

Armor of God – Protective Armor

Ephesians 6:10–20

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. ¹³Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: ¹⁸Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; ¹⁹And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” (KJV)

Remember the intent of Ephesians...Paul is looking to reflect the calling in which Jesus has for us upon our lives. He is giving practical exhortation to tells us how to live our Christian lives, particularly in this wicked world. It is plain that Paul is giving us clear advice on what, how and why in spiritual warfare.

Purpose of this passage (3 questions)

- **What does Paul want us to do?**
 - **Be strong (v. 10)**
 - **in the Lord**
 - **In the power of His might**
- **How does he want us to do it?**
 - **Putting on the whole armor of God (v. 11)**
- **Why does he want us to do it?**
 - **To be able to stand against...the devil (v. 11)**

- **The enemy is not human, but spiritual and he's stronger than us**

The whole armor of God

- **The panolpy (full armor) of a soldier**
- **πανοπλία *panoplia* – the complete equipment of a heavy-armed soldier (usually infantry)**
 - **Full armor for endurance in battle, providing protection for the whole person, a complete or perfect covering**
 - **Implies having all distinguishing characteristics and enjoying all authorized rights and privilege, not lacking in any essential equipment, training, or power**

Within the NT, this Greek word is only used in the Eph 6 passage.

3 categories of “panoplia”

- 1. Protective armor**
 - **Belt**
 - **Brigandine**
 - **Helmet**
 - **Greaves**
 - **Shield**
- 2. Weapons**
- 3. Tactics and Strategies**

- **The armor of God is not something the believers put on to fight on their own.**
- **The armor is Christ himself.**
- **Putting on the armor is equivalent to putting on Christ**
- **The power of Christ is sufficient to stand against all evil and temptation that a believer will encounter**

2 Corinthians 12:9

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” (NIV)

Armor and Weapons are the primary instruments enabling three basic elements within the art of warfare:

- **Mobility**
- **Firepower**
- **Security**
- **Protective instruments consisted primarily of various pieces of body armor and a shield**
 - **Without provision for personal protection of the individual soldier on the battlefield, the mobility and security of an army are seriously compromised**

Gird about with truth

Paul wrote this letter from Rome where he was under the custody of Roman soldiers (cf. Acts 28:16). Knowing that his readers would be familiar with the dress and armor of Roman soldiers, Paul used this imagery to communicate a spiritual message. Of course he wants us to put on the fullness of Christ, but he symbolizes the aspects of Christ in our life with the various pieces of armor and weapons that his audience would be able to identify and apply. Before a Roman soldier put on his armor, he put a belt around his waist. This held his garments and armor pieces together and gave freedom of movement as well as served as a place on which to hang his sword.

- **Belt**
 - **Has 2 purposes**
 - **Securing the armor**
 - **Provide utility**
 - **Foundation of the armor, providing confidence and freedom of movement**
 - **Roman soldiers used a sturdy belt to fasten their sword to their body**
 - **A soldier girded in such a manner would be recognized as being on active duty.**
 - **Modern soldiers use a belt (LBE) for utility. It is part of their combat readiness gear.**



Paul wanted believers to gird themselves with “truth,” the foundation for all spiritual activity

- **Represents our binding with Christ**
 - **Signifies integrity, sincerity, readiness**
 - **Not an ornament, but armament**

John 4:24

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (KJV)

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (KJV)

Isaiah 11:5

He will wear righteousness like a belt and truth like an undergarment.” (NLT)

Having on the breastplate of righteousness

Body Armor or Personal Armor protected the body of a combatant from injury while freeing his hands to use his weapons. It usually consisted of a full-length tunic made from leather or some tough fiber. It was relatively simple to produce, was light enough to permit full mobility, and offered a measure of protection to the chest, abdomen, back, thighs, and legs.

