

A SOLDIER FOR JESUS

BIBLE TEXT : Ephesians 6:10-24

LESSON 404 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Ephesians 6:10-24

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

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

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

¹⁵ And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

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, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

¹⁹ And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

²⁰ For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Preparation for War

Can you picture in your mind an army encampment -- maybe the very one you visited when your father or your older brother was in the service? The first thing you saw as you came to the gate was buildings, row on row, in which the soldiers lived and worked. Just beyond you saw men here and there on the field. Some were marching. Some were target-practising on the rifle range. Some were at the airfield, preparing their gear for a flying lesson in the Army jets. All these men were learning to be soldiers, learning how to wage war.

As you went inside one building, you may have seen mechanics working on airplane parts. In the mess hall you saw cooks and orderlies. In another, there were those who issued the soldiers' clothing, and kept a record of supplies. All this was being done for the defence of our nation.

Spiritual Warfare

The Christian life is a warfare, too. As soon as a boy or girl is saved, the devil comes to try to take away his salvation. We must be willing to fight against Satan to keep our salvation, just as we resist those who try to take our beautiful country, Nigeria, from us. God is on our side if we are true Christians. He wants us to be strong, aggressive soldiers who will not give one inch to the devil. God has provided a complete armour for the defence of our soul, and He commands us to put it on -- put on the whole armour of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles or cunning tricks of the devil.

Our Defence

Soldiers in the Nigeria Army must be physically strong. Each one is given an examination before he is accepted. In our lessons today the Bible commands that everyone in God's army be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. So even though a boy or girl may not be big and physically strong, he can lean hard upon Jesus and be strong in Him.

The first thing an Army soldier is taught is loyalty to his country, and obedience to the commands of his superior officer. We, as Christians, pledge our allegiance to the cause of Christ. We tell God we will be true to Him; we will go all the way to Heaven with Him; and we promise to obey His commands. The enemy of our soul tries to cause us to be disloyal to our heavenly country, of which Jesus is the Head. The devil tries to cause us to disobey the orders our Captain has given. Jesus is our Captain and His orders are written in the Bible.

We do not see our enemy, the devil, but he is very real. We do not see Jesus with our natural eyes, but He lives in our hearts and His presence is very real to us. The enemy of our soul is strong, but Jesus is stronger. We do not fear the devil, but we reverence and have a godly fear for Jesus, the Captain of our salvation.

The Armour

Each Army soldier is fitted with sturdy shoes for marching. He

²¹ But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

²² Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

²³ Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

is given a helmet to protect his head. He is given a rifle and trained to use it. When he is in the enemy territory he has to be watchful lest he be snared and taken captive.

We read that the first piece of armour which God has provided for His Christian soldiers is truth. Do you know what truth really is? We read the answer in the Bible where the answer to all our questions can be found. Jesus said to one of His disciples, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." When we speak the truth, not only with our mouth but in our heart, even though it may bring persecution or punishment, it makes us feel strong. We are strong in the Lord, for Jesus who is the Truth has helped us to speak the truth.

Truth is like a girdle about our hearts and minds. It enables us to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. When temptations comes we obey Christ's command and resist the devil.

The next piece of armour is the breastplate of righteousness. Jesus is our righteousness, and the doing of right things — Christ-like things — is like a strong plate of metal that protects our heart, the most vital part of our body. In another place in the Bible this defence is spoken of as the breastplate of faith and love (I Thessalonians 5:8). As we keep our faith strong in Jesus, and keep our love for Him fervent, we will never be defeated.

For our feet there is the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Our feet are to take us on errands of obedience. One of our Captain's commands is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). We can tell our playmates, perhaps our schoolteacher, and our mothers and fathers if they are not saved, about Jesus. God will give us opportunities if we have a true purpose to do what He commands. Then one of these days we will have a share in the kingdom of peace that Jesus will set up on this earth.

We are to take the shield of faith with which we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the devil. The darts the devil hurls are filled with fire. He wants them to stick fast in our heart and flood it with resentment, criticism, and evil thoughts that would destroy our soul. But we raise the shield of faith in God's promises, and the fire is quenched. The dart that the devil intended should destroy us falls harmlessly under our feet. For God has promised He "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape" (I Corinthians 10:13).

Those who hear the Word of God with an open heart, those who read and study the Bible in which God's promises are written, are the best soldiers. They can most easily wield the shield of faith, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

The helmet of salvation is next. This is the hope we have that the Lord Jesus will keep us under His precious Blood and help us win all our battles with the devil, every day and all the time until Jesus comes again.

The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is given last because it is the most effective piece of the armour. The Bible says, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). Jesus used it when the tempter came to Him. Each time Jesus would say, "It is written," and at last the devil left.

Watch and Pray

At the end of this list of spiritual armour, we are told to pray. We are told when to pray, how to pray, for whom to pray. We

are to pray always. We are to pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. We are to watch unto prayer, lest the enemy hinder us from persevering or staying with our praying until we know God has heard and answered. We are to pray for all the saints. We are to pray for ourselves and for each and all our fellows in the Gospel; and especially for our ministers, and our overseers, that they may preach the Word of God boldly as God would have them preach.

QUESTIONS

1. In whose power are we to be strong as Christian soldiers?
2. Why is it necessary for us to put on the whole armour of God?
3. Against what powers and rulers do we wrestle?
4. What six pieces of armour are listed in our lesson today?
5. When and how are we to pray? For whom?
6. Why did Paul want the Ephesian Christians to pray for him