

The Whole Armor of God



Key Scripture:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord be empowered through your union with Him; draw your strength from Him that strength which His boundless might provides.

Put on the whole armor of God -- the armor of a heavy-armed soldier, which God supplies -- that you may be able to successfully stand up against all the strategies and deceits of the devil.

For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood -- contending only with physical opponents -- but against principalities (despotisms), against the powers, against (the master spirits who are) the world rulers of this present darkness, against spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere [high places].

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.

Stand therefore -- hold your ground -- having girded or tightened the belt of truth around your loins, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness (integrity) and of moral rectitude and right stand' standing with God;

And have shod your feet in preparation (to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness and the readiness produced by the Good News of the Gospel of peace.

Above all, lift up over all the covering shield of saving faith, upon which you can quench the fiery darts and flaming missiles of the wicked (one).

And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Pray at all times -- on every occasion in every season -- in the Spirit with all (manner of) prayer and supplication and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding on behalf of all the saints (God's consecrated people).

Ephesians 6:10-18 Amplified and King James Version

The Spiritual Armor

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

"The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ... But **put on the** Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts." (Romans 13:14)

The apostle Paul was a trained warrior in the constant conflict with the forces of darkness. From his letters we see how real the foe and the battle was to him. His instructions along with the whole Word of God can teach us how to recognize the tactics of the evil one in our own lives. We must not be ignorant or naive of his devices. The evil one is always too much for us in our own strength. Our victory comes as we seek to abide in the LORD which is where the enemy is defeated. (2 Corinthians 2:11, Proverbs 1:17) "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free." John 8:32

When Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians he had been closely guarded by Roman soldiers for several months. He had a good opportunity to observe the pieces of the soldier's armor at close range! The World Book encyclopedia states that the Roman army was originally made up of citizens whose duty it was to serve in time of war. By Caesar's time (40 B.C.) most of the soldiers were professionals in a standing army. Their training and discipline made them one of the greatest forces of all time.

It is important from the outset to grasp the fact that this is not *our* armor, but *God's*, given to protect us. It is not our righteousness, or our faith, or our authority which can stand in this evil day, but God's provision alone. In a sense, all pieces of the armor combined together, are Christ Himself. Notice, too, that we need to put on this armor before battle. It will do no good to wait until the dart is on its way to go look for the shield of faith! We must live in the armor, in order to be protected from various points of attack, so that the enemy's blows will not penetrate or harm us."

To put on the armor of God is to appropriate His power in a most personal way. It involves first and foremost a change of heart. The person who boasts that he has confidence in God but does not truly believe with his heart will never be safe in the war zone that separates earth and heaven. If by negligence or choice he fails to put on God's armor and rushes naked into battle, he signs his own death certificate. God's word teaches us how to put on Christ and His graces so that we are fitly armed.

Christian, take care not to trust in the armor of God, but in the God of the armor. All your weapons are only 'mighty through God' (2 Corinthians 10:4). The ark was the means of Israel's safety, but then the people began to glory in it instead of in God Himself, it hastened their overthrow. We do not simply say, or pray on the armor, we must seek to live and apply these truths in a very real way on a daily basis.

A true soldier goes to the front with no arms except what his general commands. It is not left to everyone's fancy to bring whatever weapons he pleases; this would only breed chaos. The Christian soldier is similarly bound to God's orders. Though the army is on earth, the council of war sits in heaven and issues directives: "Here are your orders ... these are your weapons." And those who do more or use other than God's commands, though with some seeming success against sin, shall surely be called to account for their boldness. The discipline of war among men is strict in this case. Some have been court-martialed and executed even though they have beaten the enemy, because they forgot their rank or acted without orders. The discipline of God is very precise on this point.

God designs each part of the armor for a particular purpose; therefore the saint must be properly attired. In other words, it will not do to cover the heart with the helmet, or to hold the buckler where

the breastplate ought to be. Indeed, there are a series of graces, each with a special function to bring life and health to the soul.

Not only is each piece of the armor perfect as a whole, but God provides for each piece to be complete and perfect as well. Here the saint is called to keep his armor ready for use and shining. He must not only seek after all the graces, but also grow and mature in every particular grace--even to perfection itself. (Matthew 5:48 "Be ye ... perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.")

In an army called to active duty, weapons are frequently battered and broken. One man has his helmet dented, another his sword bent, a third his **pistol broken**. So replacements are often necessary. You need an armor shop near at hand to make up your losses as quickly as possible, for Satan is most likely to attack when you are least prepared to repel his charge. He is called 'the old serpent' and for good reason, subtle and cunning; wrathful by nature, yet ever more enraged. Like a bull, the longer he is baited, the madder he grows. And considering what little time he has left, we who are to fight with him must enter the arena well equipped.

God both designs and makes His saint's armor; it is therefore perfect in every detail. The obligation which rests--with the saint is to 'put on the whole armor of God.' ...It is one thing to have the armor in the house, and another thing to have it buckled on--to have grace in principle, and grace in action.

The Christian's armor is made to be worn--no taking it off until you have finished your course. Your armor and your garment of flesh come off together. In heaven you shall appear, not in armor, but in robes of glory. Nevertheless, for the present you must wear your assigned suit night and day. You must walk, work, and sleep in it or you are not a true soldier of Christ. (Acts 24:16) Here we see this holy man at his arms, training like a true soldier, his own heart the target range on which he practices all the graces in preparation for battle.

All of the language of this passage speaks of taking definite action on our part. We must make the decision to walk in the armor of God. Galatians 3:27 instructs us to cloth ourselves with Christ. Jesus Christ is our armor. Every individual piece of the armor is Jesus in our lives.

Our direction to stand is vital. The Greek word used here for stand is a military term which means that having once conquered to stay and maintain. It means to live in it, to abide, to endure, to covenant. It implies not only a fighting posture but also a conquering posture-- "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25). When we come to stand in God's army we must remain in armor, live in the armor, and walk in it continuously. This armor is not simply something we put on when we pray; we must make it a part of our life.

Rest easy, the duel is not between the church and Satan, but between Christ and Satan. These are the champions of the two sides. Gather round and watch the all-wise God joust with His crafty opponent. You shall behold the Almighty smite off this Goliath's head with his own sword, and take this wicked knight in the trap of his own schemes. Unbelief fears Satan as a lion; faith treads upon him as a worm. (Source unknown)

Notes from "The Adversary" by Mark 1. Bubeck on the spiritual armor:

... The enemy presses to battle us, and it is God's sovereign will and purpose in this day that we fight a good fight.

