

"Be Ready for Spiritual Battle"

Ephesians 6:10-18

8-16-2023

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

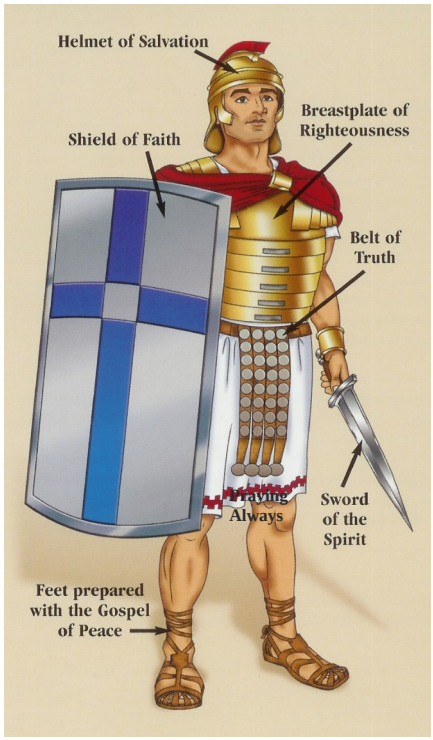
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Every believer is a soldier and is expected to fight (there are no spiritual pacifists). I Tim.1:18-19; II Tim. 2:3-4

"The whole armor" - the complete, or full armor

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).



Seven pieces of armor to overcome Satan:

1. BE TRUTHFUL

2. DO RIGHT

3. SPREAD THE GOSPEL

4. BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES

5. BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR SALVATION

6. KNOW THE SCRIPTURE

7. PRAY CONTINUALLY



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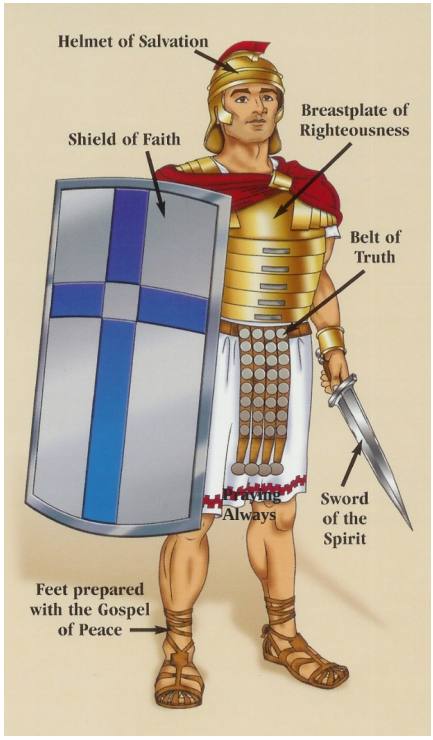
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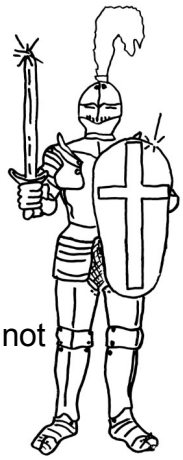
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I Peter 5:8
Our Adversary the Devil

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 (Is. 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

"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:

I. BE TRUTHFUL

V. 14

"Truth" -

Believe the truth
Tell the truth
Live the truth

Satan is opposite of truth; he is a liar (jn. 8). Overcome him with the truth.

Nothing is as powerful as the truth, and yet nothing is so rare. Perhaps this is what makes a man of truth so mighty. A man of truth does not wear the hypocrite's mask, nor does he have to back himself out of corners by lying to cover up lies. This chronic lying only digs a deeper and deeper pit for the one enslaved to such deception.

A liar plays right into the hands of the Father of lies, Satan.

Satan will take you down the path of deceit and hypocrisy unless you defeat him by always telling and living the truth.

Some might justify their lying by saying, "I'm not hurting anyone" or "What they don't know won't hurt them." Falsehood is never justified. Lying is so serious a sin simply because
it is the opposite of the nature of God, who is "Truth." It is just as serious as any other sin.

Lying is characteristic of Satan's children, not God's. Rev. 21:8 - *"all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death."*

II. DO RIGHT

V. 14

"Righteousness" - Do Right - hymn

Chest plate covers vital organs.

