

The Armor of God: Eph. 6:11-18
Huntsville Bible College

Katrina Munchinsky
Instructor: Trevor M. Crenshaw
NT 321 Prison Epistles
September 25, 2022

Introduction

God's people have always been called to be set apart and holy (Deut. 14) This has caused God's people to make enemies, even amongst themselves. The idea of having to defend ourselves for our faith might seem like a foreign archaic concept in today's modern democratic culture, but if we look closer we will see that the fight rages on. The modern version of a Christian walks out their faith in many different ways, with certain expectations of their behavior. There is no doubt that the Christian faith has always been under attack, and will remain that way until Jesus Christ's return (Matt 5:11-12). In American political circles, Christians might be viewed as delusional right-winged zealots, or in the mission fields among the neediest a loving, gentle, and philanthropic people. Since the promise of persecution exists how are we as Christians supposed to defend ourselves and does this expectation of gentleness and service mean we are defenseless?

Ephesians 6: 11-17 is the place to start looking for the answers to those important questions. Ephesians 6:11-17 is a well-known passage for spiritual warfare known as the full armor of God. In these verses, Paul reminds Christians that our fight is not against flesh and blood but is actually against the forces of evil. (Eph. 6:12) Paul the Apostle reminds us that God never leaves us alone to battle Satan and his forces. The beauty and strength in Eph. 6:11-17 are that this passage explains each article of armor that is needed for a successful battle. (Eph. 6:13-17) Paul then reminds us all that one of the best protections we can offer ourselves and each other is to spend time in prayer. (Eph. 6:18)

The Real Enemy. (Eph. 6:11-12)

We will often become distracted in this world believing that our enemy is really someone who wishes to do us harm. The person that betrayed you, or lies about you. It might be a cheating

spouse or an abusive mother but Paul reminds us in this passage while those are outlets of the enemy those people are not the root enemy. We have to have our eyes open to the spiritual realm where the real war is waging.

To fight our enemy we must first recognize them. Our enemy is not against flesh and blood like we might be deceived into thinking but it is again Satan and his evil forces. (Eph. 6:11-12) There is significant meaning in names in Scripture. God would use them to show ownership, authority, and a reaction, to raise them up to their calling. A name was more than a nomenclature it often was the identity of the person. Our enemy is no different, throughout the Bible he is called several things, and the best way to recognize how God sees an enemy is to see what he has named them. There are eight names for Satan that are repeated through Scripture. (Shier, 2015)

Satan means "the adversary" of God. (Job 1:6) The adversary of God means he is antagonistic to God's will and his people. He wants to thwart the character and purposes of God. Then there is the Devil. This is used commonly and it means "slanderous"(Eph.4:25-27). If we look to the garden of Eden and the interaction between Eve and the serpent we see that Eve crumbled not when the temptation was offered but when Satan twisted and contradicted God's words. "Did God really say ?" (Gen. 3:1) The Devil's goal is to make you reduce your confidence in what God actually said. The third name that is used for our enemy is Lucifer and this means "day star/shining one." (Luke 10:18). This name reminds us that the enemy can be attractive and lure us, distract us and call us away from God's will for our lives. "This deceptive package will often be furthest from repulsive or foul, making his handiwork difficult to detect." (Shier, 2015) The fourth name that is used is "Tempter", which translates to, one who tempts people for the purpose of enticing them to sin. (1Thess. 3:5) Jesus often warns us about this aspect of the enemy because the temptations are generally personalized and distorted versions of what God

has already or will give to us. (1 Cor. 10:13). The 5th name means Ruler of the world showing that this is not isolated to the individual but his goal is to squash God's plans so thoroughly he will reign over the world. (John 12:31). When we look at the name Prince of Darkness we are reminded that this enemy does not work alone. He is the head leader of demons and dark forces that serve him to carry out his purposes. (Eph 2:2, 6:12). Then our enemy is also called the Accuser or one who condemns. This means that he wants to deceive us of our security by making us stay stuck in shame, condemnation, and guilt. He wants to make believers ineffective for the Gospel. The last name that is used in scripture is one we are familiar with and that is he is the Father of Lies. If Satan's mouth is moving then we can bet it is a lie. He misconstrues the truth of God's word and our lives. (John 8:44)

Satan might have several names by God but what we have to keep in mind is that the enemy might have many tactics and be powerful here on earth but he is not God's peer. In the book of Job, we see that Satan asks permission to harm Job (Job 1 & 2), we see that Jesus can command demons, that he can undo what Satan has done. As God's children, we can rest in that the war may rage here, and the enemy is real but he will not win. (Rev. 20:10)

A soldier preparing for battle. (Eph. 6:13-17)

Now that we can recognize our enemy and his tricks how do we move forward to fight him? The Apostle Paul begins to prepare us for battle by showing us how to equip ourselves for battle through being strong in the Lord, through prayer, and by putting on armor to defeat the enemy. The armor is listed as the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit. (Eph. 6:11-17) A soldier does not just throw these on and head into battle. Unfamiliar armor can throw off the ability of the

soldier. We see examples of unprepared warriors in scripture. When young David who was not king yet is about to battle Goliath, King Saul tries to persuade him to put his armor on. The armor is unfamiliar and heavy becoming more of a hindrance for battle than help and David chooses to go without it. (1 Sam. 17: 32-40) Then we see Gideon's army be reduced because the men could not handle their weapons. (Judges 6:33 - 7:15).

