

# Ephesians 6:16-17 Commentary

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Ephesians 6:16 in *addition to* **all**, **taking** up the **shield** of **faith** with **which** you will be **able** to **extinguish all** the **flaming arrows** of the **evil** one. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [en pasin analabontes \(AAPMPN\) ton thureon tes pisteos. en o dunesesthe \(2PFMI\) panta ta bele tou ponerou \[ta\] pepuromena \(RPPNPA\) sbesai: \(AAN\)](#)

**Amplified:** Lift up over all the [covering] shield of saving faith, upon which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked [one]. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Above all be sure you take faith as your shield, for it can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at you. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** in addition to all these, taking to yourselves the shield of faith by means of which you will be able to quench all the fiery arrows of the pernicious one, ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Young's Literal:** above all, having taken up the shield of the faith, in which ye shall be able all the fiery darts of the evil one to quench,

## IN ADDITION TO ALL, TAKING UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH: en pasin analabontes (AAPMPN) ton thureon tes pisteos

- Ge 15:1; Ps 56:3,4,10,11; Pr 18:10; 2Co 1:24; 4:16, 17, 18; Heb 6:17,18; 11:24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34; 1Pe 5:8,9; 1 Jn 5:4,5
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## TAKE UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH

**In addition to all** - This phrase is variously translated - "Above all", "besides all these", "with all these", "always, in all circumstances, at all times".

**Ray Stedman** opens his discussion of this section with a story...

A MAN NAMED THOMAS became a monk, joined a monastery, and took a vow of silence. The only exception to the vow was that, once every ten years, monks were allowed to make one statement then the silence must resume for another decade. After his first ten years in the monastery, Thomas was called into the study of his superior, who said, "Brother Thomas, do you have anything to say?"

"The food is bad," the monk replied. Then he went back to his duties.

A decade passed. Again, Thomas was summoned to the study of his superior. "Brother Thomas," said the superior, "do you have anything to say?"

"The bed is hard," the monk replied. Then he returned to his chores.

Another decade passed. Again, Thomas was called in before his superior. "Brother Thomas," said the superior, "do you have anything to say?"

"I quit," the monk replied.

The superior frowned. "I'm not surprised. You've done nothing but complain ever since you got here!"

Friend in Christ, there is nothing that more clearly indicates that we have succumbed to the schemes of the devil than to complain about our lot in life. Again and again, the Word of God shows that the mark of a Christian who has learned how to be a Christian is that he rejoices in everything and gives thanks in all things.

Understand, this does not mean that God expects us to enjoy every circumstance in our lives! Nor does it mean that we should merely pretend to rejoice in everything. There is nothing as ghastly as the forced smile people put on and the superficial attitude they assume in the midst of difficulties because they think this is what a Christian ought to do. The truth of Scripture is that it is genuinely possible to rejoice even through tears and pain and there is nothing that more surely indicates that we have failed to understand what it means to be a Christian than a whining, complaining, self-pitying attitude toward what happens to us in life.

Do not be surprised at the devil's attack. Of course he attacks! That is his character. That is his nature. Do not complain that you are being treated unfairly. That is the nature of life--struggle, warfare, and satanic attack.

Furthermore, God allows the devil to attack. This is the clear revelation of Scripture. God permits these attacks because, for one thing, we need them. We never would develop or grow properly if we were not attacked in this manner--and this is what ultimately accomplishes God's will for our lives.

The whole outworking of God's eternal plan could never be brought to pass were it not that God permits the devil to operate within his limited sphere of activity. Let us never forget that. God allows these things to happen, and all the writers of Scripture agree on this. Peter says, "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you" (1 Peter 4:12). And the Lord Jesus Himself said, "In this world you will have trouble." But He goes on to add, "But take heart! I have overcome the world!" (John 16:33).

But this is exactly the opposite of the way we frequently feel. When attacked, we tend to think that something most unusual is happening to us. No one has ever gone through what we are going through. No one has had to undergo the depression of spirit we feel. But Paul says, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear" (1 Corinthians 10:13). So stop complaining about what happens. It is God's will for you. Let us face that fact.

And instead of a fretful, peevish, whining attitude, let us do what the Word of God says to do when these things occur: "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." There is no other way to handle the devil's attacks. There is no other solution to these basic human problems. ([Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare](#) - Available online and highly recommended!)

**Taking up (353)** (**analambano [word study]** from **ana** = up + **lambano** = take) means literally to take up. Depending on the context **analambano** can mean to cause to go up, to lift up and carry away as in the Ascension of Christ (Acts 1:2, 11, 22), to take up in order to carry (Acts 7:43, Eph 6:13, 16), to pick up (someone to take along on a journey - 2Ti 4:11-note), to take aboard a ship (Acts 20:13, 14).

Taking up is in the **active voice** indicating that each believer make the choice to do this. We must choose to believe God, His Word, His goodness, no matter what happens. In all things we must give thanks and walk humbly in obedience with our God. That is "real time" taking up of the shield of faith.

