

# The Spiritual War



For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword

Hebrews 4:12

## 7. THE ARMOR OF GOD PART II

Paul was a spiritual warrior of the first order; he understood the battle at hand. His goal in Ephesians was to give the church in Ephesus he spent three years teaching, a final message. The message to Ephesus was a message to the whole church, all the saints, by the Holy Spirit, through Paul. Paul wanted to the church established on truth; he wanted the body of Christ to know how Satan works.

On his way to Jerusalem, Paul met with the leaders of the church at Ephesus. He warned them of what was coming, in his absence, how wolves would come into their midst, and work within the church. Paul called for diligence within the body of Christ, to combat those who try to do harm to the flock.

27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

29 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

31 "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. Acts 20:27-31

Notice in verse 28, Paul refers to the overseers, who were established by the Holy Spirit to shepherd God's church. In verse 30, Paul refers to men who will rise up from within the

Church of Ephesus, to draw away disciples after themselves. Paul says to "Watch", meaning be on guard, vigilant, alert, waiting for the attacks.

Therefore, the job of the Lord's warrior is not only to advance the Gospel or Christ, we are also to defend the Gospel within the church. By wearing the armor of God, we are instruments of defense as well as offense. Satan launches attacks from within and without the church, his goal is destroy and pull down the army of the Lord. As soldiers of the Lord, we are to equip and build up the saints of Christ, and looking for opportunity to advance the kingdom of God on enemy territory.

Here is where Paul set such a great example for those who would follow in his footsteps. In his final message to this church, he commands them to put on God's armor, so they will be successful in these attacks, Satan will wage on them. Paul's message was not only for Ephesus, but for all of us too, instructing us how to be successful in the spiritual war.

In verses 10, Paul gives an important key to being successful at Spiritual warfare, which is often overlooked by many saints, he tells the church in Ephesus to "*be strong in the Lord*" and "*in the power of His might*". To be effective in spiritual warfare, we must be willing to *be strong in the Lord*, meaning we are to discipline ourselves in the knowledge and skills required. The saints need to learn God's word, increase their faith, and train for battle, like a warrior preparing for combat.

When we are *strong in the Lord*, we are then able to be *in the power of His might*. Though David was a boy and Paul a weakly looking man, they were both strong in the Lord; this allowed God's might to be unleashed from their lives. When we are strong in the Lord, we

understand our position, and the awesome responsibility God has given us to represent His kingdom in this fallen world. This is why David was outraged; he could not understand how Israel could just stand there as a Philistine insulted God, even though he was a giant.

In verse 11, Paul commands the church to put on *the armor of God*, so the power of Lord might become active against Satan's schemes and attacks. A saint strong in the Lord, without the armor of God, soon becomes a victim of Satan's attacks. Satan hunts for weak prey in the same way a lion looks for those he may devour.

### *Where the battle rages for God's warrior*

Paul wrote Ephesians, being a prisoner in Rome, seeing the majesty and grandeur of the Roman legion, he tells the church, our battle takes place in the invisible spiritual realms. The warrior wearing spiritual armor has to know where the battle takes place. Why because Satan wants the Lord's warriors to misdirect their energy, by fighting against flesh and blood rather than the spiritual kingdoms.

For example a Christians who has a conflict with a conflict with an angry foul-mouthed neighbor, might take the attack personally. Developing hatred for the person misses Paul's point. Paul wants us to understand, we see the physical results of a spiritual battle. A spiritual warrior must change their perception. The warrior needs to see through spiritual eyes, not physical ones.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore take up **the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having **girded your waist** with truth, having put on the **breastplate** of righteousness,

15 and **having shod your feet** with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 above all, taking the **shield of faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God;

18 **praying always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints

### Ephesians 6:10-18

#### Vs. 12

**For we:** The message here is for the saint, those who are lost do not know they are captives of a spiritual kingdom. When we were lost, we had no clue we were part of Satan's domain, trapped and perishing under his power. When we came to Christ, we became part of the Lord's army.

**do not wrestle against flesh and blood:** Our spiritual eyes need to comprehend the war we in. The term wrestle, *páth Pale* refers to a physical competition, where the victor forces the looser to the ground, placing his hand around the neck. We need to comprehend we are involved in a spiritual struggle against Satan; his goal (Satan) is force us (the saved) to the ground, gaining control over our lives, taking away the authority we have in Christ.

