

## Christian Armor: God's Protective Pieces

By Peter Nieman Martin, Sr.  
June 28, 2014

### Ephesians 6:10-18 Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>10</sup> *In conclusion, be strong in the Lord [be empowered through your union with Him]; draw your strength from Him [that strength which His boundless might provides].*

<sup>11</sup> *Put on God's whole armor [the armor of a heavy-armed soldier which God supplies], that you may be able successfully to stand up against [all] the strategies and the deceits of the devil.*

<sup>12</sup> *For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despoticisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere.*

<sup>13</sup> *Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day [of danger], and, having done all [the crisis demands], to stand [firmly in your place].*

<sup>14</sup> *Stand therefore [hold your ground], having tightened the belt of truth around your loins and having put on the breastplate of integrity and of moral rectitude and right standing with God,*

<sup>15</sup> *And having shod your feet in preparation [to face the enemy with the <sup>[a]</sup>firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness <sup>[b]</sup>produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace.*

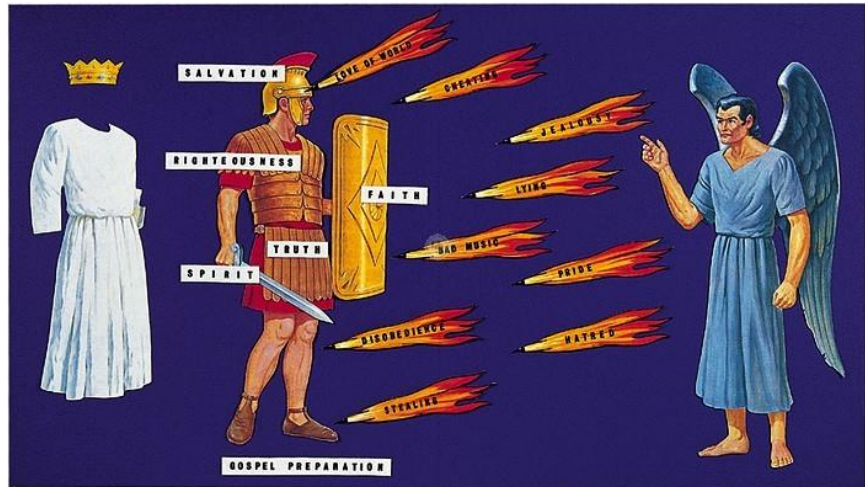
<sup>16</sup> *Lift up over all the [covering] shield of <sup>[c]</sup>saving faith, upon which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked [one].*

<sup>17</sup> *And take the helmet of salvation and the sword that the Spirit <sup>[d]</sup>wields, which is the Word of God.*

<sup>18</sup> *Pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints (God's consecrated people).*

I am genuinely persuaded that this lesson will be of great benefit to all who read it and put it into immediate practice. This has nothing to do with my authorship! It has everything to do with the power of the scriptures and the wisdom of God. In writing this (by the grace of God), I have come to see a powerful need for me to hasten to put these practical principles to work in my life. I have already started to do this very thing not only because it is the right thing to do but for the purposes of survival!

The 12<sup>th</sup> verse of Ephesians 6 is a “because” text. It **provides the reasons for** doing the 11<sup>th</sup> verse. **We are not contending only with human forces but those forces which control human forces.** This control by evil supernatural forces is such that the humans under the control of such power cannot resist it. There is the other thing which must be considered—the power of Satan not done through others. When the mind is so vexed that you think you are going crazy, and you



cannot pinpoint the cause of it right away. This is one of those occasions. Look at this commentary on Satan's abilities.

*Satan's abilities. The admonitions Paul gave indicate that Satan is a strong enemy (6:10-12), and that we need the power of God to be able to stand against him. Never underestimate the power of the devil. He is not compared to a lion and a dragon just for fun! The Book of Job tells what his power can do to a man's body, home, wealth, and friends. Jesus calls Satan a thief who, comes "to steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (John 10:10). Not only is Satan strong, but he is wise and subtle, and we fight against "the wiles of the devil." Wiles mean "cunning, crafty arts, stratagems." The Christian cannot afford to be "ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor 2:11). Some men are cunning and crafty and "he in wait to receive" (Eph 4:14), but behind them is the arch-deceiver, Satan. He masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14) and seeks to blind men's minds to the truth of God's Word. The fact that Paul uses the word "wrestle" indicates that we are involved in a hand-to-hand battle and are not mere spectators at a game. Satan wants to use our external enemy, the world, and our internal enemy, the flesh, to defeat us. His weapons and battle plans are **formidable**.*

*(from The Bible Exposition Commentary. Copyright © 1989 by Chariot Victor Publishing, and imprint of Cook Communication Ministries. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)*

That word “**formidable**” in the commentary is defined as **very powerful or strong; deserving serious attention and respect, something causing fear, dread, or apprehension**. This is how the weapons and battle plans of Satan are described! Now, ask yourselves, do these things warrant a serious attempt on our part to make certain that the armor of God is secure on us? Are you willing to do what it takes to do it? We are under siege (a prolonged period of trouble). This is not something that could happen. It is something that is already happening! We are at war—the worse kind and against the most aggressive and intelligent foe! Now let's talk about defenses! Solomon said, “**Purposes and plans are established by counsel; and [only] with good advice make or carry on war.**” (Proverbs 20:18). Paul has given the perfect advice in our text.