...As believers we are to aggressively act in taking the armor and putting it on. ...Every time we face the enemy and battle him we should be sure our armor is in place. Daily we need to appropriate the armor and put on our spiritual dress for battle. A very close, hard-fought battle is always before us. Facing that battle without armor is unthinkable.

Putting on the armor is something done by prayer and the daily practice of faith. As you equip yourself with the whole armor of God, you will find yourself using it many times throughout the day. It is a very worshipful and praising experience to meditate upon each piece of the armor provided for us by God. This is the **whole** armor of God. It is a complete, total provision of God, sufficient to equip us to stand against the very worst Satan can dish out.

Following is a typical prayer one might use in putting on his armor, seeking to show how it can enlarge into a worship and praise experience of adoration of our Lord:

"Heavenly Father, I desire to be obedient by being strong in the Lord and the power of Your might. I see that this is Your will and purpose for me. I recognize that it is essential to put on the armor that You have provided and I do so now with gratitude and praise that You have provided all I need to stand in victory against Satan and his kingdom. Grant me wisdom to discern the tactics and sneakiness of Satan's strategy against me. Enable me to wrestle in victory against the princes, powers, rulers and wicked spirits who carry the battle of darkness against me.

I delight to take the armor You have provided and by faith to put it on as effective spiritual protection against the spiritual forces of darkness

I confidently take the loin girdle of truth that You offer me. I take Him who is the truth as my strength and protection. I reject Satan's lies and deceiving ways to gain advantage against me. Grant me discernment and wisdom to recognize the subtle deceiving ways in which Satan seeks to cause me to accept his lies as truth. I desire to believe only the truth, to live by truth, to speak the truth, and to know the truth. I worship and praise you that You lead me only in the ways of truth. Thank You that Satan cannot stand against the bold use of Truth.

Thank you for the breastplate of righteousness which you offer me. I eagerly accept it and put it on as my protection.

Thank you for reminding me again that all my righteousness comes from You. I embrace that righteousness which is mine by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His righteousness that is mine through justification. I reject and repudiate all trust in my own righteousness which is as filthy rags. I ask you to cleanse me of all the times I have counted my own goodness as being acceptable before You. I bring the righteousness of my Lord directly against all that Satan is accusing against me. I express my desire to walk in His holiness and by faith appropriate the righteousness of Christ. I invite Jesus to walk in His holiness in my life today that I might experience His righteousness in total context of ordinary living. I

count upon the righteousness of my Lord to be my protection. I know that Satan must retreat from before the righteousness of God.

Thank You, Lord, for the sandals of peace You have provided. I desire that my feet should stand on the solid rock of the peace that You have provided. I claim the peace with God which is mine through justification. I desire the peace of God which touches my emotions and feelings through prayer and sanctification (Phil. 4:6). Thank You that as I walk in obedience to You that the God of peace promises to walk with me (Phil. 4:9), that as the God of Peace you are putting Satan under my feet (Romans 16:20). I will share this good news of peace with all others today that Your Spirit will bring into my life and witness. Thank You that You have not given me the spirit of fear but of love and power and a sound mind (II Tim. 1:7). Thank You that Satan cannot stand against Your peace.

Eagerly, Lord, I lift up the shield of faith against all the blazing missiles that Satan and his hosts fire at me. I recognize that You are my shield and that in Your incarnation and crucifixion You took the arrows of Satan which I deserved. By faith I count upon You to shield me from above and beneath, on my right and on my left; in front of me and behind me, that I might be protected, walled in, encapsulated by You that Satan may gain no way to hurt or destroy me from fulfilling Your will today. I am willing that any fiery darts of Satan You wish to touch me should do so, but I shall look upon them as refining fires permitted in Your providence for my refining and glory (I Peter 1). Thank you that You are a complete and perfect shield and that Satan cannot touch me apart from Your sovereign purpose.

I recognize that my mind is a particular target of Satan's deceiving ways. I take from you the helmet of salvation. I cover my mind, my thoughts, with your salvation. I recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ is my salvation. I helmet my head with Him. I invite His mind to be in me. Let me think His thoughts, feel His love and compassion, and discern His will and leading in all things. Let my mind be occupied with the continuing, daily, saving work of my Lord in and through my life. May the salvation of the Lord meet and defeat all satanic thoughts that come to my mind.

With joy I take hold of the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. I choose to believe it and to live in its truth and power. Grant me the love for Your Word which comes from the Holy Spirit. Forgive and cleanse me from the sin of neglecting Your word. Enable me to memorize and meditate upon its truth. Grant me proficient recall and skill in using Your Word against all of Satan's subtle attacks against me, even as My Lord Jesus used the Word against Satan. Enable me to use Your Word not only to defend myself against Satan, but also to claim its promises and to wield the sword strong against Satan to defeat him, to push him back, to take away from him ground he claims and to win great victories for my God through Your Word. Thank You that Satan must retreat from Your Word applied against him.

The Armor of Light: Truth

"...having girded your loins with truth..."

The Roman army had the finest armor in the ancient world. In the Roman's armor the girdle was a belt, six to eight inches wide, which went around the waist. It was one of his most important pieces of equipment because everything else in his armor fastened to the belt. If the belt wasn't in place, then the armor wouldn't be secure. Paul says that the Christian's foundation piece of armor is the Truth: A growing knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures and how they apply in life. God wants us to have defensive armor in place against the wiles of Satan. The belt of Truth must be secure or everything else will fall off.

GIRD:

"To gird," means to take upon oneself, to encircle, fasten, enclose, to equip, to clothe, invest, to prepare oneself for action. Gird comes from the Greek word "Perizonnumi" which means to gird around or about, literally of girding or preparing oneself for service; for rapidity of movement. Orientals tied or girded their garments around their loins before walking or working.

To gird the loins with truth is not something you do in the heat of battle. It is done first in preparation and readiness for the battle!

Luke 12:35 says "Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning." An amplified composite of translations of this verse would read: "Be prepared--all dressed and ready for whatever comes--ready for service, ready for action, with clothes fastened at the waist, belts fastened and the lamp lit and burning."

