**The Whole Armor of God**

By Arlen Chitwood

Ephesians 6:10-18 is the passage in the Word of God that instructs Christians concerning how to be properly clothed in order to withstand the onslaughts of Satan and his demons today. There is a battle presently being waged. This battle is specifically said to not be “*against flesh and blood* [not against fallen man residing on the earth],” but, instead, “*against principalities*, *against powers*, *against the rulers of the darkness of this world* [age], *against spiritual wickedness in high places* [against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenlies]” (Ephesians 6:12). And the issue at hand concerns *a future governmental control over the earth from a heavenly realm as joint-heirs with the* “*King of kings*, *and Lord of lords*.”

A battle of this nature requires *extensive preparation*, and only those properly prepared can be victorious in the battle. This is the reason given in Ephesians 4:11ff for the placement of pastor-teachers in the Church, and this is the reason given in Ephesians 6:10ff for the battle-dress in which Christians are to be arrayed.

Christians entering into this conflict are to take unto themselves “*the whole armor of God*.” Nothing short of this will suffice, for Christians are able to withstand Satan’s attacks (are able to stand against the wiles of the devil) only in this manner.

Six items are listed for Christians to take in order to be properly clothed in the present conflict:

1) “*Stand therefore*, *having girded your waist with truth* . . . .” (Ephesians 6:14a).

There is no definite article before “truth.” This is not “the truth,” which is the Word of God. That appears later (Ephesians 6:17).

The girdle is placed about the waist first, and the other pieces of armor are affixed to the girdle. Placing the girdle about the waist is with a view to the other pieces of armor also being taken and put on; and for a Christian to put on the girdle of truth can only be synonymous with a Christian entering the conflict in a truthful or sincere and earnest manner, looking ahead to continuing the process of putting on the armor, ultimately resulting in his being clothed with the whole armor of God.

Arraying one’s self with the girdle has to do with a Caleb- and Joshua-type attitude toward the goal in view:

. . . *Let us go up at once and take possession*, *for we are well able to overcome it*. (Numbers 13:30).

2) “. . . *having put on the breastplate of righteousness*” (Ephesians 6:14b).

Note that this is something that the Christian himself is to put on. This has nothing to do with the righteousness of Christ imputed to the Christian at the time of the birth from above. Rather, the “*breastplate of righteousness*” has to do with *right living*. It has to do with the “*righteous acts of the saints*” (Revelation 19:8, ASV), which make up the wedding garment.

3) “*and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace*” (Ephesians 6:15).

Note the emphasis in verses eleven, thirteen, and fourteen relative to *standing* as one goes forth to battle: “*to stand*” (Ephesians 6:11), “withstand [lit., ‘stand against’],” “*to stand*” (Ephesians 6:13), and “*Stand*” (Ephesians 6:14). One must have solid footing to stand upon. Both feet must be firmly planted, “*shod* . . . *with the preparation* [‘readiness’] *of the gospel of peace*.”

There are two aspects to the gospel in Scripture. One appears in connection with “peace *with* God,” and the other appears in connection with “the peace *of* God.”

“Peace *with* God” comes about through justification by grace through faith, as seen in Ephesians 2:8-9: “*Therefore having been justified by faith*, *we have peace* *with* *God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Romans 5:1). This peace results from one being placed upon the foundation, with the most sure, steadfast footing possible, apart from which there can be no conflict.

However, distinctions between “peace *with* God” and “the peace *of* God” are not what is in view in Ephesians 6:15, for availing oneself of the proper footwear (for both feet) is something that, contextually, occurs following salvation.

In a parallel passage to that which is in view, the latter part of Romans 10:15 states,

*How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace*, *who bring glad tidings of good things*!

The feet are seen as the vehicle of transportation for the messenger, as he goes about proclaiming good news concerning *peace*. Within the overall scope of the good news, as previously stated, there is a facet of the message having to do with “*peace with God*” (for the unsaved [Romans 5:1]) and there is a facet of the message having to do with the “*peace of God*” (for the saved [Philippians 4:5-7]). The contextual emphasis in Romans 10:15 though has to do with *the saved*, not with the unsaved.

Exactly the same thought is in view regarding the armor in Ephesians 6:15. Having one’s feet properly shod has to do with proper preparation relative to the good news concerning *peace*, as it pertains to the saved, exactly as seen in Romans 10:15; and this would be based on the person already having “*peace with God*,” as seen in Romans 5:1.

The messenger’s feet being properly shod shows a proper preparation of the messenger as he goes about proclaiming this message concerning *peace*. And this message of *peace* would have two facets — *the peace of God* now (having to do with the present aspect of salvation, the outworking of the saving of the soul), culminating in a future *peace* when *the Prince of Peace* is Himself present (having to do with the future aspect of salvation, when the salvation of the soul will be realized).

4) “*Above all*, *taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one*” (Ephesians 6:16).

“Faith” is simply *believing that which God has to say about a matter*. The weakness of the average Christian is lack of faith, which results from the neglect of prayerful study of and meditation in the Word of God. Hebrews 11, the great chapter on *faith*, provides the capstone to the first ten chapters of the book of Hebrews; and the opening two verses of Hebrews 12 provide the capstone to all that is stated in chapter eleven.

In these verses, Christians are exhorted to “*lay aside every weight* [every hindrance in the spiritual warfare], *and the sin which so easily ensnares us* [lack of faith, the besetting sin common to every Christian (ref. Hebrews 11)].” And in this manner alone Christians are to “*run with endurance*” the race set before them, “*looking to Jesus* [lit., looking from, to Jesus (i.e., looking from all that surrounds, to Jesus)] . . . .”

5) “*And take the helmet of salvation* . . . .” (Ephesians 6:17a).

1 Thessalonians 5:8 reveals that this helmet is the “*hope of salvation*.” This is the salvation to be revealed (salvation of the soul) at the time Christ returns. The hope set before Christians is the hope of occupying a position with Christ in His coming kingdom. There is no other doctrine in the Word of God that will inspire and encourage a Christian more in the present conflict against Satan and his demons than the doctrine of “*that blessed hope*” (Titus 2:12-13; *cf*. Colossians 1:5, 27; Titus 1:2; 3:7; Hebrews 3:6; 6:18).

6) “*and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*” (Ephesians 6:17b).

Christ Himself, in the temptation account, demonstrated that the one great weapon to be used against Satan is the Word of God. Satan also knew and attested to the power of this Word when he attempted to use it against Christ (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; *cf*. Hebrews 4:12). David said, “*Your Word I have hid in mine heart that I might not sin against You*” (Psalm 119:11). It is vitally important, it is imperative, that Christians *know and use the Word of God* in the present conflict.

Having properly clothed and armed themselves, Christians are to then be:

*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints*.(Ephesians 6:18)

Overcoming is a lifelong task, provision has been made, and proffered rewards await the victors. In the words of Paul, as he was moved [borne along] by the Holy Spirit, “*So run*, *that you may obtain*” (1 Corinthians 9:24b).

[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Ch. 4, The Whole Armor of God](http://bibleone.net/JSC04.htm)