**against principalities:** Without understanding the source of our fight, the Lord's warrior can waste a great deal of spiritual and physical energy in the struggle. Paul defines our struggle as being against non-physical entities, he calls them *principalities, powers, rulers and hosts*.

Let us take the terrorism for example, many in the secular world, see a clash of cultures, the culture of *Islam* versus the *Western* culture. Ephesians defines these conflicts as spiritual, spiritual realms at war. The Greek word for principality is *Arche*, literally meaning origins or beginning. Kingdoms are called principalities, because they were identified with a specific point where the power originated. The ruler of a principality was as a prince, or in the Greek an *Archon*. Paul wants the spiritual warrior to understand, there exists literally *spiritual kingdoms*, or *principalities*. They are just as real as physical kingdoms, but they exist in spiritual realms. Daniel chapter 10 is an example of such a kingdom, there we see the *Prince of Persia* at war against the prayers of Daniel.

**against powers:** The second force Paul describes, *powers* comes from the Greek word *ekousia*. *Exousia* also translated as authority. The war is also against areas of power and authority. Demonic forces exercise authority or power over areas of choice. This would include issues, which plague the world and the church, such as adultery, pornography, abortion, homosexuality, racial prejudice, violence and more. In these areas, demonic forces exist, thy exercise authority over these realms.

When a saint enters these powers without authority, we become subject to these powers. We need to understand, there are literal areas of power where saints are not to tread, without our armor and authority. Remember Satan's goal is to get his enemy, the saint, subdued to the ground, placing his hand around the neck. Many saints have fallen pray to Satan, by wandering into areas of authority power under control by the enemy. A saint without his/her armor, becomes hunted like the lion hunts prey. When they are taken, they have been spiritually defeated, loosing their authority.

This is an important point to remember, when we are tempted to go in areas under enemy power. Walking into a bar, strip club, violent movies, profane conversations or listening to music which is contrary to Christ, puts in areas of enemy power. These areas are under demonic influence, where the enemy of your soul rules. Now I understand many in the world might dismiss these remarks as fundamentalist prudishness, that is ok, how do expect the world to understand the spiritual realms? We can't! Scripture clearly says, those who are perishing, are blinded by Satan, they don't know they are lost. Therefore its understandable for the lost to dismiss a spiritual message.

**against the rulers of the darkness of this age:** The Christian is to watch because, the battle is very real, there are not only principalities, but princes or *rulers*, who have dominion. Darkness is the absence of light, light exposes reality. According to scripture, the lost are in darkness, II Corinthians 4:4 proclaims the lost have been blinded, by the *god of this age* or *aion*. There are literal beings that are responsible, for those in darkness.

whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them **II Corinth 4:4**

Satan has an ordered kingdom, with a hierarchy of demonic (fallen angels), which exercise authority and control in these kingdoms of darkness.

**against spiritual hosts of wickedness:** Satan is called prince of the power of the air, meaning the atmosphere of this physical world. Satan is not hindered by physical constraints of the earth; he literally has the ability to operate from celestial plane, from the air.

2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, **Ephesians 2:2**

This power was demonstrated when in Luke 4:5, when in an instant of time, he flashed all the kingdoms of the earth before Christ, offering Him all the kingdoms if Jesus would just fall before Satan and worship him. We should not think Satan has physical limitations; he operates in the minds of the lost, making them captive in darkness. Therefore, his power is in high places, not limited by physical obstacles.

#### *How to face Satan*



Satan is a very real enemy at war with every saint (believer), his goal is to remove our authority, to vanquish us, by putting his hand over our neck. Forcing us to submit, causing us to loose our authority. His control is redundant in many ways; he has a multi-pronged attack strategy.

For example, Satan does not only deceive through false religions and counterfeit Christianity; he also attacks by denying the existence of God. If none of this works, there is always materialism, the deception of wealth and the sensuality of this world to seduce the lost. He has many strategies and schemes to capture lost souls. Scripture alone, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, allows us to see his tactics.

However, Paul addresses the armor of God for the believer, how we are to be equipped to withstand what has captured the world. We as believers are separated from the world, the Bible calls us holy, translated saints. This word comes from the Greek *agioß Hagios*, meaning separated or called out. Since we are called out from the world, we are no longer to be under Satan's authority, but

the Lord's authority. To wage successful war against Satan, we need to wear the armor of God, this is the point Paul is making.

#### Vs. 13

**Therefore:** In verse 12, Paul writes about the reality of the spiritual forces mustered against the saint. The situation might seem overwhelming when understand; shear force and power of our enemy. Who are we to battle against such a foe? We alone are powerless against such an enemy, but it's not us alone, we have an ally, who is already victorious against Satan, the Holy Spirit.