Strong's Concordance defines "gird" as "to fasten one's belt (Literally or figuratively). Perizonnumi comes from two words "peri" meaning to encircle or surround and "zonnumi" meaning to bind about, especially with a belt or girdle. Peri speaks of through, thoroughness, all over, around, completeness. Thus this word would be translated to mean "Be completely surrounded and bound to God's word of truth."

We are thus prepared for battle through surrounding ourselves with God's truth, being joined and firmly fastened to God's truth. This is our firm foundation, our firm root.

The belt goes around our middle and is symbolic of our innermost being, our vitals. It is not a superficial knowledge that will stand against the enemy but a Truth that is forged within us.

The belt is the piece of equipment that holds the rest of the armor in place and it is thus bound tightly to the figure. The Lord can only be our armor while we are walking in the truth.

Hebrew Honey defines "gird" in the following ways:

- To surround and bind to oneself as with a garment
- To be prepared for battle (Psalm 18:39)
- When we are girded we are filled with strength (Psalm 18:32)

LOINS:

The loins are regarded as the region of the thighs and groin. This is symbolic of the region of strength and procreative power or unseemly nakedness. The loins are regarded as the seat for generative power, the bracing of oneself so as to maintain one's position, alertness necessary for sobriety and setting of hope.

Isaiah 11:5 "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

I Peter 1:13 "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

TRUTH:

The Greek word used here for Truth is "Aletheuo" which means to be true in doctrine and profession, to speak the truth, not to be hidden, to deal faithfully or truly with anyone.

This truth is to be our way of life. It means to be genuine in the very essence of the matter. God's word is always the reality of a thing. This refers not merely to ethical truth, but truth in all its fullness and scope, as embodied in Him. He is the perfect expression of Truth. This word speaks of truth in character, sincerity, and integrity of character.

"There can be no crookedness, no turning aside from or evasion of the truth, no willful giving of wrong impressions, no exaggeration of facts, no coloring of actions.'Always, everywhere, in everything, at any cost, or sacrifice, facing the truth as it concerns ourselves in the eyes of others and of God. And looking to God with a keen desire for the light of His truth to be streaming upon us within and without day after day. In brief, truth is light, untruth in any degree is darkness.... be aware that the devil's wiles will ceaselessly be planned to entangle us in some shade of untruth, in our attitude toward God, or our intercourse with others." ~~Jessie Penn-Lewis~~ "The Warfare with Satan" p. 69

Related Scriptures:

John 1:14; John 8:32; John 14:6; John 14:17; John 16:13; John 17:19; John 18:37, 38; Isaiah 44:18-20; Romans 10:14-15, 17; Hosea 4:6

BELT OF TRUTH: Defensive armor--form of attack = lies and errors

"Jesus said unto him, 'I AM the way, the Truth and the life...' (John 14:6)

Satan has been a liar and the father of lies from the beginning. He seeks to have us doubt the word of God, to twist and pervert the truth. One of his favorite ways is false accusation. "The accuser of the brethren" also seeks to constantly malign God's character. The Belt of truth goes right around our middle and examines the very center of things. It examines our motives.

"Behold, thou desirest truth in the innermost being and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom." (Psalm 51:6)

The Armor Of Light: Breastplate of Righteousness

"...and having put on the breastplate of righteousness..."

In the Roman armor there was a breastplate which was made of bronze backed with tough pieces of hide. This protected the most vital areas of the body, the heart and lungs. The breastplate of our armor which protects our heart from attacks of Satan is righteousness. This refers to the righteousness of Christ.

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (II Corinthians 5:21)

BREASTPLATE:

The Greek word for breastplate is "thorax" which means a corselet or breastplate. It consists of two parts and protects the body on 2 sides from neck to middle.

The breastplate is a piece of defensive plate armor for the breast. It was also the square piece of linen cloth embroidered with gold and adorned with the 12 precious stones symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel worn by the Jewish high priest as he ministered to the Lord.

The breastplate is also the term used to describe the strap or straps crossing a horses' breast and attached to the saddle. It is also the inscription plate on a coffin.

Isaiah 59:7 "And He (Jesus) put on righteousness like a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on His head."

I Thes. 5:8 "Let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love."

Revelation 9:9, 17 speaks of the breastplates worn by powers of darkness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

Righteousness is defined as the character of being right with God, to be right or just. It was formerly spelled "rightwiseness". It is used to denote an attribute of God, His faithfulness or truthfulness to that which is consistent with His own nature and promises.

Romans 3:25-26 speaks of His righteousness as exhibited in the death of Christ which is sufficient to show men that God is neither indifferent to sin nor regards it lightly. On the contrary, it demonstrates that quality of holiness in Him which must find expression in His condemnation of sin.

Faith reckoned for righteousness = produces righteousness of life
= conformity to do the will of God

We have an initial righteousness that we did not earn and did not deserve. We have this righteousness through the blood shed at the cross in Jesus Christ and through this we have a new relationship with

God. The breastplate covers our heart. It is talking about a heart relationship with God. Isaiah 59:2 tells us that our sin will separate us from God, so if there is any sin which we are knowingly engaging in we will be separated from God and our prayers will not be effective. So we need to deal with any sin in our life on a continual basis.

The breastplate of righteousness means to walk with a conscience void of offense toward God and man. It is only when our heart condemns us NOT that we have a boldness toward God. Satan seeks to bring us under condemnation and thus bound from walking in the fullness of God's love and blessings. To walk in God's righteousness we need to have a revelation of the power of the blood of the Lamb. His righteousness given to us is our provision of "right standing" before Him and enables us to walk in integrity and moral righteousness.

We must always be certain that we are -not walking in the breastplate of our own righteousness for it will most certainly fail to protect us. We must know that it is not our own righteousness which allows us to stand against Satan, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is given to us. We are not only forgiven for our sins, but we are clothed with the very righteousness of Christ. Satan is the accuser of the brethren and he likes to make us believe that when we fail we will lose our standing with Christ. At that time if we have on the breastplate of righteousness, we can say, Phase out Satan, I don't appear to God in my own righteousness, I never did. It's Christ's righteousness which has always made me acceptable and it hasn't changed.

