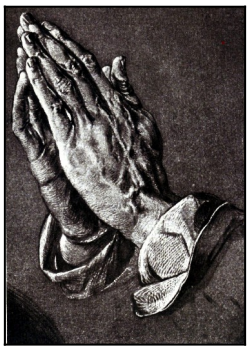


"Battle Prayers"

Ephesians 6:18-20

3-1-2026



INTRODUCTION

***You are in a battle: Use the weapon of prayer!**

I. **Prayer is a powerful weapon when used _____**
(v. 18a - *"always"*)

II. **Prayer is a powerful weapon when used _____**
(v. 18b - *"all prayer and supplication"*)

III. **Prayer is a powerful weapon when used _____**
(v. 18c - *"in the Spirit"*)

IV. **Prayer is a powerful weapon when used _____**
(v. 18d - *"watching...with all perseverance"*)

V. **Prayer is a powerful weapon when used _____**
(v. 18e-20 - *"supplication for all saints. . . for me"*)



A. Pray specifically for God's _____ (v. 18)

B. Pray specifically for God's _____ (v. 19-20)

CONCLUSION:

"Battle Prayers"

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INTRODUCTION

Today, we are in a battle, but we cannot see the enemy. We are in a war, but we do not fire guns or missiles. We fight on a continual basis, but often do not realize it.

I Peter 5:8
Our Adversary the Devil

Satan is a spirit being. A personal being, not a mere force of evil. "Satan" is not merely the devil with the "D" missing (i.e. "evil"). He is a wicked angel with intellect (mt. 4:1-11; II Cor. 2:11 - "devices"), emotion (Rev. 12:17), a will (II Tim. 2:26) (He can think, feel hatred and anger, and choose to oppose God and godliness).

For example, demons are said to "believe (rationally) . . . and tremble (emotionally)" (James 2:19).

Satan is not a mere influence. 174 times in the Bible a personal pronoun is used in addressing him. He is referred to as "he," never "it."

As a personal being, He speaks (Mt. 4), travels from place to place (I Pet. 5:8), expresses anger (Rev. 12:17), is proud (I Tim. 3:6; Is. 14:12-14), etc.

We can learn a great deal about who Satan is by looking at the different names, titles, and representations of him throughout Scripture:

*SATAN (Zech. 3:1; Mt. 4:10; Rev. 12:9, 20:2), used 52 times, comes from the Hebrew word "satan" meaning adversary or opposer.

*DEVIL (Mt. 4:1, 13:39; Eph. 4:27; Rev. 12:9, 20:2), used 35 times, comes from the Greek word "diabolos" meaning slanderer, accuser.

*LUCIFER (*s. 14:12) means son of the morning, shining one, or light bearer. Even though this describes him before his fall, Satan currently "transforms himself into an angel of light" to deceive the world (II Cor. 11:14).

*ANOINTED CHERUB (Ezek. 28:14) indicates that he had one of the highest (if not the highest) ranking of all the angels.

*EVIL ONE (Mt. 13:19, 38; Jn. 17:15; Eph. 6:16; I Jn. 5:18, 19) describes him as the personification of evil.

*RULER OF THIS WORLD (Jn. 12:31, 14:30, 16:11) refers to his power over the evil world system of men and demons.

*GOD OF THIS AGE (II Cor. 4:4) is used in reference to his power to blind the minds of the world to the gospel.

*PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR (Eph. 2:2) describes his pervasive spiritual influence.

*SERPENT (Gen. 3:1; II Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9, 20:2) portrays his deceit and craftiness.

*DRAGON (Rev. 12:3, 7, 9) indicates his fierce nature and power to destroy.

*ACCUSER (Rev. 12:10).

*TEMPTER (Mt. 4:3; I Thes. 3:5)

*DECEIVER (Rev. 12:9; 20:3).

*MURDERER (Jn. 8:44)

*LIAR (Jn. 8:44).

*SINNER (I Jn. 3:8).

*BEELZEBUB, RULER OF THE DEMONS (Mt. 10:25, 12:24, 27; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15), literally translated means lord of the flies, the lord of filth.

