

Sunday, February 17, 2008

This morning I will be deviating from the book of Galatians due to some events that have taken place this past week. As a pastor, sometimes people will come to me and tell me that they think they are “under attack.” Sometimes

Ephesians 6: 10-18, “10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Introduction:

- . The metaphor here is based on the armor and battle dress of the first century Roman soldier...
- . All spiritual warfare waged today is victorious only because of Christ's death on the Cross (Col. 2:15). Based on His victory, there are two distinct facets of a believer's spiritual life: The faith that positions itself against evil and the aggressive prayer-warfare that assails demonic strongholds.
- . Recognize that your demonic enemies are behind much of what comes against you to harm you.
- . “The shield and the helmet are meant for defensive purposes.”¹
- . A deep faith answers the call to believe in the power of Christ when all hell is breaking loose,
- . Satan is the accuser, the father of lies, and the one to sow discord and malice. ... But his advances are stopped by faith ... No fiery darts will stick to the one whose faith is strong and vital. Fiery darts of the wicked one are those devices intended to penetrate your defenses. These will often penetrate your mind.

¹ Jack Hayford, *Ephesians & Colossians in the Spirit-Filled Life New Testament Commentary Series*, Jack W. Hayford & David P. Seemuch, eds. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 123.

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

- . The tense of the verb be strong implies that we are to keep on being strong continually.
- . If the armor of God is on, and never removed, then God provides safety from the devil's schemes.

11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

- . The name devil means "slanderer" or "accuser."
- . The word for wiles is the word from which we derive our word "method." The method of the adversary is geared to do anything possible to make our lives less than fulfilling.

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12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- . In the heavenly places
- . The arena of our conflict is... Heavenly places are the invisible realm of spiritual reality where spiritual conflict takes place. ...Our struggles are not merely with things or people—spiritual struggles may manifest in those areas of our lives because there are spiritual powers behind them.
- . One of the church's greatest demands is to discern between the spiritual struggle and other social, personal, and political difficulties.
- . Heavenly places recalls earlier references to:
 - . spiritual resources available to the church (1s3)|
 - . Christ's authority over evil
 - . the church's being seated together with her ascended Lord (2:6); and
 - . the Father's will to display His wisdom through the church to the confounding of evil powers (3:10).
- . Hayford: "On these ground this passage announces the church's corporate assignment to prayer-warfare: that evil will be driven back and the will of God advanced."
- . People who tilt the balance of power begin by recognizing that they are people of a dimension beyond the earthly plane. This dimension essentially influences everything else that goes on around us.

13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

. God protects His children in two ways: through supernatural enabling and the power that comes from I Christ's own power in the heavenly realms. The church is enabled fully in the heavenly realms.

. But where there is armor, there is protection. ... After the armor is on, however, the command to stand firm remains.

. Stand against (Greek *anthistemi*)—This verb suggests vigorously opposing bravely resisting, standing face to-face against an adversary,

. The believer stands ready for war with armor that may not have struck the average Roman soldier as effective.

14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist,

. But the battle is not an average battle. Since the battle is not against flesh and blood, the armor is not at all the same as a Roman soldier's—a leather belt, metal breastplate and helmet, etc. In our spiritual armor, truth is the belt bringing protection and allowed mobility. It tightens around an outer garment for better mobility. Truth holds things together.

with the breastplate of righteousness in place, armorvenueimage[1]

. The Roman's breastplate guarded the vital organs. Righteousness protects our eternal life. Only God's righteousness brings eternal life. We reflect how God is and what He does.

. Even God Himself put on the breastplate of righteousness.

o Isaiah 59:17, "The LORD looked and...He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak."

15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. image_rome001[1]

. Our boots are the preparation of the gospel of peace... The Roman soldier's boots were designed to provide maximum stability and flexibility for marching... What an irony that the weapon of war in the heavenlies is the gospel of peace on earth.

16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

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. “Fiery darts” are those devices intended to penetrate your defenses. These will often penetrate your mind to create doubt or error. Of course, being filled with the Spirit of God ensures richness of faith and, therefore, a strong shield.

Power Point - Photo of a Roman Shield

17 Take the helmet of salvation...

. The helmet protects our head. A full understanding of salvation, with all its victorious attributes, provides maximum safety for the mind of the believer. Knowing one is saved from the wrath of God and transferred into the kingdom of God brings extraordinary confidence and peace.

and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

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. Our offensive weapon is God’s word. It is described as the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The Holy Spirit’s primary vehicle for

. warfare is God's Word. When God speaks, actions occur. His Word never returns empty. Every time God speaks, the realm of darkness parts. Satan is powerless to prevent God's righteousness and grace from being realized through His Word.

. The shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit go hand in hand. One is defensive, the other is offensive. The shield and the sword both have the same fountainhead—the Word. The sword is the cutting edge of the word of authority against the works of darkness. The shield is kept in place by the resource of the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).

