

The Armor of God

EPHESIANS 6:10-18 (NIV)

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."

The picture for the armor of God was birthed in Paul as he observed the Roman soldiers during his imprisonment. The **belt of truth** is best described as a type of girdle hanging from a belt which encompassed the hip area. The garment was loose and had to be secured at the waist. The Roman legionnaire would tuck the skirt up between his legs and into the belt to allow free movement when he entered battle.

We too, are to be wrapped about with truth. We cannot pay attention to Satan's distortions and God's truth simultaneously. We are to embrace God's truth. Embracing the truth eliminates the spiritual waste (the falsehoods, lies, and deceit) in our lives. *"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth."* John 16:13a (NIV) *"Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth."* John 17:17(NIV)

Before anything else we need to be sure we are studying, believing and holding fast to the truth as revealed in God's word.

The **breastplate of righteousness** guards our heart and is held in place by the girdle. *"Above all else guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."* Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) The heart is the seat of our emotions which Satan often uses to stir us up. Many temptations revolve around our emotional responses. Satan wants us to focus on our feelings instead of the truth. We have been made righteous in our spirit and we are learning to act righteously in our soul and body. The blood of Jesus, which we received as a covering at salvation, gives us the wonderful treasure of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He is our righteousness!

The Roman soldier's sandals were strapped on securely and often had a spike protruding from the bottom to aid footing. We have our feet shod with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**. A walk of peace deflects many attacks, as well as models peace and invites others into this pool of peace. We receive peace at salvation. *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1 (NIV) We have the peace of God during the storms of our life and we point others toward the Prince of Peace, our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

When doubts and fears arise within, or assaults come from without, take up the **shield of faith**. The Roman soldier's shield was wrapped with strips of leather and soaked in water just before a battle began to help extinguish the flaming arrows shot at the soldiers. We also must keep our shields soaked with the water of the word of God. Ephesians 5:26 speaks of Jesus sanctifying and cleansing the church by washing with the water of the word. We should not let our shields dry out! Stay in the Word as *"faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."*

Romans 10:17 (KJV). We have the pattern of Jesus in the wilderness warding off the attacks of Satan with *"It is written."* The soldier's shield was large enough to offer full coverage. When our shield is in place, God is our defender through faith in Him and His word. We use our shield to ward off contaminating thoughts or imaginations, accusations or doubts that Satan throws at us. *"Faith working through love"* Galatians 5:6b (NAS), reminds us that as we grow in love and trust for our heavenly Father our faith increases and His love governs more of our actions toward others. As the Heart of God pulsates out of our cleansed heart, the love of God is stretched out to others and one more of Satan's means of attack is thwarted. Colossians 2:11, 12a (AMP), makes it clear that Jesus strips off the body of flesh (the whole corrupt carnal nature with its passions and lusts). *"And above all these (put on) love and enfold yourself with the bond of perfectness which binds everything together in ideal harmony."* Colossians 3:14 (AMP) The verse preceding is encouraging us to be gentle and forbearing with one another and forgiving. The Message Bible says *"Wear love. It is your basic, all purpose garment. Never be without it."*

The **helmet of salvation** has the insignia of our Lord of Hosts on it. It is strapped firmly in place and has pieces that guard our eyes and ears - the gateway to our minds. *"But we have the mind of Christ."* I Corinthians 1:16b (NIV) *"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."* II Corinthians 10:4-5 (NIV)

The **sword of the spirit** is using God's specific truth for each unique battle. It is our offensive weapon. It is the proclaimed word of God from the believer's mouth. "*They overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.*" Revelation 12:11 (NIV)

The Roman soldier's sword hung from his belt ready for use. Our sword hangs on our **belt of truth** ready to be drawn to become a verbal flaming sword in our mouth as we declare the truth of God's word to our enemy, Satan.

Our scriptural instructions close with the admonition to pray in the spirit on all occasions and to pray for all the saints.

"Put on the armor of light."
Romans 13:12b (NIV)

"Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ"
Romans 13:14a (NIV)

The blood of Jesus purchased this very expensive spiritual protective clothing. We received it as a free gift at our salvation experience. Be faithful to keep it clean with all pieces intact and firmly in place.

***Be firmly dressed for battle !
Stand firm !***

"We are hidden with Christ in God."
Colossians 3:3b (NIV)

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