**Proverbs 30:5** says that...

**Every word of God is tested** (Smelted and purified = It is trustworthy! Lxx = puroo = made fiery hot as used of metals in Re 1:15-note, Re 3:18-note). **He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.** (Proverbs 30:5, see KJV translation to help understand meaning Pr 30:5KJV or Pr 30:5YLT)

**Comment:** All the OT uses of the verb **tested** - Jdg 7:4; 17:4; 2Sa 22:31; Neh 3:8, 32; Ps 12:6; 17:3; 18:30; 26:2; 66:10; 105:19; 119:140; Pr 25:4; 30:5; Isa 1:25; 40:19; 41:7; 46:6; 48:10; Jer 6:29; 9:7; 10:9, 14; 51:17; Da 11:35; 12:10; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:2, 3 - NAS renders **tsaraph** as goldsmith(5), goldsmiths(2), pure(1), refine(3), refined(5), refiner's(1), refining goes on(1), silversmith(2), smelt(1), smelter(2), smith(1), test(2), tested(4), tried(2).

**Take refuge** implies the place of refuge is a place to be trusted to keep one safe, and thus pictures the hearer who is a doer of the word (Jas 1:22-note) as one who confides in the God Who is revealed in His tested, trustworthy Word (cp Joshua's testimony who had been given the promises in Josh 1:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 with his **last words** - Josh 23:14, cp Josh 21:45 - God had proved Himself faithful to His Word in

Joshua's experience - cp Nu 23:19). It is the one who puts their trust in Him. To that person He is their shield, which parallels Paul's teaching on picking up the shield of faith in Ephesians 6:16. The Septuagint (LXX) translates take refuge or trust (Hebrew = chasah) with the Greek verb **eulabeomai** which means to show reverent regard for. The verb **eulabeomai** is in the present tense which indicates that this person continually shows a reverence and regard for the Word of grace (Act 20:32). Note that the English Word reverence conveys the sense of profound respect mingled with love, devotion, or awe!

**Harry Ironside** comments on Pr 30:5 writing "There are two great facts enunciated in these verses. The first is the perfection of the Word of God and the second, the all-sufficiency of that Word. The Scriptures, as a whole, are called the Word of God. Any portion taken separately is a word, or saying, of God. All Scripture is God-breathed; every part of it is divinely inspired. It is therefore pure and perfect in itself (Ps 12:6-[note](#), Ps 19:7-[note](#)). All who rest on it find its great Author is a shield from the enemy's assaults and a refuge for their souls. He will be the protection of those who confide in Him; but no one who doubts or questions the integrity of His words really trusts Him."

**Spurgeon** in his comments on the almost identical passage in **Psalm 18:30** writes "The word of the Lord is tried, like silver refined in the furnace. The doctrines are glorious, the precepts are pure, the promises are faithful, and the whole revelation is superlatively full of grace and truth. David had tried it, thousands have tried it, we have tried it, and it has never failed. It was meet that when way and word had been extolled, the Lord himself should be magnified; hence it is added, **He is a buckler to all those that trust in him**. No armor of proof or shield of brass so well secures the warrior as the covenant God of Israel protects his warring people. He himself is the buckler of trustful ones; what a thought is this! What peace may every trusting soul enjoy!

**Guzik** suggests that "These aspects of the armor we take up from situation to situation, as the moment demands. Think about those "demanding moments" in spiritual warfare"

- A flood of depression or discouragement, feeling like a black cloud.
- When a relatively insignificant thing gets blown way out of proportion.
- An opportunity to speak with someone about what Jesus did for you.
- Opposition against a sense that God wants you to do something, to follow through on something.
- A sense of panic and helplessness.

In those critical moments, we need to

- Take the shield of faith.
- Take the helmet of salvation.
- Take the sword of God's Word. ([Ref](#))

**Shield** ([2375](#)) (**thureos** from **thura** = door) was originally a large, oblong stone used to close an entrance and later came to mean a shield, not the small circular shield (aspis, Latin clipeus) but the large, oblong, and four-cornered shield (Latin scutum) about 4 x 2.5 feet in greatest dimensions and sometimes curved on the inner side. From these dimensions one can readily see now it would have been large enough to cover all the other armor and allowed the soldier to stand behind it fully protected. This Christian soldier's shield is faith, a faith in God's trustworthy Word and in the One Who is named Faithful and True, the Lord Jesus. Such a faith firmly grounded on the Rock provides a sure defense against the fiery missiles of the evil (actively desiring to hurt or harm) one, the devil and his minions. The practical issue of the believer's faith as a "shield" is discussed in greater detail below.

The **NET Bible** note adds that...

Before a battle in which flaming arrows might be shot at them, the soldiers wet the leather covering with water to extinguish the arrows. The Roman legionaries could close ranks with these shields, the first row holding theirs edge to edge in front, and the rows behind holding the shields above their heads. In this formation they were practically invulnerable to arrows, rocks, and even spears. ([NET Bible](#))

**Bratcher** and **Nida** write that...

There were shields of various sizes; in this context most commentators take it to be the large shield which, according to the ancient historian Polybius, gave protection to the whole body. It was made of two layers of wood, covered with canvas, and with a leather covering on the outside; this, when soaked with water before

the battle, would effectively serve to extinguish the incendiary missiles of the enemy (Barth). The soldier carried it in his left hand (and the sword in his right hand). ([The United Bible Societies' New Testament Handbook Series](#))

**Expositor's** writes that...

Thureos is derived from thura (a door) and refers to the large oblong or oval scutum the Roman soldier held in front of him for protection. It consisted of two layers of wood glued together, covered with linen and hide, and bound with iron. Soldiers often fought side by side with a solid wall (testudo) of shields. But even a single-handed combatant found himself sufficiently protected. After the siege of Dyrachium, Sceva counted no less than 220 darts sticking into his shield.

Only in this instance does Paul indicate the effect of a particular piece of armor. With such a shield the believer can extinguish all the incendiary devices flung by the devil (v. 11). Herodotus described how cane darts tipped with tow were dipped in pitch and then ignited. Octavius used such arrows against Antony's fleet at Actium and they were not unknown in OT times. The reference is not, as some have surmised, to poisoned darts producing fever. The Christian's shield effectively counteracts the danger of such diabolical missiles not merely by arresting or deflecting them, but by actually quenching the flames to prevent them from spreading. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing](#))

**TDNT** writes that **thureos** is...

the ancient four-cornered long shield. The long shield comes in various shapes, but the reference is to the rectangular Greek shield which is almost a portable wall, which covers the whole person, and which poses the hard problem of reconciling strength and lightness. The Romans take over a later form of the long shield around 340 B.C. and retain it until the days of Constantine, who reverts to the round or oval form. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

**Vincent** writing on **thureos** says...

Homer uses the word for that which is placed in front of the doorway. Thus of the stone placed by Polyphemus in front of his cave ("Odyssey," ix., 240). The shield here described is that of the heavy infantry; a large, oblong shield, four by two and a half feet, and sometimes curved on the inner side. Sculptured representations may be seen on Trajan's column. Compare "Compass him as with a shield," Ps 5:12. It was made of wood or of wicker-work, and held on the left arm by means of a handle. Xenophon describes troops, supposed to be Egyptians, with wooden shields reaching to their feet ("Anabasis," i., 8, 9). Saving faith is meant. (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament 3:409)

Just as **David** took his stand against a formidable foe, **Goliath**, by trusting in the name of **Jehovah** (Ps 20:1-note, Ps 20:7-note, Pr 18:10-note, David's declaration of faith = 1Sa 17:37 [see more in depth discussion] - Note David's present confidence and trust is based on past experiences with **Jehovah** = "**Who delivered...will deliver**" [**Who delivered** = past tense = past experience = **Lesson**? Recall the times He **has** delivered you, beloved! **Jehovah's** past deliverances form a firm footing for future faith to firmly stand! And then lay hold by grace through faith of the truth that He **will** deliver you again, either **from** or **through** the fire! Heb 10:23-note, 1Th 5:24-note, Php 1:6-note, cp His great faithfulness), so we take our stand (Ep 6:11-note, Ep 6:13-note) against Satan in the victorious name of Jesus Christ (cp Heb 2:14, 15-note). As alluded to, God may choose to deliver us **FROM** our trial or to deliver us **IN** the midst of trial, but He will deliver us! (cp the testimony of Shadrach, et al, when faced with fiery trial Daniel 3:14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19) The LORD of hosts to Whom David entrusted himself in his hour of great need is the same yesterday, today and yes tomorrow ([Heb13:8](#)-note). Let us run confidently into the immutable (unchangeable) **Strong Tower of Jehovah Sabaoth** and we will be safe (Pr 18:10-note)

**Guzik** writes that ...

In ancient warfare, these **fiery darts** were launched in great number at the beginning of an attack. The idea was not only to injure the enemy, but to shoot at him at all sides with a massive number of darts, and thus confuse and panic the enemy.

Even when such a missile was caught by the shield and did not penetrate to the body, says Livy, it caused panic, because it was thrown when well alight and its motion through the air made it blaze most fiercely, so that the soldier was tempted to get rid of his burning shield and expose himself to the enemy's spear-thrusts. But the shield of faith not only catches the incendiary devices but extinguishes them. (F F Bruce)

Thoughts, feelings, imaginations, fears, lies - all of these can be hurled at us by Satan as fiery darts. **Faith** turns (**all of**) them back. ([Ref](#))

### Spurgeon on the metaphor of the **shield of faith**...

Like the Spartans, every Christian is born a warrior. It is his destiny to be assaulted; it is his duty to attack. Expound the metaphor.

**1. Faith, like a shield, protects us against attack.** Different kinds of shields were used by the ancients, but there is a special reference in our text to the large shield which was sometimes employed. I believe the word which is translated "shield" sometimes signifies a door, because their shields were as large as a door. They covered the man entirely. You remember that verse in the Psalms which exactly hits the idea, "Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous, with favour wilt Thou compass him as with a shield." As the shield enveloped the entire man, so, we think faith envelopes the entire man, and protects him from all missiles wherever they may be aimed against him. You will remember the cry of the Spartan mother to her son when he went out to battle. She said, "Take care that you return with your shield, or upon it." Now, as she meant that he could return upon his shield dead, it shows that they often employed shields which were large enough to be a bier for a dead man, and consequently quite large enough to cover the body of a live man. Such a shield as that is meant in the text. That is the illustration before us. Faith protects the whole man. Let the assault of Satan be against the head, let him try to deceive us with unsettled notions in theology, let him tempt us to doubt those things which are verily received among us; a full faith in Christ preserves us against dangerous heresies, and enables us to hold fast those things which we have received, which we have been taught, and have learned, and have made our own by experience. Unsettledness in notion generally springs from a weakness of faith. A man that has strong faith in Christ, has got a hand that gets such a grip of the doctrines of grace, that you could not unclasp it, do what you would. He knows what he has believed. He understands what he has received. He could not and would not give up what he knows to be the truth of God, though all the schemes that men devise should assail him with their most treacherous art. While faith will guard the head, it will also guard the heart. When temptation to love the world comes in, then faith holds up thoughts of the future and confidence of the reward that awaits the people of God, and enables the Christian to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, and so the heart is protected. Then when the enemy makes his cut at the sword arm of a Christian, to disable him, if possible, from future service, faith protects the arm like a shield, and he is able to do exploits for his Master, and go forth, still conquering, and to conquer, in the name of Him that hath loved us. Suppose the arrow is aimed at his feet, and the enemy attempts to make him trip in his daily life--endeavours to mislead him in the uprightness of his walk and conversation. Faith protects his feet, and he stands fast in slippery places.

**2. Faith, like a shield, receives the blows which are meant for the man himself.** Blows must be expected; the conflict must not be shirked; but let the shield of faith bear the cut and the thrust.

**3. Faith is like a shield, because it hath good need to be strong.** A man who has some pasteboard shield may lift it up against his foe, the sword will go through it and reach his heart. Or perhaps in the moment when the lance is in rest, and his foe is dashing upon him, he thinks that his shield may preserve him, and lo it is dashed to shivers, and the blood gushes from the fountain and he is slain. He that would use a shield must take care that it be a shield of proof. He that hath true faith, the faith of God's elect, hath such a shield that he will see the scimitars of his enemies go to a thousand shivers over it every time they smite the bosses thereof. And as for their spears, if they but once come in contact with this shield, they will break into a thousand splinters, or bend like reeds when pressed against the wall--they cannot pierce it, but they shall themselves be quenched or broken in pieces. You will say, how then are we to know whether our faith is a right faith, and our shield a strong one? One test of it is, it must be all of a piece. A shield that is made of three or four pieces in this case will be of no use. So your faith must be all of a piece; it must be faith in the finished work of Christ; you must have no confidence in yourself or in any man, but rest wholly and entirely upon Christ, else your shield will be of no use. Then your faith must be of heaven's forging or your shield will certainly fail you; you must have the faith of God's elect which is of the operation of the Holy Spirit who worketh it in the soul of man. Then you must see to it that your faith is that which rests only upon truth, for if there be any error or false notion in the fashioning of it, that shall be a joint in it which the spear can pierce. You must take care that your faith is agreeable to God's Word, that you depend upon true and real promises, upon the sure word of testimony and not upon the fictions and fancies and dreams of men. And above all, you must mind that your faith is fixed in the person of Christ, for nothing but a faith in Christ's Divine person as "God over all, blessed forever," and in His proper manhood when as the Lamb of God's passover He was sacrificed for us--no other

faith will be able to stand against the tremendous shocks and the innumerable attacks which you must receive in the great battle of spiritual life. Look to your shield, man.

**4. But to pass on--for we must not pause long on anyone particular--faith is like a shield because it is of no use except it be well handled.** A shield needs handling, and so does faith. He was a silly soldier who, when he went into the battle, said he had a shield but it was at home. So there be some silly professors who have a faith, but they have not got it with them when they need it. They have it with them when there are no enemies. When all goeth well with them, then they can believe; but just when the pinch comes then their faith fails. Now there is a sacred art in being able to handle the shield of faith. Let me explain to you how that can be.

**(1) You will handle it well if you are able to quote the promises of God against the attacks of your enemy.**

The devil said, "One day you shall be poor and starve." "No," said the believer, handling his shield well, "He hath said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'; 'bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure.'" "Ay," said Satan, "but thou wilt one day fall by the hand of the enemy." "No," said faith, "for I am persuaded that He that hath begun a good work in me will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "Ay," said Satan, "but the slander of the enemy will overturn you." "No," said faith, "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him; the remainder of wrath doth He restrain." "Ay," said Satan, as he shot another arrow, "you are weak." "Yes," said faith, handling his shield, "but 'my strength is made perfect in weakness.' Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." "Ay," said Satan, "but thy sin is great." "Yes," said faith, handling the promise, "but He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." "But," said the enemy again, drawing his sword and making a tremendous thrust, "God hath cast thee off." "No," said faith, "He hateth putting away; He doth not cast off His people, neither doth He forsake His heritage." "But I will have thee, after all," said Satan. "No," said faith, dashing the bosses in the enemy's jaws, "He hath said, 'I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.'" "This is what I call handling the shield.

**(2) But there is another way of handling it, not merely with the promises, but with the doctrines.**

"Ah," says Satan, "what is there in thee that thou shouldest be saved? Thou art poor, and weak, and mean, and foolish!" Up came faith, handling the shield doctrinally, this time, and said, "'God hath chosen the base things of this world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are'; for 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.' 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him'?" "Ay," said he, "if God should have chosen you, yet after all you may certainly perish!" And then, Christian handling his shield of faith doctrinally again, said, "No, I believe in the final perseverance of the saints, for is it not written, 'the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger'?" "Those that thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost," and so forth. So by well understanding the doctrines of grace, there is not a single doctrine which may not in its way minister to our defence against the fiery darts of the wicked. Then, the Christian soldier ought to know how to handle the shield of faith according to the rules of observation. "Ay," saith the enemy, "thy confidence is vain, and thy hope shall soon be cut off." "No," said faith, "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken." "Yes, but thou hast fallen into sin, and God will leave thee." "No," saith faith, "for I saw David, and he stumbled, but yet the Lord surely brought him out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay." To use this shield in the way of observation is very profitable when you mark the way whereby God has dealt with the rest of His people; for as He deals with one, so He will deal with the rest, and you can throw this in the teeth of your enemy. "I remember the ways of God. I call to remembrance His deeds of old. I say hath God cast off His people, hath He forsaken one of His chosen? And since He has never done so, I bold up my shield with great courage, and say He never will; He changes not; as He has not forsaken any, He will not forsake me."

**(3) Then there is another blessed way of handling this shield, and that is experimentally**

When you can look back, like the Psalmist, to the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar; when you can return to those days of old, and call to remembrance your song in the night, when your spirit can say, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me. Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him." Why, brethren, some of us can talk of deliverances so many, that we know not where to end; scarcely do we know where to begin. Oh! what wonders has God done for us as a Church and people! He has brought us through fire and through water. Men did ride over our heads, but hitherto all things have worked together for our good. His glory has appeared amidst all the villanies and slanders of men to which we have



been exposed. Let us handle our shield then, according to the rules of past experience, and when Satan tells us that God will fail us at the last, let us reply, "Now thou liest, and I tell it to thee to thy face, for what our God was in the past, He will be in the present, and in the future, and so on even to the end." Young soldiers of Christ, learn well the art of handling your shield.

**5. Lastly, for the matter of the figure. The shield in olden times was an emblem of the warrior's honour, and more especially in later days than those of Paul.** In the age of chivalry, the warrior carried his escutcheon upon his shield. Now, faith is like a shield, because it carries the Christian's glory, the Christian's coat of arms, the Christian's escutcheon--the cross of his Saviour.

**William Gouge** on the shield of faith...

1. What faith is. A believing of a thing to be true. The faith here spoken of is a belief of the truth of God.

(1) Every faithful soul, every true believer, gives a full assent in his mind to the truth of the gospel.

(2) With the assent of the mind there goes a consent of the will.

2. The resemblance between faith and a shield. A shield is a general fence for the whole body, especially for the principal parts, the head and heart. The use of it is to avoid blows of all kinds. So faith defends the whole man from all sorts of temptations cast against him by any of his spiritual enemies, the flesh, world, or devil.

3. How faith is wrought.

(1) Outward means: the word, and sacraments.

(2) Inward means: the sanctifying Spirit of God.

4. How faith must be proved. By its causes, and by its effects.

(1) Causes.

(a) Illumination.

(b) Compunction and grief of heart.

(2) Effects.

(a) Shame for evil that has been done.

(b) A true and thorough resolution to enter into a new course.

(c) A renewing of grief, as often as occasion is offered.

5. How faith is to be preserved.

(1) By a conscionable and constant use of the means which God has appointed.

(2) By faithful and hearty prayer for God's blessing on those means.

6. How faith may be well used. By resting on God's promises.

**Faith** ([4102](#)) (**pistis** [**word study**]) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it.

Here **faith** is the confidence, the trust, the commitment which a Christian has toward God and Christ and His non-failing Word of Truth (cp Josh 23:14, 21:45, Nu 23:19, Lk 1:37ASV, et al). This faith serves like a **shield** to protect the believer from the enemy's fiery missiles. As **pistis** relates to God, it is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things (He 11:3note) well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As **faith** relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven (cp Mt 4:17, Mt 7:21-note, Mt 7:22, 23-note). Stated another way, eternal salvation comes **only** through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way (Acts 4:12, 16:31, Ro 10:9-note, John 14:6).

**Walvoord - Of faith** is a genitive of content; the **shield** consists of **faith**. The idea, then, is that a Christian's resolute **faith** in the Lord can stop and extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one aimed at him.

**Faith** is an essential protection against **flaming arrows** of **temptation, doubt, fear**, etc, because faith is the believer's expression of trust in God's promises, plans, and truth. **Faith** is an unwavering belief in God's Word and belief protects one from temptation's arrows. But don't separate **believing** from **obeying** (see Ro 1:5-note "obedience of faith"). The demons believe but don't obey (Jas



2:19-note). We can say we believe and yet still (foolishly, willfully) choose to disobey! (cp Ro 7:18, 19note) We are deceiving ourselves if we think we have taken up the shield of faith while overtly disobeying (Jas 1:22NLT-note). No, in fact what we have really done is tossed the shield aside and are holding up an shield of our own vain and foolish imagination. And then we wonder why we have been hit with the stinging missile of temptation, doubt, discouragement, despair, fear, etc! Beloved, don't be deceived by teaching that separates faith from obedience (cp Jas 1:15-note).

**Olyott** - Faith is the Christian's shield. The devil can do nothing against it. His worst attacks are frustrated. Faith offers complete protection and makes advance possible. Where there is faith, there is nothing to fear. And what is faith? It is believing what God has said, for no other reason than that he has said it. It is taking God at his word. It is accepting his teaching, obeying his commands, heeding his threats and laying hold of his promises. Where there is faith, defeat is unknown. The soldier who has it is never floored by anything. Faith is invincible. (Alive in Christ: Ephesians Simply Explained)

**Strauss** - Against these satanic, fiery darts of pride, envy, jealousy, covetousness, worry, unbelief, impurity, and many others, we need a sure defense. Paul calls that defense "the shield of faith."...

Now notice that Paul says: "Taking," or "Taking hold of" the shield of faith. God is our shield, but only as we lay hold of Him in faith does He become our protection against the fiery darts of the enemy. The shield is our sovereign God; faith is the human responsibility. The "faith" here is not that system of Christian teaching "which was once delivered unto the saints," and for which we "should earnestly contend" (Jude 3). It is, as Dr. Ironside has said, not what you believe but how you believe. And to this we might add that it is also whom you believe. Faith here is confidence, complete reliance in the Person, purposes, and power of God. Implicit trust in Him alone can quench the enemy's darts. ([Ephesians 4-6 Notes](#))

**Beet** on faith in Eph 6:16

belief of the Gospel, the unique condition of salvation. It saves us from both the guilt and power of sin, as being the one condition of union with Christ.

**Adam Clarke** - Faith, in this place, must mean that evidence of things unseen which every genuine believer has, that God, for Christ's sake, has blotted out his sins, and by which he is enabled to call God his Father, and feel him to be his portion. It is such an appropriating faith as this which can quench any dart of the devil.

**Pulpit Commentary** - Faith, in its widest sense, constitutes this shield—faith in God as our Father, in Christ as our Redeemer, in the Spirit as our Sanctifier and Strengthener—faith in all the promises, and especially such promises as we find in Rev. 2 and 3 "to him that overcometh" (comp. promise to Ephesus, Rev. 2:7)

**Spurgeon** - We are not to neglect our sincerity, our righteousness, or our peace, but above all, as the most important, we are to see to it that our faith is right, that it be true faith, and that it covers all our virtues from attack. There is no respect in which faith is not useful to us, therefore, whatever you leave out, see to your faith; if you forget all besides, be careful above all that ye take the shield of faith. And then, again, we are told above all to take the shield of faith, because faith preserves from all sorts of enemies. The fiery darts of the wicked! Does that refer to Satan? Faith answers him. Does it refer to wicked men? Faith resists them. Does it refer to one's own wicked self? Faith can overcome that. Does it refer to the whole world? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It matters not who the enemy may be; let the earth be all in arms abroad, this faith can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Above all, then, take the shield of faith.

**Jerry Bridges** on faith...

**Faith** involves both a **renunciation** and a **reliance**.

First, we must **renounce** any trust in our own performance as the basis of our acceptance before God. We trust in our own performance when we believe we've earned God's acceptance by our good works. But we also trust in our own performance when we believe we've lost God's acceptance by our bad works—by our sin. So we must renounce any consideration of either our bad works or our good works as the means of relating to God.

Second, we must place our reliance entirely on the perfect obedience and sin-bearing death of Christ as the sole basis of our standing before God—on our best days as well as our worst....

By **faith** (we are) to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit instead of (our) own resolutions, self-effort, or willpower. (We are) to acknowledge that without Christ (we) can do nothing (John 15:5). Just as (we) must look outside (ourselves) to Christ's righteousness for (our) standing before God, (we) must also look outside (ourselves) to the power of the Holy Spirit for (our) strength to live the Christian life....

**Faith** involves both **renunciation** and **reliance**. We have to first renounce all confidence in our own power and then rely entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit. We must be **enabled**, not merely **helped**. What's the difference? The word **help** implies we have some ability but not enough; we need someone else to supplement our partially adequate ability. By contrast, **enablement** implies that we have no ability whatsoever. We're entirely powerless. We can do nothing. But when by faith we renounce self-sufficiency and embrace reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit, we receive divine empowerment, enablement, and strength for personal transformation and ministry. (The bookends of the Christian Life)

Looking at it negatively, unbelief characterizes all sin. When a believer sin, they have believed Satan's lie, they have even sinned in the light, and they have made a choice to walk in the darkness, whether they understand that spiritual dynamic or not. There's an old hymn which could easily be the "theme song" for taking up the shield of faith...[Trust and Obey!](#) Look especially at stanza number 2 with the thought of taking up the shield of faith to deflect fiery missiles (*doubt, fear*)!

### **Trust and Obey!**

John H Sammis

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,  
What a glory He sheds on our way!  
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,  
And with all who will trust and obey.

#### **Refrain**

*Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*  
Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,  
But His smile quickly drives it away;  
Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,  
Can abide while we trust and obey.

#### **Refrain**

Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,  
But our toil He doth richly repay;  
Not a grief or a loss, not a frown or a cross,  
But is blessed if we trust and obey.

#### **Refrain**

But we never can prove the delights of His love  
Until all on the altar we lay;  
For the favor He shows, for the joy He bestows,  
Are for them who will trust and obey.

#### **Refrain**

Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet.  
Or we'll walk by His side in the way.  
What He says we will do, where He sends we will go;

**Never fear, only trust and obey.**

**Faith that obeys** makes you like an impregnable castle door or wall. Satan's fiery missile enticing you to commit sin is always a temptation to not believe God. For example, God says do what is right and I'll bless you. Satan says do what is wrong and you'll experience pleasure. Who do you choose to believe? If you believe God and follow through in unhesitating obedience, you've just taken up the "shield of faith" and deflected the lie of the enemy. And remember that you are not alone in the struggle but you have

the indwelling Holy Spirit Who fills you, in order to control you and Who strengthens you giving you the the will to obey and the energy to obey the truth.

It is your faith in Christ and God's Word that quenches the fiery darts. Just as much as you trust Him and His Word, you will share His victory. Remember that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ (Ro 10:17-note) so stay in the Word.

**Oliver Wendell Holmes** said "It is faith in something that makes life worth living." That sounds good but it is a half-truth and in spiritual life it equates with a lie. It's like the little leaguer who told his mom, "I think we're going to lose the game today" to which she answered "No son, think positive!" His reply was "I'm positive we're going to lose the game today." She wanted him to put faith in faith. But faith must be in something that's worth putting one's faith in. For the Christian, faith is believing God and remembering that every fiery dart that Satan shoots is a lie. If we believe his lies, we are not believing God. It's really that simple. If God said it, then it's true, and we are to believe it. Which comes back to the source of our faith, God's Word of Truth. We can know all the pieces of the Roman soldier's armor, but if we are not daily in His Word, letting His Spirit remind us of His faithfulness and renewing our mind to think like Christ rather than like the evil world system, then we are destined for defeat in our spiritual battles. We are to follow in the steps of our Savior, Who when tempted by Satan (Mt 4:1ff, Luke 4:1ff) said in essence "I will believe God and His trustworthy Word." The moment Christ chose to believe the Word, He became a veritable fortress against the onslaught of Satan, even though fiery missiles continued to rain down. The pattern for victory has been clearly displayed by our Lord, Who withstood Satan as the perfect God-Man, and He did so in order to demonstrate that in Him every believer can stand against all the evil schemes and every flaming missile (Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4). We can be more than conquerors through Christ (Ro 8:37KJV-), but it all comes down to our choices. God will not force us to be victorious, but He does supply everything necessary for victory. Begin today by laying aside one deed of darkness, one grudge, one area of unforgiveness, one fear, etc. Lay hold of a promise of God in the Word. **Memorize** it. **Meditate** on throughout the day (cp Josh 1:8-note, Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note). Take the errant thoughts captive to the obedience of your Commander in Chief, Christ Jesus (2Co 10:5-note, for context read 2Co 10:3, 4-note) and replace them with thoughts of God's truth (cp Php 4:8-note, Php 4:9-note). You will find that in your weakness, you will begin to experience His inner strengthening (read 2Co 12:9-note; cp Isa 40:31-note; Eph 3:16-note). Continue to walk out in faith not sight (2Co 5:7, 4:16, 17, 18, He 11:1-note, He 11:6-note), remembering that effective/active/dynamic faith obeys (see Ro 1:5-note "obedience of faith") what God has said is good and acceptable and perfect (Ro 12:2-note). John wrote that

*"This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith." (1Jn 5:4)*

We win by believing and trusting God. You may have doubts and anxieties, and various struggles and trials, but as you daily (and you must do this daily, even moment by moment!) choose to believe in God's Word and power, you will be strong in Him and victorious in Him.