- **Breastplate, Coat of Mail, Brigandine**
 - Also known as “breastplate of scales” (1 Samuel 17:5)
 - Made of metal links, plates, and/or leather
 - Sometimes had greaves – a layer of strips for the legs
 - Breastplate infers the covering of the front torso
 - Protection for the vital organs
 - Provides protection while freeing hands to use weapons
 - Modern body armor is very similar



- Represents the soldier's character, conduct, value, rank
 - Without it we would be vulnerable, disgraced, and defeated
 - Righteousness guards the breath, the true “heart”, and the spiritual digestion
 - Not justification, but the sanctifying righteousness of Christ

Isaiah 59:17

He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle.” (NASB)

Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace

The idea of shoes for battle means having bound under for firm footing, for sure steps, and for protection. Preparation indicates readiness; prepared to see duty, prepared to do God’s will, and prepared to proclaim the gospel of peace. Roman soldiers prepared for battle by putting on shoes that had short nails in their soles. These enabled them to stand firm and avoid slipping on the ground. Paul wanted believers to prepare themselves for spiritual battle with the gospel of peace.

- **Shoes**

- Usually light and sturdy for traction, sure footing, and easy movement
- In armor, shoes usually include greaves, a shin guard along with the shoes
- Represents the idea of traveling, to go, on the move and readiness to attack
- Modern combat boots serve the exact same purpose



Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”” (NKJV)

Nahum 1:15a

Look to the mountains— the feet of one bringing good news and proclaiming peace! (HCSB)



Take the helmet of salvation

Since the greatest point of vulnerability for a soldier in combat was his head, concern for some form of protective helmet can be traced as far back as the end of the fourth millennium BC. Having one's head guarded by a helmet gives a sense of safety, identification, and stature.



- **Helmet**

- **Most made of metal or leather**
- **Deflects attacks to the head, the brain**
 - **Some were for practical protection of the head, others for intimidation, build stature, or identification**
 - **Ornate helmets were more of a hindrance causing limited vision and had excessive weight so were rarely used except for ceremony**
 - **Many were for rank or unit identification**
 - **One of the pieces we are to receive**



Take means receive or accept it from God...It is the assurance of salvation. Salvation is a present possession.

- **Represents assurance and the immediate, inevitable sense of battle**
 - **Allows for wisdom, vision, and filtered hearing**



The helmet protects the head, the citadel of intelligence, from false teachings and gives confidence and boldness in the conflict.



1 Thessalonians 5:8

But let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation." (NLT)

Jeremiah 46:4

Harness the horses, mount the steeds! Take your positions with helmets on! Polish your spears, put on your armor!" (NIV)

Above all taking the shield of faith

Above all” means after all the other armor is on, then take the shield in addition. The fire-tipped darts are the arrows dipped in combustible material and set on fire, usually fired at long range. The Shield was designed to provide a barrier between the body of a soldier and the weapons of his foe, the shield was one of the oldest means of security devised. Two types of shields were used by Roman soldiers: a large shield that protected the whole body and was carried by the infantry (The shield here is the thureon, a door-like oblong shield), and a smaller shield (buckler), made of wood overlaid with leather, which was carried by the archers.



- **Shield**
 - **Provided additional and sometimes full protection**
 - **External deflection**
 - **The primary external protection for direct blows and long range weapons of the enemy**
 - **Used for personal as well as corporate protection**
 - **Romans commonly used the thureon, a large oblong shield**
 - **Normally metal, sometimes wood covered w/ leather**
 - **Often allowed for insignia, rank, records, some for decoration, intimidation, or superstitious markings**
 - **A barrier between the soldier and the enemy’s weapons**
 - **Deflected or absorbed the enemies darts/arrows**



Note this is another piece that is to be taken or received. Faith is utter dependence on God, upon His presence and His power.

- **Faith puts God between you and the enemy.**





Faith is a genitive of content; the shield consists of faith. The idea, then, is that a Christian's resolute faith in the Lord can stop and extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one aimed at him.



Genesis 15:1

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." (NKJV)



Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him." (NASB)

Hebrews 11:6

It's impossible to please God apart from faith. And why? Because anyone who wants to approach God must believe both that he exists and that he cares enough to respond to those who seek him." (MSG)



Romans 5:2

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (KJV)

Deuteronomy 33:29

Israel, you are blessed! No one else is like you, because you are a people saved by the LORD. He is your shield and helper, your glorious sword. Your enemies will be afraid of you, and you will walk all over their holy places." (NCV)

Romans 13:12

The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light." (NASB)