(1) **Stand** therefore [hold your ground], having tightened the belt of truth around your loins

The word “**stand**” means to **face or encounter**. The word “**withstand**” means to **stand or hold out against; resist or oppose**. One cannot **stand** without **withstanding**. Be mindful that unless there is a **resolute** frame of mind, one will not stand or withstand. **Resolute**, according to the definition found on dictionary.com., means “**characterized by firmness and determination.**” S. Martin says,

*The text requires that having taken the field we **keep it**. We may not retire to the ranks of those who refuse to fight: **we must stand**. The militant position must be maintained throughout life. We may be weak; **but must stand**. We may be weary; **but must stand**. We may be fearful; **but must stand**. We may be defeated in some single fight; **but must stand**. We may see others fall about us; **but must stand**. Many may desert our cause; **but we must stand**. Consternation may spread through the army of the Lord of Hosts; **but we must stand**. It may seem as though all things were against us; **but we must stand**. The day of final triumph may seem long delayed, and with weak, and weary, and aching hearts, we may cry, "How long, Lord? how long?" - **but we must stand**. The measure of*

*conflict and of service allotted to us may seem excessive, but having done all, **we must stand.** (from *The Biblical Illustrator* Copyright © 2002, 2003, 2006 Ages Software, Inc. and Biblesoft, Inc.)*

## **I. Loins girt about with the truth**

*Truth appropriated and made our own gives energy, firmness, and decision to Christian life and action, relieves us from the entanglement and distraction which come from uncertainty and doubt, gives us a complete command of all our vigour (vigor). It is like the strong belt of the ancient soldier which braced him up, made him conscious of his force, kept his armour in its place, and prevented it from interfering with the freedom of his action. (from *The Biblical Illustrator* Copyright © 2002, 2003, 2006 Ages Software, Inc. and Biblesoft, Inc.)*

In Proverbs 23:23, we are told to buy the truth and sell it not. Paul tells us to think on things which are true in Philippians 4:8. I will present a text by location instead of words so that you can see for yourselves its importance to this subject. The text is John 8:31, 32. Remember that all of the promises of God are true!

How well do you know yourself? How well do you understand your motives? Your character? Your purpose? If one were to make a slight against you falsely, how would you react? If one lied on you, would you seek revenge? Don't you see, knowing the truth about yourself is very important. When you are criticized unjustly by sinners or those acting ungodly, this knowledge of yourself will quench the fiery dart thrown at you. The more practiced you become in this, the better you will see the hand throwing the dart—Satan .

## **II. The breastplate of integrity and of moral rectitude and right standing with God**

The Amplified Version uses **integrity, moral rectitude, and right standing** in its dealings with the breastplate. These powerful characteristics caution the mind to be duly sober as to their meanings. There is certain zeal here which presents itself at a spiritual level. This zeal is motivated by one thing—to be approved of God. Nothing else matters. It is almost as if one has found the currency, the money to buy that field containing the pearl of great price—the three things listed below!

- **Integrity** is acting on what is right without expecting anything in return.
- **Moral Rectitude** means good character, incorruptness, and moral excellence.
- **Right standing** means in unquestionable spiritual fellowship with God

The language of the apostle Paul has significance in Philippians 3. Listen to his determination to arrive at a certain place in his spiritual life. Listen to the boldness of speech!

**Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.**

We must also remember those closing remarks of Joshua in Joshua 24:15. **And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods**

**which your fathers served on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**

A breastplate having these qualities is sure to be protective. It must be noted that such a breastplate does not come about of its own accord! It must be forged out of the strongest metals and then heated to high temperatures in order to be effective against Satan's darts. The venom of those darts is designed to expose hypocrisy and unfaithfulness in Christians whose breastplate is not as it is supposed to be.

There is another consideration regarding this breastplate. The physical breastplate was designed to protect those organs which had to do with life—the heart and the lungs. Remember the scripture which says, **“Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.”** (Proverbs 4:23, Amplified). And again, in Romans 10:10, you find that **it is with your heart that you believe and are justified.**

**III. Shod your feet in preparation [to face the enemy with the <sup>[a]</sup>firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness <sup>[b]</sup>produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace.**

Think about the shoes that you would wear if you were to go hiking in the woods or along some treacherous trail where stones and broken branches were everywhere. Would you wear dress shoes? Would you wear lightly-cushioned tennis shoes? Would you wear sandals or beach flip-flops? Of course you wouldn't. You would want the sturdiest shoes you could wear for the walking you would have to do; otherwise your tender feet would suffer damage. If that happened, the journey might soon be over before you even started good.

