



Introduction

Victory against Satan during spiritual warfare is contingent on the spiritual and psychological attitude. Going to war with feelings of defeat and weakness will result in defeat. On the other hand, entering a war with the assurance of mightiness and strength in the Lord will ultimately result in victory. "*Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his mind*" (Ephesians 6:10). When we find ourselves standing alone, with no support, we need to first and foremost go to God for He alone will give the strength and power needed. That is what David the psalmist did in his war against Saul and that is how he won the war and restored peace and happiness in his people's hearts. Do not start your day without pleading with God to strengthen and empower you.

Who is Our Enemy

The Holy Bible is full of verses that prove the existence of the devil, his nature and his constant evil works against us:

- "*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,*

against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

- *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world" (1 Peter 5:8-9).*
- *"lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11).*
- *"and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will" (2 Timothy 2:26).*
- *"Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).*
- *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside" (Matthew 13:19).*

- *"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one" (John 17:15).*
- *"But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thessalonians 3:3).*

Our enemy is powerful and well organized into several ranks:

1. *Principalities*. Having its root in the word "prince", this rank of angels fell with Lucifer. Some biblical scholars believe that Satan appoints some of these princes and assigns them over cities and countries. The story of Daniel confirms this story. God had to send Archangel Gabriel to Daniel to answer his prayers and confirm him *"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days"* (Daniel 10:13). Thus Archangel Gabriel was delayed by Satan. Then Archangel Michael joined in this war for assistance and finally Archangel Gabriel was able to communicate the message to Daniel. This story reveals the power of our enemy. While taking our enemy seriously we have the good news that the almighty God is on our side.
2. *Powers*. This fallen rank is believed to exercise power over the world.

3. Rulers. This fallen rank is responsible for bringing darkness to our mind; blinding and confusing us in order to drive us away from the main source of light, our Lord Jesus Christ. *"against the rulers of the darkness of this age"* (Ephesians 6:12).

4. Spiritual Hosts of Wickedness in the Heavenly Places. This group of fallen angels attacks us through lust of the flesh, instilling wickedness in the hearts that leads to rebellion against God. A biblical example of the work of this rank is manifest in the story of Balam who was hired by the king of Moab to curse God's people. He could not go against God's blessings over the Israelites; but he followed the evil instigations of the Spiritual host of wickedness and brought about the Israelites destruction by their own hands through falling into the immoral sin with the women.

The Enemy's Weapon

Symbolically, St. Paul likens the enemy's attacking weapon to "fiery darts". These are reeds emptied from the inside and filled with a combustible substance. Once ignited and shot, it burns whatever, whoever and wherever they rest upon. Satan and his fallen ranks constantly shoot these fiery darts against us in this fallen world.

To Whom is the Victory

The Holy Bible promises us victory and overcoming in Jesus Christ.

- *"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). "Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).*
- *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death" (Revelation 12:11).*
- *"I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14).*
- *"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).*
- *"Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place" (2 Corinthians 2:14).*

- *"And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly"* (Romans 16:20).

Our Weaponry

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"

(Ephesians 6:11). Two important facts about this armor are:

- It is referred to as one piece although it is made up of six separate components.
- All the six components must be put on all the time.



Although the Holy Bible refers to the "armor" in physically tangible terms, yet it is entirely spiritual belonging to God alone Who is capable of casting strongholds and of achieving His aim behind using this armor. Some of these weapons are defensive like the shield of faith, some are offensive like the gospel of peace and some are both offensive and defensive like the sword of the Spirit. The order in which St. Paul has listed the pieces is significant and each depending on the one before it. The belt of Truth is the starting point and a prerequisite for the acquisition of Righteousness with which we cannot shoe ourselves with the readiness of Peace and the Gospel of the Good News. Each piece is worth explanation:

1) The Belt of Truth



"Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth," (Ephesians 6:14) the verbs "to buckle" or "to gird" means to encircle or encompass for the sake of supporting, fortifying or keeping in place and in shape. In the order of the pieces of the armor presented by St. Paul, the girding is the first piece and is symbolically placed around the waist (the loins which hold the upper and lower parts of the body together) to guard the other pieces against falling apart and to serve as a holder for the sword. However, St. Peter speaks of girding the mind *"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"* (1 Peter 1:13). Therefore, the girding is a voluntary action that should be applied to the major inlets and outlets of our human nature such as the mind, the heart, and all the senses. The truth here first and foremost is

- Christ Himself

"'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.' And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free... Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:31-32,36).

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'" (John 14:6).

"And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).

- With alertness, discovering the Truth embedded in the true meaning and true interpretation of our faith, the church teachings and dogmas that should settle in our mind and heart in order to bring about effective change and spiritual enlightenment.

"may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:18-19).

"Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3).



2) The Breastplate of Righteousness

"...having put on the breastplate of righteousness," (Ephesians 6:14), St. Paul talks about two types of Righteousness.

