

# **UNDER ARMOUR**

THE DAILY DEVOTION: 3



# UNDER ARMOUR

THE DAILY DEVOTION: 3

## Under Armour: The whole armour of God

Read Ephesians 6:10-18 (NKJV) and fill in the blanks

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 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. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with \_\_\_\_\_, having put on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 15 and having shod your \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_; 16 above all, taking the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 \_\_\_\_\_ always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

The battleground for intense spiritual struggle is not for some piece of earthly real estate; it is the human heart. Jesus is supremely interested in winning possession of our minds and hearts. Yet so is the devil. For this reason, Christians are called to be more than peaceful spectators or mediators in this cataclysmic conflict. We must be committed front-line commandos.

Although our armor and weapons are spiritual, this does not mean they are unreal or ineffective. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)" ( 2 Corinthians 10:3 , 4 ).

Paul also makes it clear that the Christian's commitment to his cause and their Chief Commanding Officer, the Lord Jesus Christ, should be as real and complete as for any earthly soldier. "You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier" ( 2 Timothy 2:3 , 4 , NKJV).

The first time I did a study on the armor of God, I looked up all the Bible references to armor, searching for passages that would support and enhance the importance of wearing armor when charging off into battle. I was a bit disappointed to find that Saul's armor did not fit David and that Goliath's armor was useless against David's stone. I also discovered that a stray arrow found a crack in Ahab's armor, killing the wicked king. "So much for the value of armor!" I thought.

But then I realized that we are not called to wear the faulty body armor of Saul, Ahab, or Goliath. Rather, we must put on the unfailing armor of God!

Now that we have established that we are to wear the armor of God and not of man, we must be careful not to miss the admonition to wear all of the articles God provides. Ephesians 6:11 cautions, "Put on the whole armor of God," and Ephesians 6:13 declares, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God." This is where many Christians fail. They take SOME of the armor, but forget one or two parts of the suit—and pay an eternal price for their neglect. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Paul attaches a spiritual association to seven articles of earthly armor. Let's consider each of these articles of defense one by one to see what we can learn.

---

# UNDER ARMOUR

THE DAILY DEVOTION: 3

## **Belt of Truth**

In Bible times, the girdle about the waist held together the soldier's garments, which might otherwise hamper his movements while marching or engaging in combat. The spiritual significance is that God does not simply want us to point at the truth; He wants us to wear it and have it wrapped about us. Not only does the belt hold everything in place, but it also serves to carry the sheath that holds the sword of the Spirit for ready access. Some people have the sword of God's Word, but without the belt of truth they come to reckless conclusions that don't HOLD TOGETHER very well.

## **Breastplate of Righteousness**

The breastplate was an important article of defense that protected the front torso and all of the vital organs from a mortal wound. It was often composed of a solid piece of metal, but it could also contain numerous small pieces that were sewn to cloth or leather that overlapped much like the scales of a fish. These scales could number as many as 700 to 1,000 per "coat." When the sun shone directly on the armor, it could become very hot. So to avoid being burnt, or even pinched, by the moving metal plates, the soldiers always wore a sturdy robe under the armor. In other words, wearing the breastplate of righteousness is always in partnership with the robe of Jesus' righteousness. "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me" ( Job 29:14 ). Also keep in mind that the high priest wore a golden breastplate over his linen robe that was set with 12 precious stones, each inscribed with one of the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. This place represented nearness to the heart. "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart" ( Exodus 28:29 ). The only way we can experience victory in battle against the devil is through confidence that the righteousness of Jesus covers our hearts and that we are forgiven.

Another interesting aspect of the breastplate was that it offered no protection to the person's back. It was assumed that soldiers would not turn their backs toward the enemy to retreat. Likewise, Christian soldiers should stand firm and never surrender any ground to the devil. Instead, let the devil flee from your steadfast loyalty. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" ( James 4:7 , emphasis added). This was the strategy employed by Jesus to emerge victorious after being tempted by the devil in the wilderness. "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.' Then the devil left Him" ( Matthew 4:10 , 11 , NKJV).

## **Shield of Faith**

The warrior's shield was his first line of defense. Usually made of wood or bronze, it was often big enough to protect the whole body when the soldier crouched down under a hail of arrows. Likewise, faith in Christ's blood is our first defense against the great accuser ( Zechariah 3:1-5).

The enemy is constantly firing shot after shot of those flaming arrows of carnal desire. The purpose for this shield of faith was to deflect the fiery darts of the enemy and prevent them from ever making contact. Multitudes of Christians fall on the battlefield and fail to overcome evil because they wait until they are immersed in the fires of temptation before making any effort to resist. At that point, it is often too late. As soon as you recognize a fiery dart sailing toward you, there is no time to lose. Hold up that shield of faith and do everything in your power to keep as much distance as possible between you and the temptation. If we yield without a fight, we are in reality inviting temptation.

---

# UNDER ARMOUR

THE DAILY DEVOTION: 3

The shield was not held loosely in the soldier's hand, but was firmly strapped to his forearm so he could resist the mighty blows of an enemy's sword without fear of dropping it. Likewise, Christians cannot afford to have a flimsy faith while in the heat of spiritual battle. The shields of old were also often of a distinctive nature, sometimes marked with the insignia or name of the king to help soldiers avoid fighting their own comrades in the confusion of battle. In the same way, when the devil sends his flaming arrows of temptation, we are to hold up the shield bearing the name of our King of kings, Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Through faith in His name, we can resist any enticement. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" ( 1 Corinthians 10:13 ).

## Helmet of Salvation

There are several Bible stories that stress the importance of protecting the head while in battle. For instance, King Abimelech died because he charged a city wall without first putting on his helmet. "And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull" ( Judges 9:53 ) In another instance, simply wearing a helmet improperly proved to be a fatal mistake. The giant Goliath became outraged that young David would dare come against him with nothing more than a shepherd's staff and sling in his hand. Goliath's haughtiness apparently prompted him to carelessly push back his helmet, because minutes later a smooth stone from David's sling had sunk deep into the giant's forehead ( 1 Samuel 17:40-49 ). Some professed Christians have "rocks in the head" from neglecting to wear their helmets. But the purpose for this helmet of salvation is not only to keep out the rocks, but also to keep in the brains! Your mind should not be open to anything and everything. As we study and come to understand God's Word, there should be a settling into the truth "that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting" Ephesians 4:14, NKJV ).

Your body has seven sacred openings from the neck up: two nostrils, two ears, two eyes, and one mouth. (Our biggest problems usually come from what enters our eyes and ears and exits the mouth) Only in eternity will we appreciate how pivotal to each person's salvation were their choices concerning what they allowed to enter their minds through these vital senses. We must firmly strap the helmet of salvation in place and guard these avenues to the soul.

## Gospel Shoes

In the Bible, the foot is a symbol for the direction or "the walk" of a person's life. Having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace gives us good footing—and prevents "backsliding" as well. As we become involved in spreading the good news, it will strengthen us (and others) against the enemy's attacks. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good [things], that publisheth salvation" ( Isaiah 52:7 ).

## Sword of God's Word

The sword was the most common weapon in battle. Indeed, the word "sword" appears 449 times in Scripture. The other articles in God's arsenal are defensive in nature, but the sword is primarily an offensive weapon. In fact, the sword of God's Word is what Jesus used against the devil and it also gave the beast of Revelation 13 a deadly wound ( Revelation 13:3 , 14 ). When Jesus said, "I did not come to bring peace but a sword," He was not saying that He, the Prince of peace, had come to start wars ( Matthew 10:34 ). Rather, He was pointing out that the sword of God's Word has a dividing effect. Several times, this sword is depicted as having two edges: "For the word of God is quick, and

# UNDER ARMOUR

THE DAILY DEVOTION: 3

powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" ( Hebrews 4:12 ). Then again in Revelation 1:16 , the Bible says, "He had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." The two edges of the Spirit's sword are the two witnesses of God's Word, the New and Old Testaments. It is also called a two-edged sword because it is to be used both against the enemy and for personal use. Like the Philippian jailer, we must be ready to apply the sword of God's Word to ourselves ( Acts 16:27 ).

Ancient soldiers also used their swords for cooking, splitting kindling, and for cutting the ropes that bound their captives to set them free. Likewise, the Word of God is a practical tool for every area of life, as well as in fighting the devil. In Bible times, there was no stainless steel. A sword unused became rusty, dull, and pitted. Swords were kept clean by frequent use or by honing them against a stone (Jesus is our SOLID ROCK) or another soldier's sword. "Iron sharpeneth iron" ( Proverbs 27:17 ). Likewise, when we study the Bible with others, our skill in the Word is sharpened. A soldier traveling in enemy territory never left his sword out of reach. In the same way, a Christian should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" ( 1 Peter 3:15 ).

And don't forget about your prayer life

Ephesians 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:13-15. According to verse 14, when someone prays in tongues, who is actually praying? "For if I pray in a tongue, \_\_\_\_\_ prays." The ability to pray in both your known tongue and unknown tongue is an incredible weapon of warfare.

---