Related Scriptures:

Genesis 15:6; Deut. 24:13, Psalm 4:4,5; Psalm 5:8; Psalm 11:7; Psalm 36:6; Psalm 50:6; Psalm 51:14,19; Psalm 85:10; Psalm 99:4; Psalm 103:17, Psalm 106:31; Psalm 112:3; Psalm 132:9; Proverbs 10:2; Proverbs 10:21,21; Proverbs 13:6; Proverbs 14:34; Proverbs 16:12; Isaiah 45:23, Isaiah 59:17; Ezekiel 33:13; Daniel 12:3; Hosea 2:19; Malachi 4:2; Matthew 3:15; John 16:5; Acts 13:10; Romans 1:17; Romans 4:11; Romans 10:10; Romans 14:17; 2Cor. 6:7, 14; Ephesians 4:24; Ephesians 5:10; Philippians 3:9; 11 Timothy 3:16; 11 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 7:2; James 2:23; Revelation 19:8; Matthew 5:10, Isaiah 67:6

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: Defensive armor-form of attack = temptations, accusations, guilt, sin

One of the Hebrew covenant names of God in the Old Testament is "Jehovah Tsidkenu" which means "The Lord is our Righteousness". This name reveals the fullness of the measure of our acceptance in the presence of God. Righteousness comes from the Hebrew word "tsedek" which originally means to be straight, that which is morally upright, clean and clear in righteousness. It can also mean a full weight or measure toward God in a spiritual sense (Psalm 51:16-17; 119:142,144). Peter called Jesus the Holy One and the "Righteous One." His righteousness has been bestowed upon us. When we wear the righteousness of God we are given the divine power to stand against the temptations of the enemy. We stand not in our own strength to resist the enemy but upon the power of God's righteousness. We are assured victory over every ploy of Satan to withstand temptations to sin.

The Armor of Light: Gospel of Peace

"...and having feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace..."

The Roman soldier wore a hobnail sandal equipped with spikes in the heels to keep their feet from slipping in time of battle. When one fought with a sword it was essential that you did not lose your footing. To lose your footing when fighting in face-to-face combat could mean death and the spikes helped to ensure firm footing at all times.

"Anyone who has ever fought in any kind of hand-to-hand combat knows that sure footing is most important. I used to box, and I remember how we put resin on the bottom of our shoes. More than once I was floored because I lost my footing just at the time I was throwing a punch. In fighting with a sword as they did in the time of the Roman legion a loss of footing meant death. In the Christian life we need solid footing, too, if we are going to walk and resist Satan. That solid footing is provided by the Gospel of Peace. This is not the same as the Gospel of salvation. Gospel means good news, and it is certainly great news that we have forgiveness through Jesus Christ, but there is more good news for us. There is a place of rest and peace of mind for every Christian; it is God's hiding place for every believer in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 4 tells us about entering God's rest. It is a rest for here and now, God has peace of mind and a resting place available for every believer. Learn to depend upon the promises of God for peace and then we will be able to stand against the wiles of Satan. He will knock us off balance and have us on the ground before we know it." Hal Lindsey, "Satan is Alive and Well..."

FEET:

Webster's defines feet: To impress deeply, to be firmly established, that upon which we stand or move, the base or bottom. Reference to foot soldiers or infantrymen. That part without which we cannot stand or run or walk.

Feet represent our walk and our testimony. A life of truth and fellowship with God is bound to result in testimony. Feet represent a living, active faith which is vibrant and participating in life. The feet are symbolic of motion or action. It is used in phrases expressing subjection and the humility and receptivity of discipleship, of obeisance and worship. Washing the feet of another betokened the humility of service and the comfort of the guest, and was a feature of hospitality.

"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses." Joshua 1:3

(See Luke 1:79; Acts 5:9; Romans 3:15; 10:15; Hebrews 12:13; 1 Cor. 15:27; Acts 22:3; Matthew 28:9; Luke 7:38; John 13:5, 1 Timothy 5:10; Luke 8:5)

SHOD:

The word "shod" means to be bound underneath, to be firmly affixed, to have shoes placed upon one's feet. In the case of a horse who is shod, the shoe is nailed right to the hoof and is not removed. To be shod means to be fitted with shoes that are suitable to, proper, suited to the purpose or function required.

"How beautiful on 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!" (Isaiah 52:7)

PREPARATION:

Preparation speaks of a readiness to act or to speak. One who is prepared has a ready reply and is available to be used. Our feet are equipped with shoes for marching and suggests a promptness of service to evangelize the world.

"The one who dwells with Christ in the heavenlies walks on earth for one and only one purpose, of being a ready messenger for Him and for this part of armor to be overlooked will mean defeat before the foe."

Jessie Penn-Lewis

I Peter 3:15 "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."

GOSPEL:

This is also translated as Good News. This is anything which is proclaimed in God's word and is accepted as the absolute truth.

Acts 10:36 "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of All)..."

Acts 10:36-43 offers a brief definition of the Gospel and outlines the message of the Gospel. This is the essential which needs to be shared with the lost.

PEACE:

Peace is defined as the harmony, serenity, calm or quiet, the freedom from war both without and within. The peace of Jesus Christ is not always evidenced by outward peace but consists of a deep inner peace in our spirit.

A group of artists were commissioned to paint a picture best illustrating peace. Most chose to draw pleasant valleys, tranquil seas, and rich pastures but the painting chosen as most depicting peace was that of a small sparrow. This sparrow was nestled in a cleft of a rock with a storm raging all around him. He had found a safe, dry refuge in the midst of the storm.

Jehovah Shalom is one of the Hebrew covenant names of God. Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace and this name was first revealed to Gideon in a time of warfare. Israel had fallen into apostasy and the their enemies had the people were living in fear and bondage. Jehovah appeared to Gideon as a deliverer and showed Himself as Jehovah Shalom in confident anticipation of victory and peace. Our strength and position of authority in spiritual warfare is established as we enter and abide in the inner sanctuary of God's peace. His peace is not to be confused with passive complacency but is extremely active and powerful. The name speaks of harmony and reconciliation based on the completion of a transaction, the payment of a debt, the giving of satisfaction. Shalom is translated as Peace, wellness, or wholeness. Jehovah is our complete peace. His desire is for us to have peace on all sides. Shalom also means "full, lacking in nothing".

In Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, we find peace between God and man because of the atonement. It speaks of wholeness, prosperity, and tranquility. This is truly "Good News". In times of war God not only gives peace but He is our Peace! Jehovah Shalom overcomes all violence "because He had done no violence nor was there any deceit in His mouth." (Isaiah 53:9)

Shalom is used 170 times in the Bible and is translated simply as "peace". Jerusalem, the city of our LORD, means "City of Peace". The Greek word for peace is "eirene" which means to live life at its best. The peace offering mentioned in the Old Testament is not a request for peace, but a celebration of having obtained it." (Ephesians 6:15; Isaiah 9:6 7; Luke 1:78)

Satan's nature is violent and he seeks to bring violence against all of mankind. Violence infringes upon man's own will and rights and results in "killing, stealing, and destruction. Mankind is truly waiting to hear the Good News of the message of salvation. We must be always ready, always prepared to go wherever the Lord sends us and to speak the Words that He gives us, to share the message of Good News with those who are lost.

Related Scriptures:

Romans 10:9,10, 15; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Luke 1:78, 1 Corinthians 15:1

FEET SHOD WITH PREPARATION OF GOSPEL OF PEACE: Defensive armor--form of attack fear, violence, any emotion which would cause us to lose God's peace in our spirit (i.e. anxiety) Philippians 4:6-7)

Armor of Light: Shield of Faith

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

A Roman soldier's shield was about two feet wide by four feet long. He used it to ward off blows of the enemy and also to hide behind when the enemy archers would let go a volley of arrows. The Romans could kneel down and erect a wall of shields around them to block out the flaming missiles.

SHIELD:

A shield is a defensive weapon that is carried upon the arm for protection. Paul says, "Above all, taking the shield..." The shield was the ancient soldier's chief defense. In a siege the shield covered the soldier's whole person (2.5 x 4.5 feet), and at the top had a curved point or a square projection like a roof, at right angles with the body of the shield. This was to defend the combatants against missiles thrown from the walls. An ordinary shield was easily burned; however, the Romans oiled their shields and then kept them wet so that flaming missiles could not start them on fire.

The Lord is our shield. The Hebrew word for "shield" is ganon and one of the names of our Lord is Jehovah Ganon, "The LORD our Shield." This shield was also translated defense and was referred to as a shield or protector. It was also used in reference to the thick, scaly hide of the alligator. Ganon means to hedge about, protect, and defend. It signifies perfect protection. We can receive comfort and peace from the knowledge that the Lord is our protector. This root was used to tell of princes and chiefs who protected their people by force of arms. Our Prince has a limitless arsenal with which to guarantee perfect protection. The scriptural references to the Lord as our protector also convey the idea of the protectiveness of a mother who guards her young. The Lord first and foremost is the protector of our hearts. He covers our hearts because of our noticeable vulnerability which very much needs a shield. The root for Ganon in Hebrew is also used to build the word for gardener (Nehemiah 10:6). The Lord defends His children like the gardener does his flowers or the sower his grain. The root is also used to make a word meaning priest. A true priest of God will forever defend his flock. Isaiah 31:5 reveals our Father as both a priest and husbandman, hovering over Jerusalem on reconnoiter and defending missions.

"He is a shield to those who walk in integrity." Proverbs 2:7

"But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me." Psalm 3:3

"Do not fear, Abraham, I am a shield to you, I am your very great reward." Genesis 15:1

"There is none like the God of Jeshurun who rides the heavens to your help, and through the skies in His majesty. The eternal God is a dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemy from before you, and said, "Destroy!" Deuteronomy 33:29

God's blessing was upon Jeshurun. He promises to be above, before, underneath and all around! Jeshurun means upright. His promise here is perfect protection for the upright. Psalm 7:10 "My shield is with God who saves the upright in heart." He will be the shield of our help and the sword of our majesty so that our enemies will cringe before us and we will tread upon their high places. Those who have been

saved of the Lord are granted every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies (Ephesians 1:3) God's shield of protection will be essential in the days to come as we confront demonic forces of darkness in even greater measure.

When Saul died, David lamented his death. David noted that Saul's shield had not been anointed with oil, that his shield had been defiled, his weapons of war perished (2 Samuel 1:21, 27) It was customary to keep the shield cleaned and polished with oil. This symbolizes the need to keep free from sin and to be continually seeking the anointing oil of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Saul was badly wounded by the archers but he killed himself with his own sword. (2 Samuel 22:20-28). Saul lost his shield of protection through disobedience to God's instructions.

Song of David

The LORD is my rock
And my fortress
And my deliverer My God, my Rock,
in whom I take refuge My Shield
And the horn of my salvation My Stronghold
And my refuge My Savior
Thou dost save me from violence. II Samuel 22:2-3

"He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him" (II Samuel 22:31)

As a shield God surrounds us perfectly. His shield is perfect and leaves no area open for enemy attack. Even though we are surrounded with dangers from our own sin nature, the temptations of the world, and the arrows of Satan himself, we are protected through our faithful Father who never sleeps nor slumbers. We can lie down and rest knowing that He stands guard over us to protect us even as we sleep.

In Psalm 35:1-3 David called upon God to defend him against his enemies and asked the Lord to assure his soul of God's salvation. This seems to be a key in our warfare and in taking up the shield of faith: We know God can save, but need the assurance in our hearts **that He will** save. This is faith!

FAITH:

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1

Faith is our confidence in God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work in us. Faith is the keeping power of God. Our faith is not in "our faith" but in a mighty God who is well able to meet our every need. "Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandths generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments." Deut. 7:9

(See also Psalm 32:23, Psalm 101:6, Isaiah 33:14-16)

Faithful means to be absolutely firm in adherence to promises, commitments to another. Webster's dictionary defines it as keeping faith, loyal, reliable, dependable, accurate, exact, rare, full of faith, completely trustworthy. The primary root is the Hebrew word "aman" which means to build up or support, to foster as a parent or nurse, figuratively to render firm, to be faithful, to trust or believe, to be absolutely certain.

Jesus is called "Faithful and True". (Revelation 19:11) He is perfect in His faithfulness. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who will also do it." (I Thes. 5:24) See also II Thes. 3:3)

"He will cover you with His pinions and under His wings you may seek refuge, His faithfulness is a shield and a bulwark." Psalm 91:4

"My eyes will be upon the faithful in the land, that they may dwell before Me, he whose walk is blameless will minister to Me." Psalm 101:6

"For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith." I John 1:4

NIV footnote: To overcome the world is to gain victory over our sinful pattern of life, which is another way of describing obedience to God. Such obedience is not impossible for the believer because he has been born again and the Holy Spirit dwells within him and gives strength. John speaks of 2 aspects of victory: (1) The initial victory of turning in faith from the world to God (has overcome), (2) the continuing day-by-day victory of Christian living (overcomes).