NOTE: Righteousness is not merely abstaining from what is wrong, but it is positively doing what is right.

A man is not righteous simply because he does not do wrong, but because he does what is right. Righteousness should be our # 1 priority in life (Mt. 6:33 - *"Seek ye first...His righteousness..."*).

Righteousness is:

1) Being just and fair (not partial)
2) Being kind and helpful (not self-centered)
3) Being holy and pure (not defiled)

How will righteousness help you defeat Satan's attacks?

1. A righteous man's prayers get answered (James 5)

2. A righteous man's life is not cluttered with obstacles to make him stumble

3. A righteous man's life is pleasing to God and God will come to his rescue (when God isn't helping a person, it is because that person is not right with God).

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right" (Eph. 6:1) --So that you will have a:--good life and a long life

"It's never right to do wrong to do right."

"The end never justifies the means"

If the end is righteous, then the means to that end should also be righteous.

III. SPREAD THE GOSPEL

V. 15

"Feet" - cp. Is. 52:7 - "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that

bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

Rom. 10:15

"Preparation" - readiness
"Be ready always" (I Pet. 3:15).

Our "feet" are that which move us forward into battle.
The victorious Christian life is not a stagnant one, not a "sterile" one, not an uninvolved one. It is taking the offensive for God. It is a life of being busy for God. Busy about His work. God's work for you and me is His Great Commission -- *"To preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mk. 16:15; Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

In order to conquer Satan we need to be busy "going with the Gospel." Our feet need to be bringing us to lost sinners in need of salvation.

How does witnessing (evangelism) keep us from Satan's attacks?

1) It keeps us from idleness (*"Idle hands are the devil's workshop")*
"An idle life parked at a 'red light' is a green light for Satan to come and side-swipe us."
Some of the most troublesome, disgruntled church members are those who are doing nothing in terms of evangelism.

2) It keeps us fulfilled and joy-filled (*"...fruit, that your joy may be full"*)
Depression comes when the focus of our lives is self. However, when the focus of our lives is others (when we are compassionately concerned for others and their need), depression flees.

IV. BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES

The hymn writer said: "I want to live above the world though Satan's darts at me are hurled; though some may dwell where these abound, my prayer, my aim is higher ground."

A shield is a defensive weapon; it is used to deflect the flaming arrows of the

wicked one.

As Satan aims and fires his arrows of:
"Fear" - we deflect with God's promise *"Be not afraid, for I am with thee"*
"Loneliness" - we deflect with God's promise of *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."*
Discouragement" - we deflect with God's promise of *"Your labor is not in vain in the Lord"*
"Trials and tribulation" - we deflect with God's promise of *"All things work together for good"*
"Persecution" - we deflect with God's promise of *"When you pass through the waters I will be with you..."*
"Sexual lust" - we deflect with God's promise of *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man..."*
"Faith" is the victory that overcomes the world (I Jn. 4).

V. BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR SALVATION

Ex: helmets are used in golden glove boxing; NFL; construction hard hats; motorcycling etc.

One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to assure us regarding our salvation. *"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God"* (Rom. 8).

When we grieve Him because of sin (Eph. 4) or quench Him because of unbelief (I Th. 5), we forfeit His ministry of convincing our spirit that we belong to God.

Satan plagues the mind; he torments the spirit of the one who lives in continual doubt of his salvation.

Paul said, *"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."*

VI. KNOW THE SCRIPTURE

V. 17

"Sword of the Spirit" - Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:15

The sword of the Spirit is not:

--new revelation from some self-appointed prophet

--psychiatry or secular psychology
--visions, dreams, or speaking in tongues

The weapon He uses to convict, rebuke, encourage the hearts of men is His inscripturated oracles, the Bible (Heb. 4:12 - *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.")*

A sword is an offensive and defensive weapon.

The Word of God offensively brings people to their knees so that they become captives of Jesus Christ (*"He led captivity captive").*

The Word of God defensively fights off false doctrine (Satanic distortions of God's truth).

It also defensively fights off temptations (Mt. 4 - *"It is written").*

VII. PRAY CONTINUALLY

In war times, one of the greatest tactics is to cut the lines of communication; to cut the telegraph wires; to jam and scramble the messages; to sabotage the phone lines.

Don't let Satan cut off your communication to the "Captain of the Lord's Host."