This world is a perilous place, full of rocks, stones, broken glass, and uneven terrain. Our spiritual walk is in danger at all times because of this; we never know what we may come upon. The mind, therefore, must be shod with the surety and certainty of the gospel's truth and promises so that we may walk by faith and not by sight. The more firmly our faith is established in us, the more certain is our ability to navigate those dangerous paths we must tread on our way to heaven. Trials and tribulations toughen us in the mental department, and we become like the leather soles on shoes able to walk and keep on walking despite what lay in our path. Like Paul, we say, “None of these things move me!” In this particular case, an aggressive attitude controlled by the Holy Spirit is necessary to have the proper spiritual footwear! We must be soberly mindful of the fact that when we would do good, evil is present. That being said, we must endeavor with all of our energies to overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21).

**IV. Lift up over all the [covering] shield of saving faith**

The shield deflects as it protects. It should be made of material that is able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. The idea of quenching in a physical sense means something of a liquid nature. Water quenches the thirst. The mind which is full of the word of God and of the Spirit is able to quench those darts. If we look at the shield as being a kind of force field, we can see its repelling nature. When the mind is layered with the word of God, the

penetrating ability of darts is stopped at the outer core of the shield. The toxic effect is so diminished that it does not alter the desire to move forward with great zeal and godly determination. I cannot over-emphasize the importance of study and meditation. This must be a daily endeavor of high priority! Don't have time? Sacrifice time! You can even buy the bible on CD and listen to two or three chapters daily. You should not listen to them randomly but rather chose texts that apply to your weakness so that you can use those scriptures to fortify you against your lusts. You must never forget that we are at war against an enemy who has conquered untold billions who were unprepared to meet his attacks. The enemy used their lusts against them. The method used by Satan was both brilliant militarily and lethal in a spiritual sense. Too often, the victims had no idea that they were in trouble until it was too late. They were ignorant of his devices. They had no defense against him.

## **V. And take the helmet of salvation**

The promise of salvation through the promises of God keeps us focused and moving forward. God cannot lie. (Numbers 23:19).His promises are exceedingly great and precious.

*For His divine power has bestowed upon us all things that [are requisite and suited] to life and godliness, through the [d]full, personal] knowledge of Him Who called us by and to His own glory and excellence (virtue). By means of these He has bestowed on us His precious and exceedingly great promises, so that through them you may escape [by flight] from the moral decay (rottenness and corruption) that is in the world because of covetousness (lust and greed), and become sharers (partakers) of the divine nature.(2 Peter 1:3, 4, AMP).*

Now, do you believe them? This text has no power for you if you do not believe what it says. Are you convinced of your salvation? If the promises are firm in your mind, then you are protected against anything that would suggest otherwise. You are established in salvation and salvation is established in you. You are unmovable, grounded, and settled in the truth. You have done everything in your power to so arm yourself with this helmet. You sit and think about what else you can do. Nothing comes to mind because you were careful to make sure that the helmet is as it ought to be. Keep moving forward soldier!

## **VI. The sword that the Spirit [d]wields, which is the Word of God.**

The power of God's word can be understood by what the Hebrew writer said in Hebrews 4:12. "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." An investment of the word of God will bring tremendous dividends to the one who seeks to do so. We cannot have enough word in us. The word of God provides light and exposes error. Jesus used it most effectively when contending with Satan in Matthew 4. With an understanding of the scriptures, we become powerful warriors ready for

the defense of the truth. With an understanding of the scriptures, we will be able to save our souls if we walk in the truth.

**VII. Pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty.**

Prayer is as much a part of the armor as every other part. It may well be the glue that keeps all of the pieces effectively connected. Prayer is communication with God—communication with God! His inexhaustible blessings await us—standing ready to deliver us more deeply into his will and love. Prayer strengthens the faith to such a degree that faith can now grow legs and walk confidently. Prayer provides resurrection to a hope which has died because God is able to raise it from the dead. Prayer provides a safety net for all of the brothers and sisters we pray for because effectual prayer produces! A godly person praying a fervent prayer is a horror to the evil spirits because they know that God will answer and deliver. The effectiveness of prayer is seen in Luke 18:1-8.

We are soldiers in a war for the soul. We dare not try to contend with the enemy in an unprepared manner. We must take time each morning to be properly outfitted with the Christian armor, along with Christian love. Then when we go our way, we will be in a better position to STAND.