*BELIAL (II Cor. 6:15) means worthless or wicked.

*ROARING LION (I Pet. 5:8) describes him as hungry and on the prowl to devour Christians.

*ENEMY (Mt. 13:39

*THE WICKED ONE

Every believer is a soldier and is expected to fight (there are no spiritual pacifists).

I Tim. 1:18-19; II Tim. 2:3-4

V. 10

"Be strong" - lit. be empowered (passive). Allow yourself to be endued with divine ability. Yield to the power that God alone gives.

Those who are "strong" in themselves usually are proud and independent and usually don't tap into the strength of God.

God can use weak people more than He can "strong" (I Cor. 1:27 - *"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty"*).

Paul's thorn in the flesh caused him to depend upon God's strength and not his own.

II Cor. 12:9-10 - *"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. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."*

V. 11

"The whole armor" - the <u>complete</u> armor; the <u>full</u> armor (planoplian).

Having on <u>every</u> piece of armor that God commands is vitally important.

While most Christians would not dream of dressing immodestly or of leaving their house naked; many do so every day. Dressed physically but naked spiritually.

The purpose of the armor is not for "looks"; not to be spiritually "dressed up" to impress others; but it is for battle!

"Wiles" = schemes; crafty plots; deceitful tactics and maneuvers.

"The <u>whole</u> armor" - the complete, or full armor

(ILLUS: in football, every essential bit of protective padding is needed)

If <u>one</u> piece is missing, Satan will attack that area of vulnerability; he looks for unprotected areas of our lives, for "chinks" in our armor.

Satan has much experience (6 - 12,000 years) in knowing how to make men fall. None of us could match his intelligence. By ourselves we are no match for him.

V. 12

Our battle is not physical but spiritual. An unseen yet real conflict that is raging all around us.

"Principalities" - high rulers

"powers" - authorities

"rulers" - lit. world rulers of this (present) darkness (kosmos & kratoras).

"Spiritual wickedness in high places" - the spiritual armies of evil in the heavenlies; a reference to the demonic spirits that soar through the universe.

Three truths:

1.We can only be strong in the Lord (v. 10)

2.By ourselves, we are no match for Satan (v. 11)

3.Spiritual battles require spiritual weapons (v. 12).

Verse 12 could be describing different ranks of demonic forces (in ascending order from the least powerful to the most).

V. 13

"Wherefore" = because of the spiritual demonic armies hovering over and about us.

"Withstand" = to stand against (antistanai); to resist; to withstand is the opposite of remaining passive or of giving in to the devil; or being defeated by Him.

The only formula for getting rid of the devil is (not magical phrases or verbal formulas) but by resisting him (I Pet. 5:8-9; Ja. 4:7).

"the evil day" - there are specific days when Satanic activity, temptation, etc. will reach each one of us. We need to be ready for those "days of evil."

"And having done all, to stand" - After accomplishing great victories, after working hard and doing all that was right and godly, there is a tendency to become complacent, to savor the past triumphs. And then, in such times, having stood, there is a tendency toward a great fall.

"Take unto you" - this imperative requires our volition; it's a choice of our will; we must make a decisive decision to take up the virtues He mentions. It's not automatic. Otherwise, the imperative would be meaningless.

"The evil day" - a particular day when Satan's fury is aimed personally at you. There may come into you life an evil day like no other. It will be too late then to put on the armor. The

time to be ready for war is before the battle starts. Before the missiles fly. Before the guns fire.

V. 14

"Stand" - stand firm, maintain your ground without budging or giving up any won territory to the Devil.

In verses 14-16, God gives a series of participles which unfold how we are to stand.

God is saying, *"Stand!"* Now here's how. . .

Seven pieces of armor to overcome Satan:

- The Belt of Truth — BE TRUTHFUL
- The Chest Plate of Righteousness — DO RIGHT
- The Ready Feet to Share the Gospel — SPREAD THE GOSPEL
- The Shield of Faith — BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES
- The Helmet of Salvation — CONFIDENCE IN YOUR SALVATION
- The Sword of the Spirit — KNOW THE SCRIPTURE
- Prayer — PRAY CONTINUALLY

v. 18

"PRAYING" - (PRESENT TENSE, MIDDLE voice participle) - At the same time as we wear the armor (as we strive to take the virtues and activities mentioned in v. 14-17), we must be prayer.

