

THE ENEMY WE BATTLE—EPHESIANS 6.10-20

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, **and having put on the breastplate of righteousness**
¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ **and take the helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

Philippians 4:7

Amplified Bible (AMP)

⁷ And God's peace [shall be yours, that ^[a] tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall ^[b] garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

What were Paul's circumstances? What are some common reactions to dire circumstances?
What two places needed a garrison of guards? Why those two?

Satan is our Adversary

He is called the Deceiver. How does he deceive?

He is called the Accuser. How does he accuse?

⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things
and beyond cure.

Who can understand it? Jeremiah 17

The Breastplate of Righteousness

Righteousness is IMPUTED

Romans 4:25-5:11

Imputed Righteousness results in Practical (IMPARTED) Righteousness (Sanctification)

¹⁴ Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵
See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. Hebrews 12

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. Ephesians 5

The Breastplate covers the heart

The heart in biblical thinking represents the “real you”. It is the place from which your thoughts arise, your actions are motivated and your feelings are generated. Strip away all the facades and phoniness, and what is left is the heart.

This is a major battlefield in the spiritual warfare. This is the place where Christ must be enthroned and must rule. Deceitfulness in the heart translates into hypocrisy in life. Deceit revolves around the need for significance and for authentication. Natural man believes money, power and pleasure are the factors that should be pursued in this regard. The result is that greed, manipulation and hedonism become the core values. Spiritual warfare confronts these issues of the heart.

This speaks of idolatry, and once an idol really takes hold of a heart, the life spins out of control. The result is what the bible calls a stronghold.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

New International Version (NIV)

³ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish

arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

The Helmet of Salvation

Salvation is by grace alone.

We are born with the default Operating System of law. Life consists of reward and punishment. If I behave I deserve to be rewarded by God. Any mishaps in my life are punishment. Since I tend to think of myself as a “good” person, they are unfair and result in complaints.

Salvation introduces a new Operating System of grace. It is a wonderfully simple system – God gives freely without regard to how good or bad I am.

King David was in a low trough, his physical danger led to emotional depression, physical exhaustion, mental distraction and spiritual distance. He cries out in desperation “Preserve me!” Psalm 16. Then follow the strategies of spiritual warfare. Notice how they speak to all we have been saying:

Psalm 16

A Michtam of David.

¹ Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.

² *O my soul*, you have said to the LORD,
“You *are* my Lord,
My goodness is nothing apart from You.”

³ As for the saints who *are* on the earth,
“They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.”

⁴ Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten *after* another *god*;
Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer,
Nor take up their names on my lips.

⁵ O LORD, *You are* the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
You maintain my lot.

⁶ The lines have fallen to me in pleasant *places*;
Yes, I have a good inheritance.

⁷ I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel;
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.

⁸ I have set the LORD always before me;
Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will rest in hope.

¹⁰ For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

¹¹ You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

HELP!

Putting trust in God is decision, the intellect chooses and the will implements.

Acknowledge God is the source of all good, turn away from idols.

I follow the example of godly people and seek them out.

In contrast, idolaters fall into multiple sorrows, I reject them!

Despite hardships, God has provided and all is well with my heart!

Gratitude for this insight will inform my insomnia (anxiety).

Even if I were to die, I have hope.

This is the path of life and fullness of joy with eternal pleasures are mine.