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. **I John 4:4**

With all this force mustered against the believer, what are we to do?

**take up the whole armor of God:** This is how we can be successful in the face of Satan's attack. Notice, Paul writes to take the whole armor, being partially armed is not enough. Satan and his minions are looking for holes to bring the believer down. Every piece of God's armor is required to stand against Satan's methods. The Greek word for the whole armor is *panoplia*, which means full set of armor, a compete set. Every component of the armor is required.

**that you may be able:** Without the full armor of God, our ability to stand is at great risk. The Greek work for able is *dunamai* *Dunamai*, means having the strength or power. From the same root, we get the word *dynamite* or power. Having the whole armor of God gives us the power to stand against Satan. We have dynamic power, Holy Spirit power to withstand Satan.

**to withstand in the evil day:** Satan and his demonic forces will attack the believer, therefore we should be ready when the day comes. The Christian must walk forward, continually we must be on alert for Satan's devices, his goal is to disable the believer and keep the lost, lost. We need to be on alert for the coming attack, because we live in evil days, in a fallen world.

**and having done all, to stand:** Putting on and wearing the armor of God is a process. Wearing the armor of God and effectively using the armor is linked with *being strong in the lord* and in the *power of his might*. When we have done all, the word here is *πάντας Hapax*, meaning all things or whole. The armor of God is one whole unit, which functions together, weakness in our gives Satan a platform to launch his attack, preventing us from standing.

Paul point here is we should be prepared to stand and not fall for Satan's devices. We need to make a conscious effort to stand up against Satan's plans.

#### Vs.14

**Stand therefore:** Once we are wearing the complete set of God's armor, the *panoplia*, next we need to make the conscious decision to stand. God has given us the ability to choose, to make the stand. If we do not make the choice to stand, we will fall, and being on the ground is no fun. Satan is not just content with the saint lying on the ground; his goal is choke off the life out of the saved soul. Remember, the term for wrestle is defined as a victory when the opponent has his hand around your neck.



*Belt of Truth*

**having girded your waist with truth:** The first piece of equipment Paul describes is the belt of truth. The Roman Legion belt was first known as *balteus*, later it became known as *cingulum militare*, they were the mark of a solider, common citizens did not wear the distinct belt of a legion. On the belt would the *gladius* or sword, fastened to the belt, which also kept the tunic and armor in place. The distinct medal studded strips of leather, was unique to the legions belt.

The belt allowed kept the equipment in place, the same way truth keeps the spiritual weapons in place. Truth means what is real, as opposed to what is not real or false. The New Testament rests on the reality of Jesus, Jesus makes this point very clear in John 14:6.

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.  
**John 14:6**

On the identity of Jesus, the whole armor of God described here in Ephesians rests. This is an important point, because many cults have a "Jesus" as part of their faith. However, the "Jesus" they have is a false Jesus, not the biblical Jesus. So without the truth, they are without any armor, and still in Satan's grasp.

#### Breastplate of Righteousness



**having put on the breastplate of righteousness:** This piece of equipment in the legion is called the *Lorica Segmentata*, it was constructed of strips of metal fastened together by leather. This was standard issue to the legions during the reign of Augustus. This piece of equipment weighed from 20 to 30 pounds, its design was to protect the vital organs of the legionnaire. The metal was designed to deflect a dart or sword attack, which the shield or sword failed to stop. The goal is to protect the vital organs, from enemy attack.

This parallels the righteous life, when we live a righteous life; our vital organs are protected from enemy attack. For example, the Christian who knows the word of God (Sword of the spirit) and has great faith (shield of faith), but lives an unrighteous life, is open to enemy attack, regardless how well they are able to use the other pieces of equipment. That person has put down the breastplate of righteousness; their vital organs are exposed to the attack of the enemy.

#### Shoes of the Gospel



##### Vs. 15

**having shod your feet:** As a believer we have authority, given to us by Jesus Christ. Our feet are the method we move in this physical world. What territory do we walk on? The *god of this age* is Satan, who rules over the nations. We on the other hand advance the Kingdom of God on Satan territory. How is this kingdom advanced? What is the method God uses to advance his kingdom?

Is it through the spread of democracy? Is it through higher living standards? Through education? No, it's through the Gospel, the good news, which changes lives for eternity. Offering the lost person, liberty from Satan's power, is achieved by the spread of the Gospel. If the saved person is not willing to tell others the Good News, the Gospel, Satan wins.

**with the preparation:** Part of our authority is to take the Gospel to enemy territory, our shoes our ability to move on enemy territory, is our being prepared to share the good news. The Roman legion represented, the kingdom of Rome, where they walked was Roman territory, or was being conquered for Rome. The Roman boot was designed to stand ground in battle. The Roman boot was fitted with metal studs, like the cleats of football player, to help him maintain ground in battle.

The saint must be prepared to march on enemy territory, prepared with the Gospel. With the Gospel, we free the captive, from Satan's control, offering peace to a lost world.

**the gospel of peace;** Satan's goal is to keep the lost away from the gospel. The gospel of peace is the restoration of fellowship with God through the work of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins. Our job

is to spread the Gospel. The world is divided into two camps, those who are perishing and the saved. We are the fulfillment of Isaiah words,

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!" **Isaiah 52:7**

### *Shield of faith*



#### **Vs. 16**

**above all:** What did Paul think the most important piece of equipment was for the Spiritual warrior? Right, the shield! He tells us above all right at the start. Faith is a shield, which allows us to put an immediate end to many of Satan's attacks. For the Romans the shield was not just a defensive weapon, it was also an offensive weapon. The metal boss in the center, designed to hit the enemy at impact, allowed the legionnaire to follow up with his sword, to subdue the opponent.

**taking the shield of faith:** How do you take up the shield of faith? What is faith? Faith is often defined as a religious term; religious people are called "people of faith". For many secularist, this means blind faith, which means faith without any basis. We however are told to take up or raise the shield. How can we raise our faith? Let's use the atheist for an example.

Even atheists have faith, for example if an atheist were to fly in an airplane, does he know for certain, the plane would arrive at its destination? No, he has faith that it will arrive there, he does not know for certain until the event occurs. What is the basis of his faith in the plane? He uses reason and logic, based on experience and history of airplanes. If an atheist were afraid to fly, how might he raise his faith in ability of the plane to carry him? He might read about the engineering of planes, their history and their statistics. Joe Atheist has a reasoned faith in airplanes.

There is no reason for a Christian to have blind faith; God has provided us with reasoned faith, faith based upon reason and logic. The Bible is filled with prophetic evidence regarding the Bible, and Jesus Christ, for example Isaiah 52:13-53:12, describes Jesus and his ministry 700-years before his birth. The Bible foretells the exact time of Jesus death 539-years before His birth in the *70 Weeks of Daniel*, Daniel 9:24-27. Why did God provide prophetic evidence for the person of Jesus? Why did Jesus do the miracles? To provide evidence of his identity, that we might have faith in Him. We can choose to increase our faith, by learning to have a reasoned defense of the gospel. We are told in Peter to be prepared to give a reason or logic in the Greek, of the hope we have. In other words, we are to give the reason for our faith.



15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; I Peter 3:15

**you will be able:** Raising the shield gives us power or abilities against Satan's attacks. The word used here again is *dunamai* *Dunamai*, meaning having power or strength, being capable.

**to quench all the fiery darts:** A fiery dart in Roman times was an arrow, dipped in oil then lit on fire and shot at opposing force. Paul uses the imagery of two warring factions facing each other; he describes Satan's attacks as fiery arrows, which the shield was able to deflect. The Roman shield was actually designed and curved to allow the force of the sword or arrow to be deflected to the sides.

How does this work in a practice? For example lets take Mary Christian and her co-worker. Mary is at work, and her co-worker says, "Mary do you really believe Jesus is the son of God?" "How can you believe such a thing?" The co-worker really might be

asking a sincere in her question, or she could be shooting a fiery dart at Mary. If Mary Christian has never learned how to use her *shield of faith*, the dart might hit Mary, who might ask herself, yeah, "why do I believe Jesus is the son of God", "how do I know the Bible is true"?

Now God allows us to experience warfare, because through it our faith can grow. The co-worker may be very sincere in her question, creating a door for Mary to advance the gospel. As Mary learns why the Bible is true, and why she believes Jesus is the Son of God, she can walk over to her co-worker, open the Bible (the sword of the Spirit) and show her. Now the fiery dart shot at Mary, becomes the cause of the Gospel is advanced, as Mary explains to her co-worker who Jesus is, and why he is the Son of God.