Roman soldiers were used as an example because the early Christians would have been very familiar with them. They would have had encounters with them often in the Roman empire, so the connection between physical armor and spiritual armor would have been very applicable. Roman soldiers spent months and even years training for battle. They were taught how to walk as a soldier, to put on and take care of their armor for battle, and then how to use those weapons against the enemy. Our spiritual armor does the same thing. We prepare with the training of prayer and submission to God and the obedience we walk out helps us place the armor on and prepares us for battle against spiritual forces.

Different Aspects of Armor and their significance. (Eph. 6:13-17)

The Armor God has called us to put on is the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit. (Eph. 6:11-17) The belt often distinguished the soldier from a civilian, it added core support almost like a girdle. From this, we can see that truth should be our core distinguishing and supportive piece of spiritual armor. (Image, 2022) The significance of the breast plate of righteousness is upright living that aligns with God's expectations (Shier, 2015) With the belt we have truth with the breastplate we have justice.

We move on to discussing the shoes of peace, a soldier's shoes were distinguishable from civilian shoes during Ancient Roman times. A civilian would have worn soft leather shoes and a

soldier would have worn half boot half sandals, which were much heavier duty leather and had hobnails to hold their traction. These shoes would have allowed the soldier to be sure-footed and stable when advancing against the enemy. (Shier, 2015) . Our enemy wants to steal our peace, our relationships, our lives, and in our salvation. This piece of armor keeps us sure-footed in who we are in the Lord.

Paul then mentioned the shield of faith. The shield of a Roman soldier was large, oblong, consisting of two planks of wood fused together. The wood would then be covered by canvas and leather. Iron was built into the center and the edges allowing the shield to take heavy hits during close combat with an enemy. The Roman shield was large enough to cover the whole body when they crouched down. (Shier, 2015) When we use the shield of faith it is us resting on God's promises, we trust that he will do what he says he will do and because of that we can do what he has called us to do.

Then we place the Helmet of Salvation on. We can rest in our salvation, that once we are saved we are redeemed by Christ. It allows us the confidence of knowing where we will spend eternity. We are saved by Christ and the enemies' lies no longer have power over a believer. "Receiving salvation is not the same as applying salvation. The first redeems us; the second restores, protects, and shields us from the daily attacks of the enemy." (Shier, 2015)

The last piece of armor that we put on is the Sword of the Spirit. The sword is an offensive weapon, it is what we can pick up not to just protect ourselves but to fight back. Paul is referring to a dagger type that is 18inches long and needle sharp and would have been double-edged. Its intention was to take an enemy off their guard. (Johnson,) This is the Holy Spirit working in our lives, the Spirit puts the enemy on the offensive. (James 4:7)

Prayer is power (Eph. 6:18)

The final instruction and call to battle is to pray. The Bible mentions prayer 367 times throughout its pages, so we can count on its importance. Paul is reminding his fellow Christians that we need to constantly be in prayer for ourselves and for others. We will defeat the enemy not necessarily on the battlefield but in the heavenly realms through prayer. Jesus says that whatever we pray for in his name we will receive. (Luke 11:9) The power in prayer is not changing God's mind but in spending time with him so we recognize his voice and he is able to change ours.

Conclusion - Onward Christian Soldier (Eph. 6:11-18)

We have a very real enemy in Satan and we should be aware of that, but we should not be afraid of that. The enemy might be real and he might be ferocious but God is all-powerful and one day soon Satan will be no more. In the meantime, our God has called us and equipped us to fight the enemy. The call to battle is to put on the Armor of God and pray for ourselves and others. Take up your armor and go out into the world prepared for the flaming arrows of the enemy and remind him of what God says will happen to him and those who follow him. We can rest in Jesus.

Bibliography

Shirer, Priscilla. *The Armor of God*. LifeWay Press, 2015.

“Prayer for Putting on the Armor of God.” *Northwoods Church*, 30 Sept. 2021,
<https://northwoods.church/book-of-prayers/armor-of-god/>.

Johnson, Dave, and About the Author Dave Johnson Dave Johnson was born in St. Louis.
“What Is the Sword of the Spirit?” *Life, Hope & Truth*,
<https://lifehopeandtruth.com/change/christian-conversion/armor-of-god/sword-of-the-spirit/>.

Destiny Image. “Armor of God: What's the Deal with the Belt of Truth?” *Destiny Image*,
Destiny Image, 11 June 2020, <https://www.destinyimage.com/blog/2020/03/02/armor-of-god-whats-the-deal-with-the-belt-of-truth>.