

Spiritual Armour

Ephesians 6:10-20 confirms that we fight not against "*flesh and blood but* against spiritual enemies - so we need to use the spiritual weapons we have at our disposal. We need the strength of God because we can do nothing in our own strength. Therefore put on the whole "*Armour of God*" as follows:

The Belt of Truth

The belt of truth is first part of the armour that keeps all the others together. **John 8:32** tells us that "*you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*" The belt of truth is not just about honesty in words, it applies to our actions and the way we conduct our lives. **John 14:6** tells us that Jesus Christ is the truth whereas satan is the father of lies. Keep the belt of truth firmly fastened around your waist so that you can withstand the tricks of the enemy.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

An essential part of a soldier's equipment is the breastplate which protects all the vital organs eg the heart and lungs. The Apostle Paul wrote that righteousness is the Christian's breastplate. We have automatic righteousness from God through Jesus Christ, who became sin for us, nailed it to the cross with his death and rose from the dead to give us eternal life. Therefore have faith, confess your sins and live holy in God's eyes.

The Slippers of Peace

Footgear is also very important. The soldier wears sturdy, protective shoes in order that they can stand firm in battle. As Christians, we also need to stand firm against our enemy. Scripture names Christian shoes as "*the preparation of the gospel of peace*" this means that our feet have a firm foundation planted in the word of God. Shoes enable us to walk over some rather difficult ground without any fear, so too does the Gospel of Peace. We can take that peace into every situation in our lives.

The Helmet of Salvation

A soldier may be able to withstand some injuries to his body but a blow to the head could be severe. In the same way the Helmet of Salvation is a protective headgear designed to protect the mind: as this is where the enemy attacks and bombards with his lies. Apostle Paul in 1 Thess 5:8 tells us to put on "...*the*

hope of salvation as a helmet” Jesus acquired our salvation on the Cross and He is the hope of our salvation.

The Shield of Faith

The shield in Roman Times was typically 2.5ft wide and 4ft tall made with layers of wood, leather trim and bound with rawhide or bronze stiches. The shield was the only manoeuvrable part of a soldier’s equipment and it was designed to protect them from arrows or javelins – sometimes the arrows were alight and so the material had to be able to absorb the flame.

Our shield of faith acts in the same way. When the fiery darts of the enemy take flight, they will hit the shield of faith and be extinguished on impact. The enemy wants you in turmoil and will endeavour to tempt you with fears, worries and despairs – we have to stand firm in Jesus who is our faith and extinguish every flaming dart with the shield of faith.

The Sword of the Spirit

A sword in itself is a mighty weapon but the Sword of the Spirit is no ordinary sword: it’s the Word of God and as we’ve already discussed its sharper than any double edged sword. The Sword of the Spirit is mightier than any other weapon because it’s used in the name of Jesus and powered by the Holy Spirit. Studying, reading and meditating on the Word of God will keep the sword sharp.