- Righteousness based on one's efforts. This type fails in four areas:
 - a. Could not remove the Original Sin. The original sin cannot be gotten rid of through personal efforts.
 - b. Could not guard against breaking the Law. All the righteous people of the Old Testament (from Abraham who lied to Jacob, the swindler, to Isaac the discriminator) fell short of keeping the law completely.
 - c. Could not retribute. Personal efforts cannot purchase back nor restore to the former state before breaking the Law.
 - d. Could not exempt from death. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).
- Righteousness based on belief in Christ. *"and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the*

righteousness which is from God by faith;" (Philemon 3:9). This type of Righteousness:

1. *Removes the Original Sin*. It requires the intervention of God's Grace through the sacrament of Baptism and the rebirth from "the water and Spirit". The white dress is symbolic of the righteousness of Christ while the red ribbon symbolizes the blood of Jesus Christ.
2. *Guards against breaking the law*. After baptism Grace empowers us to keep the law. *"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome"* (1 John 5:3).
3. *Restitutes and Restores*. Christ died on the cross in order to purchase us back from the grip of Satan. He paid the price with His blood. *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Corinthians 5:21). Therefore, even when we sin, we can always be washed clean through repentance and confession.
4. *Exempts from spiritual death and promotes a righteous life*. *"If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who*

practices righteousness is born of Him" (1 John 2:29).

In the succession of the pieces of the armor, St. Paul wants to state clearly the truth of the matter that when we fight against the devil we need to keep our garment white through those 4 requisites "*those who have whitened their garments in the blood of the Lamb*" (Revelation 7:14). Having understood the truth, we will be able to understand what righteousness is and Satan cannot accuse us neither before God nor before the others and will not have a chance nor a place into our lives.

3) The Gospel of Peace

"and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" (Ephesians 6:15). Having acquired the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ we will experience the "peace" that the world cannot give. At the birth of Christ, the angels sang "*Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth*" (Luke 2:14). This peace is of 3 dimensions:

- a. Peace with God "*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you;*" (John 14:27).
- b. Peace with each other "*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God*" (Matthew 5:9).

c. Peace with oneself

The shoes symbolize mobility, action and being proactive on 2 levels:

- Readiness to make peace and reconciliation with God and everyone.

"Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

- Readiness to spread the Gospel of the Good News as ambassadors of Christ.

"But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.' But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;" (1 Peter 3:14-15).

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2).

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death" (Revelation 12:11).

"to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:18).

4) The Shield of Faith



"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 the assurance and trust in God and in His truths. Satan shoots his fiery darts of doubt in the hope of destroying our Faith in God, in His salvation and His forgiveness. The only way to defeat Satan is through Faith.

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith" (1 John 5:4).

"Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world" (1 Peter 5:9).

"For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day"(2 Timothy 1:12).

"And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16).

"For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations" (Psalm 100:5).

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).

"For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day" (2 Timothy 1:12).

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

The shield of Faith protects us against the fears of the world and the threats of the enemy.

"I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:9-10).

5) Helmet of Salvation



"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" (Ephesians 6:17).

"But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation" (1 Thessalonians 5:8).

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Hebrew 10:23).

"remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father," (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

The helmet is that of the hope of Salvation. After departure from this world, we hope for the glory in

the heavenly Jerusalem where Christ will wipe every tear from our eyes. Through this hope, we persist and persevere waiting upon the Lord and holding on to the promise of hope because He who has promised is faithful.

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," (2 Corinthians 4:17).

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Corinthians 15:19).

"who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials" (1 Peter 1:5-6).

6) The Sword of the Spirit

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).



"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (Psalm 119:11).

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success" (Joshua 1:8).

"But He answered and said, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'...Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God...' Then Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" (Matthew 4:4,7,10).

Here we learn a lesson from the Master Himself. He overcame the temptation not by rebuking the enemy but by rebuking his mind. Avoiding enter into any dialogue with the tempter, He used the holy word to answer Satan. Also at the beginning of His ministry, the Lord used Scripture as an offensive weapon.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor;. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the

blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18).

St. Peter did the same thing in his first sermon by reading from Joel 2 and Psalm 16. We too should have a scriptural reservoir from which to draw in order to fortify our witnessing to Christ by the wisdom of the holy Word and not our own words.

7) Praying

"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:1-19).

If we have put on all the six pieces of weaponry but we go to war without God, then we are sure to lose the battle. Slumbering in the midst of the battle will cause the enemy to steal our weapons. Watchfulness on the other hand requires perseverance and patience. *"But he who endures to the end will be saved"* (Matthew 10:22).

"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for

us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:26-27).

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart...And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?" (Luke 18:1,7).

"But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers" (1 Peter 4:7).

"...pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).

"'But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.'" (Luke 22:32).

"and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19).

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:12-14).

Conclusion

Our war is not with flesh and blood and our enemy is not human. The battle is with spiritual beings and the enemy is Satan and his fallen ranks. However, victory is ours if we enter the battle well armored spiritually and psychologically. All the six pieces of the armor work together and are indispensable to one another and contingent on one another. Prayer serves as the ligaments that keep the pieces sharp and useable. The blood of Jesus is the source of victory and the canopy of coverage.

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