Hab. 2:4, Matt. 17:20, Mark 11:22, Luke 17:5; Luke 22:32; Romans 10:17

We are called to spiritual warfare and we are to fearlessly proclaim God's Gospel as He has equipped us with every resources necessary for victory. No matter what He will protect us (shield us) from the enemy. We know the outcome, God is always going to win, and we are on the winning side!! We have the weapons of defense and offense.

I Thes. 3:3 "But the Lord is faithful and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one."

FLAMING MISSILES OF THE EVIL ONE

Fiery darts, flaming missiles or arrows: One of the best translations describes them as "the fiery arrows of the pernicious one." The word "fiery" was used with reference to poisonous snakes and referred to the inflammation produced by their bite. In the Hebrew the word "fiery" (Strong's #8314) means poisonous, fiery from the burning effects of their poison. (See Num. 21:4-6; Deut. 8:15; Isa. 14:29; 1 Peter 4:12; Isa. 14:29) In the Greek (Strong's 4448), the word means to burn with fire, to set on fire, kindle, to be incensed, to ignite full of fire, darts filled with flammable substance and set on fire. Used metaphorically of the emotions. (See James 3:5-6; Prov. 6:27-28; Heb. 11:34)

The arrow or "flaming missile" was the chief offensive weapon in warfare in Biblical times. They consisted of a sharp tip, often dipped in poison which spread through the body. They were also frequently tipped with a combustible material which made them fiery darts and destroyed the structures in which one was hiding. These darts are not similar to our modern conception of darts we have today. Homer describes one made of a large shaft of wood, iron tipped, bound with tow and smeared with pitch. The iron head was 3 feet in length. Fiery darts are forged in hell and have a little



Examples of Fiery darts:
Anxiety, Worry, Fears of many kinds,
Discouragement, Doubt, Unbelief, Rebellion, Lust, Complacency, Ingratitude, self-confidence,
Loneliness & isolation, Accusations and condemnation,
Disappointment, Jealousy, Anger, Sickness, disease, Greed, pride, Weakness, Despair, Defeat, Self-righteousness,
Inadequacy, confusion



spark from the pit. They inflame the mind and make it incapable of receiving the truth. These flaming arrows can be extremely deadly. Scripturally, we see that these flaming missiles act upon our vulnerabilities. The flame acts upon susceptible material and spreads. All self-confidence is combustible!! Satan often attacks by misdirection. He chooses things from which no evil is suspected. He is a sniper and plays by no rules. Satan's missiles include temptation, discouragement, unbelief, lies, fear, guilt, condemnation, accusations, and slander. His main tactic is to cause us to question God's truth, God's faithfulness, and God's very character. The adversary launches fiery darts which are messages designed to bring us into his captivity. The end result of the fiery darts are to lead us into sin and captivity. The believer who questions the keeping of God will quickly feel their sting.

In the scriptures arrows are frequently figuratively used as a symbol of calamity or disease. It is also figurative of anything injurious, as a deceitful tongue (Jer. 9:8, a bitter word (Psalm 64:3), a false witness (Prov. 25:18). They were always instruments of power and action figurative of weapons of war and military power.

**Satan's strategy is always to drive a wedge between us and God
Or between us and other people, especially other believers.
He wants separate us from God's love. He wants us to sin.
He wants to destroy our faith.
He wants to ruin our testimony and reputation for God.**

As long as we stand firmly behind the shield of faith in our loving, powerful protector we are completely invulnerable to Satan's darts. Faith, which depends upon God and His goodness and truth, will keep us safe from every attack. Faith enlists the direct intervention and rescue by God. He would tempt us relentlessly to move outside of the shield and catch us unprotected. Thus he taunts continually but we need to stand fast in the perfect place of faith and he cannot touch us. Satan's fiery darts are not intimidating to God. (See Job 41:29)

Note: Absalom, David's son who murdered his own brother and betrayed his father was killed by 3 darts! Jesus was tempted by 3 darts but He overcame each one of them! Matt. 4:1-3.

In this passage, Satan is called "the Tempter" and this word means to make trial of, test, to try whether a thing may be done, for the purpose of ascertaining the quality. Unlike God who tests our hearts to purify, Satan tests one maliciously with the intention of causing to fall. (See Deut. 8:2, Eph. 6:16)

Related Scriptures:

| Thes. 5:8; Psalm 7:13; Psalm 120:4; Matthew 5:37; Isaiah 49:1-3; Isaiah 43:10-13;

WARNING: "If you do not believe (be sure and secure) you surely shall not last." (Isaiah 7:9)

SHIELD OF FAITH: Defensive armor--form of attack--unbelief, fear, discouragement, slander, accusation

Paul himself wants his readers to be especially careful to have this protection. "Above all" he writes. For unbelief in its various guises is the most formidable kind of attack. The shield of faith is the most important part of the Gospel armor. The tense of the verb implies a constant and unflinching attitude of

faith. Martin Luther knew this vicious form of attack on many occasions He knew that the only protection was through faith in the promises of God. He writes out of deep conviction:

The soul that clings to the promises of God with a firm faith is so united with them, altogether taken up into them, that it not only shares in all their power, but is saturated and made drunk with it ... If a touch of Christ healed, how much more will this tender touch of the Spirit, this absorbing of the word, communicate to the soul all things that are the world's.

Our faith needs to be placed firmly on the promises of God. In the epistle to the Hebrews the writer refers to the sin which "clings so closely." It is very likely from the context that the writer has in mind the sin of unbelief, for the previous chapter is taken up with the theme of faith, and the great men and women who so truly exemplified it. Christians are to lay aside this besetting sin. No wonder Paul describes these attacks as "flaming darts." We all know what it is to be wounded by these fearful weapons of Satan's. We know the doubts that assail us and the fear of failure that cripples action.

An excellent example of the word of God being spoken aloud, and so bringing someone to faith may be seen in the life of Barclay Buxton. During his missionary work in Japan he was attacked by fear in this way. So he said repeatedly aloud the words from Hebrews 13:5-6, "he has said, 'I will never fail you nor forsake you.'" Hence we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid, what can man do to me?'" He said these words until by faith he made them his own, and so can we.

The only answer is the shield of faith. And remember this is not our puny faith, but God's strong faith. Paul calls it "the faith of the son of God" in Galatians 2:20. We are holding up the faith of Christ between ourselves and those fiery darts. Such faith is impenetrable armor. One of the shields the Roman legions carried into battle was covered from head to foot--but not their backs. There was no allowance made for deserters, says Corrie ten Boom.

"I AM YOUR FAITH AND YOUR SHIELD"

"Do not fear ... I am a shield to you, I am your very great reward." Genesis 15:1

Armor of Light: Helmet of Salvation

... and take the helmet of salvation..."

The helmet was a vital piece in the Roman armor. The helmet protected the head, which needed to be guarded from a fatal blow. The helmet of the Roman soldier covered the ears and provided a visor to cover and protect the eyes as well. Not only did the helmet protect the soldier, it also provided a striking symbol of victory. The Roman's helmet was usually ornamented with a brilliant plume.

HELMET:

The helmet covers the head and thus guards our thought-life, emotions, will and intellect. The helmet will protect the thoughts and retain our heart at peace.

Satan's main point of attack is against our thoughts. He will shoot an evil suggestion as an arrow into the mind. The believer must ever refuse it and claim "salvation" through the cleansing blood of Jesus shed at Calvary.

God gives understanding, knowledge and wisdom and discernment if we take every thought and make it captive in obedience to Jesus Christ. We need to consciously order our words and deeds rightly.

Psalm 140:7 "O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle."

The above verse is specifically referring to the words of the wicked, words of slander, evil things, misery, sorrow, wretchedness, wrong, lies. David asked the Lord to protect him from such attacks and asked that he would be armed or equipped to fight, to be made ready to stand against the evil of those who "sharpen their tongues as a serpent, the poison of a viper is under their lips." (Ps. 140:3) One of the techniques of the enemy was to pour burning coals or shoot flaming arrows or missiles from the tops of the walls onto the heads of the soldiers. Praise the Lord that He covers our heads in the time of battle so that we will not be vulnerable to such assaults.

The helmet was worn as a protective head covering in combat and warfare. Combat refers to the actual battle and means to fight against, contend, or oppose vigorously. Warfare is a broader term which refers to the waging of war or conflict of any kind. Warfare entails a period of conflict, active state of antagonism or hostility. The Christian is thus continuously engaged in warfare but will find himself in days of actual "close quarter fighting" which are specific battles with the enemy.

Not only does the child of God wear a helmet, but the enemy also wears a helmet or seeks to place a covering over the heads of those whom we desire to see saved. Goliath wore a helmet of brass (I Samuel



We must have the salvation of the head as well as the heart. Is the mind saved from its own way of thinking, own plans, own desires? Many of the Lord's children keep their minds open to be enemy, they protect their hearts but leave their minds open and unguarded. They do not know how to recognize the thoughts that come from evil spirits. Beware of the passive mind that allows entry to all thoughts and accepts them as coming from the Holy Spirit. God will quicken our minds and make it think and reason and cause you to see what he wants you to do.

~~Jessie Penn Lewis



17:5) but it was of no protection against David who came in the Name of the Lord of Hosts. I Samuel 17:38 David had a helmet of brass but did not use it.

Isaiah 45:1 conveys an important spiritual truth in that we are given divine power and authority by which to remove the armor upon which the enemy is depending. "Thus says the Lord to Cyrus His anointed, whom I have taken by the right hand, to subdue nations before him, to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut;..." Jesus spoke of this principle in Luke 11:20-22 "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed; but when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied, and distributes the plunder." The 41st chapter of Job is considered by some to be symbolic of Satan. Vs. 13-15 "Who can strip off his outer armor? Who can come within his double mail? Who can open the doors of his face? Around his teeth there is terror. His strong scales are his pride, shut up as with a tight seal..."

The Scriptures are consistent in their symbolism. We see other references that also refer to the helmet in direct relation to salvation.

"And He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head."
(Isaiah 59:17)

"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing." 1 Thes. 5:4-11

SALVATION:

Salvation is used at least 85 times in the scriptures and refers to the saving of man from the spiritual consequences of sin, deliverance from sin and eternal damnation through the atonement of Christ. It also speaks of redemption or preservation from destruction, failure or evil. Salvation is the life, truth and love of God demonstrated as supreme over all. Sin, sickness and death are destroyed. Salvation means preservation from danger or difficulty. We must always remember the salvation of the Lord when in battle with spiritual forces of wickedness because once Satan has you tricked into thinking otherwise you are a prime target for his victory. The salvation we have in the Lord Jesus Christ is not just that which promises eternal life but speaks of the knowledge of our perfect wellbeing before the Lord. We need to have a revelation of the salvation which is offered in Christ by which we can know that He will keep us perfectly in His grace.

It is a tactic of the enemy to cause us to become discouraged or to doubt God and the provision of His blessings and care to save us in every instance. Satan will seek to bring us into condemnation over past sins and even to try to get us to doubt our salvation. We must know that we are clean through the blood of Jesus and that He has accomplished our salvation for us.

Salvation is the preservation or deliverance from evil and from the power and penalty of sin. We are being saved from sin's power and we will be saved from sin's presence.

"Restore us, O God of our salvation and cause Thine indignation toward us to cease. Wilt Thou be angry with us forever? Wilt Thou prolong Thine anger to all generations? Wilt Thou not Thyself revive us again, That They people may rejoice in Thee? Show us Thy lovingkindness, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation."

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant--...Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us." Luke 1:68-71

The Hebrew word for salvation is "Yesha" and it is from this root that the word "Yeshua" is derived. Yeshua is the Hebrew form of "Jesus"! Yesha means salvation, wholeness, also health, life, to revive, keep or make alive, nourish, preserve, quicken, save and be whole. Yeshua is literally translated "I am Thy salvation" (Isaiah 49:26; 60:16)

In Jesus, Jehovah undertakes to be what His people need as sinners, without excuse and without rights. He sent Jesus to be the full redemption of sin for us and as risen Savior will be continuously all His people need as sinners. God, in giving Him to be the answer to our sins has given Him to be the answer to all our other needs, both spiritual, moral, and material, for "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

Related Scriptures:

Ezekiel 23:24; 1 Thes. 5:8; Jeremiah 46:4; 1 Cor. 2:13-14, 16, Isaiah 55:7, 1 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Jonah 2:9; Hebrews 5:9; 1 John 5:11-13.

