

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

13. Called to be Ambassadors (2)



Introduction

As we have already discovered, the Apostle Paul wrote this letter while he was in prison. The sight of Roman soldiers was all too familiar! Just as a soldier had special clothing to protect himself, we too need to be protected from the schemes of the evil one. In our previous study we looked at the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness and the shoes of the gospel of peace. Let's continue this study.

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:16-24

The Shield of Faith v16

The shield a Roman soldier used was large and could protect his whole body. This is what faith is like.

† When we use faith as a shield, what does it protect us from? V16

(It protects us from the flaming arrows of the evil one.)

† What are some of the arrows you have encountered in your life? Share.

(They could be arrows of fear, doubt, condemnation, impurity, shame, to name a few.)

† How can faith protect us from these arrows?

(When we use God's truth in faith, it will counter the lies of the evil one.)

Helmet of Salvation v17

Just as a soldier wore a helmet to protect his head, we need to wear the helmet of salvation to protect our minds.

† Often the devil tries to attack our minds, causing us to doubt our salvation. How can we protect ourselves from these attacks?

(We need to know what Jesus has done for us and to hold onto these truths, and not be swayed by our feelings. Sometimes it is good to speak those promises out loud!)

† The helmet also speaks of the hope of our salvation. What is this hope, and what difference will it make in our lives if we know this? 1 Thessalonians 5:8-11

(Our hope is that we have received this salvation, and whether we live or die, we will be with the Lord. Knowing this encourages us to persevere, even when we go through difficulties.)

Sword of the Spirit: The Word of God v17

So far the equipment we have looked at protects us from the enemy. The last two mentioned can be used for both defense and offense. Let's begin with the sword, which Paul likens to the Word of God.

† What did Jesus do when Satan threw fiery darts at him? Matthew 4:3-4, 8-10

(Jesus quoted what the Scripture said.)

† Using the Word of God as a sword isn't simply quoting verses! What makes God's Word effective in spiritual warfare? Look at v17, Revelation 1:16, Hebrews 4:12

*(God's Word is effective when it is used in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the sword **of the Spirit.**)*

Prayer v18-20

Although prayer is not described as a piece of the armor it is included in this passage on spiritual warfare.

† What can you learn about prayer from verse 18?

(1. Just as we need the Holy Spirit to lead us when we use the Word of God, we also need his help when we pray.

(2. There are different kinds of prayer.

(3. We are to stay alert and always pray.)

† How is prayer both a weapon we can use defensively and offensively? Discuss.

† Paul reminds the believers that he is in a battle too. What does he ask them to pray for? V19-20

(He asks them to pray that he will share the gospel fearlessly.)

Although Paul was an apostle, he valued the prayers of God's people. This is one way we can encourage and support one another in the battle – by praying for each other.

Final Words v21-22

† What can we learn about Paul's relationship with Tychicus from these verses?

(Paul considered Tychicus a dear brother and faithful servant of the Lord. Obviously he had been with Paul in Rome and would be able to tell the Ephesian Christians how he was.)

Conclusion

We have come to the end of the book of Ephesians! It began with Paul teaching us that we are seated in heavenly places with Christ, far above the principalities and powers of darkness. However there is a battle taking place in this heavenly realm and we need to be equipped to stand against the enemy's schemes.

In order to stand in the battle we need protection. Paul uses the picture of a Roman soldier to illustrate this truth. Just as a soldier wore a belt to hold his sword, a breastplate, helmet and sturdy shoes, and carried a shield, we too need to clothe ourselves with spiritual armor. God has provided through Jesus Christ, everything we need: truth, righteousness, salvation, faith and peace. Along with that he has given us his Word and the privilege to come to him in prayer at any time. Let's pray that we too will be fearless ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ.