

The Armor Of God #2

"Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shot your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, whereith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God ..." (Eph. 6:14-17)

This familiar text from Ephesians 6 lists six pieces of armor to protect the soldier of Christ in his battle against sin. The first two of these was the subject of comments in a prior article; the next two will be discussed in these pages.

"Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Commentaries differ on the thrust of the apostle's description here. It is paradoxical that these "shoes" should be the *"preparation of the gospel of peace"* when these were in fact articles of protection in warfare! Is it coincidental that Paul here links the gospel with the feet when he does the same in Romans 10:15: *"and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things"* (a quotation from Isa. 52:7)? As one's feet may be *"swift in running to mischief"* (Pro. 6:18), so one's feet may be swift in carrying out the Lord's command, *"Go ye therefore and teach all nations"* (Mat. 28:18). And while Jesus is the "Prince of Peace" who *"came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh"* (Eph. 2:17), this "peace" with God may often bring "war" with man, sometimes even one's own family (Mat. 10:34)!

It must be admitted that these articles may overlap in meaning and such would be the case here. To prepare to preach peace to our fellow men necessarily involves the learning of that message so that we may forcefully and clearly set it forth. However, preparation for the gospel of peace likewise involves a frame of mind. Thus Paul wrote, *"So then, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to ye that are in Rome"* (Rom. 1:15). To Paul's writing may be added Peter's instructions: *"Sanctify in your hearts, Christ as Lord, being ready to give answer to every man that asketh a reason concerning the hope that is within you ..."* (1 Pet. 3:15). Remember, one of the best defenses is swift offense. Meet Satan "head on" by preaching the precious gospel of Christ! *"Take up the shield of faith."* This shield is definitely a defensive article in armor and just as critical to one's protections as the breastplate of righteousness and helmet of salvation. The things ascribed to faith are almost limitless: salvation, justification. We live and walk by faith

and with it we please God (Eph. 2:8; Rom. 5:1; 1:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:6).

We live in an age of reason. Like Thomas, most accept nothing except that which they "see" or "feel." Satan knows the vulnerability of such reason and casts many fiery darts of doubt our way. "How do you know there is a God?" "How could it be possible that one being created the whole world from nothing?" "How is it possible that one could have neither beginning nor end?" "You are such a speck among the masses of humanity, how could one God be interested in finite you, know your every thought and deed and care for you?" All such questions as these foregoing ones, plus many more, are designed to shake our faith in God.

So, we must have faith. We must ever remember that not all things that are moving, powerful forces in our world are visible to the naked eye. Who would suppose that to split the atom (which eyes cannot see) could bring such devastation? Who can see electricity? Yet who doesn't know these two things exist? One cannot see love nor trust yet although we cannot, we know that the world relies upon both these things. So it is with God. He is, indeed invisible. But, although invisible, He still is all powerful, all wise and eternal. We cannot see God, but we can, if we will, see testimony of Him in His creation. Take up the shield of faith. Satan's fiery darts are futile against it!

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