It is not enough to be armed if you are not taking the offensive (the weapon of prayer).

It is possible to have on the whole armor but to miss the power and energy for battle (by not praying).

It is possible to be fully dressed for battle and to miss the marching orders by not being in communion with God.

The hymnwriter said in the song "Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus" - "Put on the gospel

armor, each piece put on with prayer."

Prayer is the source and sustenance of all the other weapons (v. 14-17).

Prayer is the means by which we are *"strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might"* (6:10).

***You are in a battle: Use the weapon of prayer!**

I. Prayer is a powerful weapon when used <u>FREQUENTLY</u>
(v. 18a - *"always"*)

"Always" lit. at every opportunity (*kairos*).

Chunks of time are great, but so are those constant moments of time - to pray.

"Always" - cp.:

Acts 2:42 - *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."*

Rom. 12:12 - *"Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayers."*

Phil. 4:6 - *"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*

Col. 4:2 - *"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."*

I Thes. 5:17 - *"Pray without ceasing."*

The maturity of your spiritual life is measured by the consistency of your prayer life.

II. Prayer is a powerful weapon when used <u>VARIOUSLY</u>
(v. 18b - *"<u>all</u> prayer and supplication"*)

"All <u>prayer</u>" - to talk to God in general (general prayers)

"[All] supplication" - to specifically petition God for something (specific requests).

"All prayer and supplication" - We should pray all kinds of prayers (not limiting our praying to the same old patterns and thought processes). We should make request for all kinds of needs (not limiting our petitions to the same old list of things).

Note the repetition of the word ***"all"*** emphasizing the all-encompassing nature of prayer.

Note the various ways of prayer: You can pray:

1) In loud cries, in soft whispers, or silently;
2) Deliberately and planned, or spontaneously;
3) While sitting, standing, kneeling, or even lying down'
4) At home or in church;
5) While working or while traveling;
6) With hands folded or raised
7) With eyes open or closed;
8) With head bowed or erect

(MacArthur, p. 379)

III. Prayer is a powerful weapon when used SPIRITUALLY (v. 18c - *"in the Spirit"*)

"In the Spirit" - (not tongues, but with our mind controlled by the Spirit's mind - I Cor. 14:15).

To pray in the Spirit means to allow the Holy Spirit to control the requests we make

and the attitude with which we make them.

To pray according to God's will (I Jn. 5:14-15) is to pray in harmony with the Spirit.

Our prayers are generally to be:
Directed to the Father (mt. 6:9)

Mediated through the Son (I Tim. 2:5)

Controlled by the Spirit (Jude 20)

"Praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20).

The Spirit gives us the unction, faith, and power we need to pray Biblical prayers, utterances that are fit for our KING!

IV. Prayer is a powerful weapon when used TIRELESSLY
(v. 18d - *"watching...with all perseverance"*)

"Watching" - to stay awake; to be vigilant, alert, to not fall asleep.

"Watchmen" on guard duty must not fall asleep.

"Thereunto" - the alertness is in regards to our prayer life.

ILLUS: Sleepy Peter

"All perseverance" - total constancy; no lapses or quitting in our devotional life. *"Keep on keeping on!"*

"Men ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18:1).

V. Prayer is a powerful weapon when used <u>SPECIFICALLY</u> (v. 18e-20 - *"supplication for all saints. . . for me"*)

A. Pray specifically for God's <u>saints</u> (v. 18)

The Lord's prayer begins with *"<u>Our</u> Father"* - not "My Father" (Wiersbe, p. 174)

"Supplication for all <u>saints</u>" -

"Saints" - God's people need prayers! God never says, "Pray to the saints, but <u>for</u> the saints!"

"All" - no believer should go without your prayers.

All need it, no matter how strong.