Satan has literally hundreds of fiery darts he can fire at us, in each case; we should learn how to take his attacks and train to respond. Ask yourself, what fiery darts give you the most problems?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

We can choose to raise our level of faith, by learning scripture and the evidences contained within it. The more we engage in spiritual combat training, the more effective we can be with our weapons.

**of the wicked one:** We need to understand Satan is the source of the attack, but God allows the attack for our growth, that we might become more effective in the battle. Whatever attacks Satan wages, not one can occur without God's knowledge.

#### *Helmet of salvation*

Vs. 17



**take the helmet of salvation:** Where does the spiritual battle rage? On what battlefield is Satan active? He (Satan) works on making the mind captive. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:4, Satan has blinded the minds. The thoughts and actions of the body proceed from the mind. The head is was a prime target in warfare, because an opponent knows, a direct hit would finish the enemy. Therefore, the legions were equipped with helmets to protect the head from enemy swords or arrows. In the same way, we are to take up our helmet, the covering of our mind, with the salvation of Christ.

What a remarkable promise we have in scripture, salvation! We need to learn to trust and rejoice in the hope of our eternity, when we are engaged in warfare.

Paul in I Thessalonians describes the *hope of salvation* as our helmet.

8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
**I Thes. 5:8-9**

Whatever our circumstances, we have eternal hope. Our home is not in this world, what is the worst that can happen to us? Death!, then we spend an eternity with Christ in Heaven. Scripture gives us the picture of eternity in Revelation 21 & 22, so we can learn to set our mind on our eternal dwellings, putting our hope in salvation, not this world.

When Satan throws his fiery darts at our minds, we need to remind him, where we are spending eternity. What our promises are? Satan targets each of us with his own particular weapon suited for us. For example, to the Christian who thought money was the focus of life, before he was saved. Satan, after his salvation, may use his past as a foothold. He may call the person a looser, for not putting money and success first, how could we respond?

The same way Jesus did, through scripture, we might quote back to Satan's charges..

26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? **Matthew 16:26**

Then, wearing the helmet of salvation, we remind ourselves where we will spend eternity, in Heaven, looking forward to that day. This is how we put the helmet of salvation to practice. Read Revelation 21 and 22, try to get a clear picture of your eternity in Christ. The next time you are attacked, remember where you are going, wear your helmet of salvation.

Secondly, the Lord wants us to be sure of our salvation, so we don't hang in doubt of his ability to save us. He gives us two strong pictures; one is that of a down payment, the other that of a shepherd who does not loose his sheep.

13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. **Ephesians 1:13-14**

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. **John 10:27-29**

So if the Holy Spirit is our down payment, until redemption how good is God's guarantee? If we are part of Jesus' flock, how secure are we? Jesus says no one can snatch us out of His hand nor the Fathers hand? We need to learn how to rest in the promise of salvation, putting our in the helmet of salvation.

### *Sword of the Spirit*

**the sword of the Spirit:** We have a weapon more powerful then any earthly weapon. The weapon is a spiritual weapon, which is God extension through us. As saints, we are God's warriors, representing His Kingdom in this fallen world. We have authority and power through Christ; we also have a sword beyond any comparison in the physical world.

The sword used by the Roman legions was called the *Gladius Hispaniensis*, the word gladius is the Latin word for sword, the Romans adopted the Spanish sword in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. The Roman legions were in constant training with their sword. The sword was to become an extension of the arm; the legionnaire goal was for the sword to become 2<sup>nd</sup> nature. Paul would have seen the legions training for hours on end, perfecting their skills in combat. New legions learning the process of sword fighting, the more experienced and trained legions sparing with the new recruits getting them ready for the battle.

Paul envisioned the same for the Church at Ephesus in spiritual warfare. As the legions were proficient in their handling the sword of steel, Paul wanted the church to proficient in the Spiritual sword.



**which is the word of God;** The spiritual sword is none other then the word of God, Hebrews defines this sword for us. God's sword is an eternal weapon, while the earthly sword is very limited in scope. God's weapon is living, while the earthly sword has no life.

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. **Hebrews 4:12**

The world is subject to God's sword, Satan and his minions fear God's sword, why do you think so many atheistic and Muslim nations outlaw the Bible? Because the conflict is taking place in Spiritual realms, Satan understands the power of the word of God. The word of God has the power to transform and pull down kingdoms.

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;  
8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure,  
enlightening the eyes;  
Psalm 19:7-8

For this reason, every spiritual warrior needs to learn to become expert in their handling the word of God. In the same way the legions of Rome trained for physical battle with a physical battle, the legions of God need to train for battle against their invisible enemy.