stand our ground against these attacks. Paul uses the analogy of a Roman soldier preparing for battle, to exemplify the type of armor we have to protect us spiritually.

We are to stand firm (Ephesians 6:14), we are to be resolute, immovable, having been outfitted with the full armor of God, with which we are readied to take our stand against all enemies.

What does it mean to have girded your loins with truth? *To gird* is to secure something around that which needs protection; in this passage it is the *loins*; the loins is the area of the body from the lowest ribs to the hips, all the way around; notice here that the means, or the source of our protection is *God's Truth*.

So in this metaphor, a belt, in this case a soldier's belt, made of heavy leather, is secured around the soldier's one piece outer garment.

The belt was usually loosened when off duty and tightened up for battle, so that any loose clothing was tucked in, cinched up; the belt here, symbolizes the Truth of God that secures us for battle and readies us to stand our ground.

The next piece of armor is the breastplate [body armor, made of bronze], it protected the soldier from his neck down to his thighs, both front and

back, and was often called the heart protector, because this most important organ was covered by the breastplate.

Our spiritual breastplate is the righteousness we have, by way of our faith in the Lord for salvation (see **Romans 3:10-12, 21-24, 28**). It is by the righteousness of Christ that we are made acceptable to a Holy and Righteous God, forever (**2Corinthians 5:21**).

Read Ephesians 6:15... Paul says your feet are shod [meaning our feet have had special footwear placed on them]. Footwear is an essential part of our armament and here, Paul is talking about some very special boots used by Roman soldiers that were fitted with short broad headed nails [similar to hob nailed boots, or logger boots]; they were used to provide good traction in any terrain, against any foe.

Good foot protection is very important for a soldier to securely stand his ground.

Note: In the Korean War hundreds, perhaps thousands of men lost toes and feet to frostbite, their boots didn't protect their feet. In Viet Nam, hundreds of soldiers were rendered debilitated by jungle rot, a foot fungus that their boots did not protect them from, rendering them incapable of walking, let alone fighting.

Every Christian has been provided special spiritual footwear, through the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace, i.e., through Christ's victory over sin, death and judgement, believers have peace, and no matter how slippery, rocky, or treacherous our journey might become, because of the devil's snares and schemes, we have confidence that God will direct our steps and keep us on firm footing as we serve Him.

Read Ephesians 6:16... There were two types of shields commonly used by soldiers, a small round one for blocking the thrust of an opponent's sword, and a large oblong one for protecting the whole body, and all those who were crouching behind him, from thrown spears and flaming arrows that were wrapped with cloth, soaked in pitch and set afire.

This [large] shield was made of several layers of wood, covered with animal hide and bound with iron; this shield it was often soaked with water, so it wouldn't ignite when impacted by fiery arrows, that splattered burning pitch everywhere.

The "flaming arrows of the evil one" describes the Devil's tactics of inciting doubt, distrust, and fear among God's people, so that we will give up, or even run; but during such times, it is the shield of faith that protects

us and prompts us not give up, but instead, to stand firm in the faith (**Psalm 18:30**), "He [God] is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.." **1Corinthians 15:58**, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

1John 5:4, "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith."

Read Ephesians 6:17... The next piece of armor is the helmet, which protects the head. Paul gives it the characteristic of salvation, not the initial receiving of Christ, but the eternal security we have as God's children (cf. **Romans 6:23; 8:1**).

Satan attempts to deceive God's people, trying to confuse them or cause them to believe they have lost, or could lose their salvation; if that doesn't work, Satan attempts to discourage or disable believers from serving God.

The helmet of salvation provides both our present assurance and our future hope, for it is God Himself who watches over, provides for, and protects us, promising to bring us to Himself, in glory (**Romans 8:28-35, 37-39; John 14:1-3**). God has equipped us for victory in Christ!

Ephesians 2:10, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we would walk in them."

And God has provided everything we need to accomplish His will in and through our lives (**2Peter 1:3**), "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence," (**Philippians 4:13**) "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." (**19-20**), "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

Pastor Mike

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