HELMET OF SALVATION: Defensive armor--form of attack = thought life

Satan loves to pervert the Word of God. When we wear the helmet of salvation we know that our salvation is absolutely secure and complete.

The word salvation in the Greek "soteria" is used to describe physical well-being as well as spiritual well-being. The most common use of the word was "deliverance" from every calamity, and victory over our enemies. Salvation includes God's promise of healing and provision for every need. The Journals of John Wesley tell of how nausea and faintness came upon that great man before he was to preach. But he would carry on, sometimes barely able to climb the steps of the pulpit. But the moment he began to speak, the sickness would pass away. The enemy was defeated in his attempt to prevent the gospel from being preached.

Jesus is our salvation and we must walk in the knowledge of all that He has provided for us. We are being renewed in our minds so that we have the mind of Christ. We must look to Him to protect and cover us from every evil device of the enemy of our souls.

Armor of Light: Sword of the Spirit

"...And take ... the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God..."

The Roman sword was the atomic bomb of ancient warfare. It had a blade of about 24 inches and was sharp on both edges and pointed on the end. The design of this sword was important. A trained legionnaire could thrust and cut from any position so he was never caught off balance. Opposing soldiers with larger swords had to get in a certain position to swing. The Roman soldier could duck, catch his opponent off balance and finish him off before he could crawl back for another swing.

THE SWORD:

The sword is the only offensive weapon mentioned by Paul in the spiritual armor. The Roman sword was known for the perfection of its balance and the fact that it could cut in either direction because it was double-edged. The sword needed to be gripped firmly and held fast or it would be an ineffective weapon. When not in use the sword was kept fastened to the girdle or belt worn around the waist. Obviously, the sword needed to be taken up in order to be effective as a weapon. It provides no protection unless it is used actively.

The sword is symbolic of power and authority.

The Christ-encased Christian must never parley with the foe, but only say, "It is written..." or "God hath said" ...the Sword must be gripped and the whole armor maintained. --Jessie Penn-Lewis

The best defense is a continuous offence. The Word of God which is the Sword of the Spirit. As the believer receives God's Word it becomes Spirit and life to him. Hence he can employ this as his weapon of resistance. A heavenly believer knows how to use the word of God advantageously to break down the enemy's lies.

The Sword of the Spirit is identified for us as the Word of God. The fully equipped believer in the Church can glorify to God who has chosen us to find new life in Him.

Isaiah 49:2 "He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of His hand did He conceal me, He made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in His quiver."

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living 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."

Romans 8:26-27 "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

NIV footnote: Remember that the battle is spiritual and must be fought in God's strength, depending on His word and on God through prayer.

THE WORD:

There are two Greek words that are translated "Word" in our English Bibles. These two words are complex in their meaning, and not totally understood even to this day. The first word is LOGOS, which in the Scriptures refers to God's Word, His transcendent truth. RHEMA is the word that comes to us as spoken by God, which He brings to mind or memory, the Word which HE illuminates in our understanding.

A study of the context in which these words were used prior to their being utilized in the Scriptures gives us greater understanding. The word "LOGOS" was used in 600 BC by Greek philosophers meant 'to designate the divine reason or plan which coordinates the whole world.' Aristotle called LOGOS "a mode of persuasion from argument of reason." In BC 300 the Stoics defined LOGOS as "the organizing, integrating and energizing principle of the whole universe." This is likened unto the impersonal "Force" referred to so often in Star Wars. The Stoics believed that each person had a bit of the "force" or "logos" within them. This is most likely the "unknown god" that the

The Greek word used in this passage is "rhema" which is the revealed word of God appropriate for a specific situation. Rhema will always be in perfect harmony with God's written word. Rhema denotes that which is spoken as a statement, command, or instruction. Strong's defines rhema as "An utterance narration, command, or dispute, that which is spoken. It comes from the Greek root "ereo" through the idea of pouring forth, utter, speak or say, command, make. The significance in the injunction "take up the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" is reference not to the whole Bible as such, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture. (Vine's)

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jesus is the Word of God which has been made flesh to reveal the Father to us. He sent us the Holy Spirit who will lead us into all Truth.

God promises to give us the words which we need "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever.11 (Isaiah 59:21) Thus we have that assurance that the Lord will grant us the appropriate word and the right moment. "The Lord has given me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning to listen as a disciple." (Isaiah 50:4) This promise grants that He will give us the word in its appropriate season (rhema) so that we can speak words of life to those who are weary and perishing. This promise is even more incredible when we know that "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; **so shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.**" (Isaiah 55:8-11) Thus we see that the Sword of the Spirit is a weapon which will never miss its mark!

We must never rely upon our own wisdom, our own feelings, or our own words in our confrontations with Satan. God's word instructs us to "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of Truth." (II Timothy 2:15)

It is the scripture rightly divided that is our assurance of victory. The Word of God is powerful in all of its workings. It brings its life and its active power within us as we let it pierce like the sword. It works in the soul, the spirit and the body, and ministers to the deeper motivations of our hearts.

Satan is not impressed with how loud we shout, how sincere we are or even how hard we fight. He responds to the Word of God, plain and simple. Jesus met every temptation with God's Word. We must never confront Satan without the Word of God. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." (II Cor. 10:3-5) We thus take up the Sword of the Spirit in aggressive spiritual warfare praying, in standing against all temptations of the enemy and in counseling.

Related Scriptures:

John 1:1, 14; Luke 4:32, Matthew 7:28, 29, Isaiah 8:20, Matthew 4:4-7, James 4:7; Hosea 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 4:12

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT: Offensive and defensive armor--form of attack every temptation and assault

"And I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in the furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength."

A Fight to The Finish

(paraphrase of Ephesians 6:10-20)

And that about wraps it up. God is strong, and He wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set up for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all of his angels.

Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting, you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other's spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out.

And don't forget to pray for me. Pray that I'll know what to say and have the courage to say it at the right time, telling the mystery to one and all, the Message that I, jailbird preacher that I am, am responsible for getting out.

~~ Source Unknown ~~