Like Samuel, we "sin against God" when we fail to pray for fellow Christians (I Sam. 12:23).

B. Pray specifically for God's <u>servant</u> (v. 19-20)

"And for me" - event he greatest of saints need prayer. (the only One who never needed to request prayer for Himself is Jesus Christ).

Perhaps spiritual leaders need prayer more than anyone. Our enemy knows that when he strikes the Shepherd, the sheep will scatter (Mt. 26:31). We are Satan's special targets.

Satan will use any situation good or bad to attack God's servant. His schemes are many. Satan uses:

1) Discouragement or Self-satisfaction

2) Hopelessness or superficial optimism

3) Fear or overconfidence

"Satan uses every situation, favorable or unfavorable, successful or unsuccessful-- to try to weaken, distract, and discredit God's gifted men in their work of equipping the saints" (Eph. 4:12) (MacArthur, p. 384).

Paul did not plead, *"Pray on my behalf" "in order that my ankles, raw and sore from my shackles, may be healed; or that I might be freed from prison and suffering. Rather, his deep concern was the Gospel.*

"Utterance" - the [right] words to speak (speaking ability and opportunity)

For a preacher, not many requests are as important. For a preacher to speak the right words at the right time in the right manner is only the result of prayer.

--Pray for your <u>pastor(s)</u>

(nothing will benefit <u>you</u> more than if God would enable me to consistently and faithfully rightly handle His Word to feed the hungry souls that come here)

There is power in the pulpit if there is prayer in the pews (ILLUS: Spurgeon's "Power Plant")

--Pray for your <u>missionaries</u> and <u>evangelists</u>

Paul was actually a missionary (a church planter)

"That I may open my mouth <u>boldly</u> (fearlessly) - boldness is needed in preaching for these reasons:

1. The fear of man prevents certain messages from being preached (*"The fear of man bringeth a snare"*)

2. The truth of God cannot be compromised or cut short (people need the whole counsel of God)

3. Satan tries to intimidate God's servants to close their mouths about Jesus (EX: Peter & John - Acts)

4. Boldness gives power to the message

"To make known" - to cause others to comprehend or understand the mystery of the Gospel (good news).

Only the Spirit of God can give us spiritual understanding (I Cor. 2:9-10 - *"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.")*

Unless He (in response to prayer) opens people's minds they will not be opened!

What is so mysterious about the Gospel?

--The deity of Christ is a mystery

--The incarnation of Christ is a mystery (how God could become man)

--God's equal acceptance of Jews and Gentiles is a mystery (Eph. 3:4-6) (a concept foreign to the minds of O.T. Jews)

--Christ living in the believer is a mystery (Col. 1:27 - *"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*

"For which" - for which Gospel

--It was because of the offense of the Gospel that Paul was imprisoned.

--And yet God in His sovereignty allowed such an imprisonment to spread His Gospel to people and places where it ordinarily wouldn't go! (SEE: Phil. 1:12-14)

"Ambassador" - lit. an elder (or "older" man) who represents God.

"In bonds" - in chains. Paul was bound but the Gospel was not!

The Gospel is not bound!

"That therein" - lit. in order that in the Gospel. This phrase is a continuation of Paul's request for prayer (v. 19)

"As I ought to speak" = as it is necessary to speak

Speaking the truth openly, fearlessly, frankly, and unashamedly is an "ought." It is an obligation. We must do it. Therefore, people must pray!

CONCLUSION:

What keeps us from praying?

--preoccupation(busy-ness)
--tiredness (laziness)
--minimizing its importance (ignorance)
--pride (arrogance)
--self-sufficiency (independence)

"Take heed lest ye fall" - I Cor. 10:12

When programs, methods, and money produce impressive results, people are prone to depend on that carnal "machinery" rather than Christ's spiritual power. (EX: the church of Laodicea - Rev. 3:17-18).

We can't fight in our own power. David said, *"The battle is the Lord's"*

The same was said to Jehoshophat - *"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit."*

Remember: God's army moves on its knees.

Show the picture of father kneeling and praying for his son.