. The armor protects, but the people of God must advance. In this section, Paul gives the strategy for battle. He delivers marching orders for the church. Nothing can stop the advance of the church when these orders are followed.

18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

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. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (v. 18).

. The method of our prayer should be that we pray always and we are enabled to do this by the power of the Holy Spirit. The main way that spiritual warfare occurs is praying in the Spirit with the Word of God as our resource. As we pray in the Spirit, we are engaging in spiritual warfare. God provides powerful prayer moved by His Spirit.

. Paul also asks for supplication for all the saints. This presupposes that believers know what to request of God. Believers must become knowledgeable of the needs of others in order to pray effectively.

(1) Spiritual warfare emphasizes the authority of Christ and the victory of His Cross (Col. 2: 14, 15). This honors Jesus' commission on the grounds of His coronation.

(2) Genuine spiritual warfare does not cultivate excitability or an elitist posture, but a discerning humility (2 Cor. 2:11) and a pursuit of effective action (Cor. 4:7).

(3) Spiritual warfare is not a soul-wearying preoccupation. Also, a believer must not develop a fondness for it. Instead, we rest in the resources of Calvary's triumph by wearing the full armor of God.

Information on Roman Military

Requirements:

. You must be at least 5'7" tall (measured in bare feet)

- . You must have excellent vision
- . You must have excellent hearing
- . You must be able to read and write
- . You must have proof of citizenship

Organization

- . 8 soldiers = a Contubernium (8)
- . 10 Contubernia = a Century (80)
- . 6 Century = a Cohort (480)
- . 10 Centuries = A Prima Cohors (800)
- . 9 Cohorts + 1 Prima Cohors = a Legion (5,120)

- . Legate—the commander of a legion. Always a senator, hand-picked by the emperor.
- . Tribune: Six officers, led by a Senior Tribune. The “right hand” of the Legate.
- . Praefectus Castorum: Third in command; in charge of building camps.
- . Primus Pilus: Highest ranking Centurion. In charge of 5 other Senior Centurions.
- . Senior Centurion: Command Prima Cohors.
- . Centurion: In charge of a Century.
- . Optio: The Centurion’s second-in-command.
- . Tesserarius: Officer in charge of distributing the daily password.
- . Legionary: Ordinary foot soldier
- . Auxiliary: Non-citizens from the outer provinces, grouped into cohorts of 500-1,000.
- . Cavalry: Soldier on horseback.

Pay

- . Legionary: 300 denarii/year (better than a typical craftsman).
- . Auxiliary: slightly less than the Legionary.
- . Cavalry: slightly more than the Legionary.
- . Junior (i.e., Tesserarius): Pay and a half (i.e., 450 denarii/year).
- . Senior Officer: Double pay (i.e., 600 denarii/year).
- . Centurion: 4,500 denarii/year (before bribes).
- . Primus Pilus: 18,000 denarii/year.

Weapons:

First, items not mentioned in Ephesians 6:

- . Pilum (Javelin): wooden shaft up to 4”, with a sharp, barbed point. The end/tip was made of iron so that it could pierce a shield (and couldn’t be pulled out), but it bent if

it struck the ground (so that the opponent could not throw in back).

. Pugio (Dagger): Usually made of iron or bronze.

. Blanket: used as a cape/scarf and doubled as a blanket for sleeping.

. Tunic: made of linen or wool, and was worn next to the skin.

Items that are mentioned in Ephesians 6:

. Lorica Segmentata or Mail Vest (Breastplate):

o Lorica Segmentata: Overlapping iron strips that covered shoulders, chest & stomach.

o Mail Vest: Similar to the Lorica Segmentata, but made of mail.

. Helmet: Worn on head (obviously) as a defensive protection, but also had a protrusion that was designed to damage opponents' sword if they struck it. Lined with wool or linen padding.

. Caligae (Sandals/Shoes): Designed not to rub, the soles were studded with hobnails for rough terrain and gripping on grass. If in a cold climate, the soldier was given boots.

. Cingulum Militare (Belt): A leather belt, with strips hanging down in front. Was used to hold in/up the tunic and breastplate.

. Scutum (Shield): 48 inches high, 28 inches wide. Curved to provide better body coverage and deflect objects. In the center was a solid bulge known as a "boss." It was used as an offensive weapon—the soldier would thrust it forward into the body or face of his opponent. It was like being hit with an iron fist.

. Gladius (Sword): 18 inches & made of the best quality "steel."

o Legionary always carried/fought with his right hand (even if left-handed).

. The Testudo (or Tortoise): A group of soldiers would form a rectangle, holding their shields over their heads, or before them if they were in front. This would create an almost impenetrable barrier and was especially useful in a siege). It was so strong that a cart could be driven over the top.