**John Eadie** - The shield preserved the soldier from being struck, and his armour, too, from being hacked or notched. Such a large and powerful shield is faith—that unwavering confidence in God and His grace which guards the mind from aberration and despondency, and easily wards off such assaults as are made upon it. (John Eadie, D., LL.D. The Epistle of St Paul to the Ephesians)

**Marvin Vincent** makes a very good point writing that **flaming missiles** of..

Temptation act on susceptible material. **Self-confidence** is combustible. Faith, in doing away with dependence on self, takes away fuel for the dart. It creates sensitiveness to holy influences by which the power of temptation is neutralized. It enlists the direct aid of God. See 1Co 10:13-note; Lk 22:32; Jas 1:2-note; 1Pe 4:12-note; 2Pe 2:9-note. (Vincent, M. R.. Word Studies in the New Testament 3:409)

**John MacArthur** has this note on "**faith**"

"When [John Paton \(biography\)](#) was translating the Bible for a South Seas island tribe, he discovered that they had no word for trust or faith. One day a native who had been running hard came into the missionary's house, flopped himself in a large chair and said, "It's good to rest my whole weight on this chair." "That's it," said Paton. "I'll translate faith as 'resting one's whole weight on God.'" [MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**Wayne Barber** - **Taking up** is an **orist active** participle. It describes a soldier lifting up the shield to defend himself against the things that are coming at him and letting that shield protect him, the shield of the faith. In simple terms, what does that mean? It means everything believed about the faith, the faith being the gospel of Jesus Christ, the faith summarizing all the things we know from God's Word. It is everything believed and everything that is shown to be believed by our obedience to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## HOW DO I TAKE UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH?

By my willingness to obey the gospel which is not just the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. When I am willing to obey what His Word has to say, that act of obedience becomes like a shield to a Roman soldier in a battle. If you want to be protected against the deceitfulness of Satan, then surrender. Obey. That loving obedience becomes like a shield in the face of the devil's deceit -- obeying Christ in everything...

In ancient warfare, the enemy would wrap the arrows with flammable material, dip it in pitch, set it on fire and shoot these flaming arrows at the enemy. Now here is the picture Paul is drawing for us. First, I am to obey God. Then when the devil throws his flaming missiles at me, because I have purposed to obey the Lord Jesus at all costs in everything, that obedience becomes like a shield to ward off the flaming missiles coming in, even extinguishing those flaming missiles. It is like Scud missiles in the first Gulf War against Iraq. Those missiles were being randomly launched, without warning. You have got to retain this picture in your mind if you want to be successful in this spiritual war.

Don't misunderstand what Paul is saying. He is not saying that devil personally takes time to come after just you... God is omnipresent, but the devil is not. The point is that his minions, the demonic forces, are sending "Scud missiles" constantly and yet at random. It is not so much that the devil is coming after me personally. These "flaming missile" thoughts are everywhere in our fallen world. And so everywhere you go the flaming missiles are coming in at all times. There is no time when you can let down. Talk to the veterans of the Vietnam war and the Gulf War. You will find that those on the front line could not let down their guard because they never knew when the missiles might come in. They had to be ready, alert and aware at all times.

**In summary then, what is it that protects me? It is my attitude of obedience.** "God, I am going to obey You regardless of what comes at me." When that is my attitude, it becomes like a protecting shield. My faith is expressed by my willingness to obey. Don't misunderstand. **Faith and obedience cannot be separated.** What I believe I obey. I show you what I believe by how I live, not by what I say. So that act of obedience becomes like a door shield in front of me and wards off the fiery darts of the enemy.

The flaming missiles of the evil one, give us a picture of how the devil works in our life -- the battle is in the mind. As we think, so are we. Our enemy is constantly trying to deceive us as John says in the Revelation...

"And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives (present tense = continually) the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." (cf Re 12:9-[note](#)).

He is constantly trying to lead us astray with wrong thinking. What would the darts be wrapped up in? To me it would have to be thoughts that he is constantly throwing at us. These thoughts are like "Scud missiles" coming into our mind. We can't turn on the television without these "fiery missiles" bombarding our living room. We can't walk into the world without these thoughts bombarding our mind. **So as those things are coming in, we must make a conscious choice to adhere to the truth. Then you can recognize the deception and error. Secondly you have to obey the truth that you are adhering to. Your willingness to obey wards off those darts that are coming in.**

You are up against an enemy that wants to get your mind. If he can lock it up and hold it hostage with immoral thoughts, he will do it. If he can lock it up with anger, he will do it. If he can lock it up with resentment, he will do it.

You've got to make up your mind.

**Are you going to obey God or are you going to listen and receive the incoming flaming missiles of the evil one?**

They are randomly shot at all times and we are constantly being bombarded with these thoughts. Young people, please understand what I am saying. You've got to learn now. You will pay for the wrong choices that you make with consequences. We choose to obey and then can refuse those incoming thoughts, the fiery missiles of the evil one.

The Roman shield was partially made of leather, and it was soaked in water before they went into battle so it would quench the fiery arrows. Have you ever taken a match, licked your fingers and put it out? Get that thought in your mind the next time the devil throws one of them at you.

As Paul says we are to be...

taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2Cor 10:5bnote)

We have to learn that we are in a war all the time. There are people in the church who have not had their loins girded about with truth. They don't care about the Word of God. They don't even study it. They would rather just go out, do something and then ask God to forgive them. They have been deceived by error. They think we can go on and live any way we want, go to church on Sunday and get everything right. That is not found in the Word of God. They have believed a lie and what I am saying irritates them! I'll tell you why it is irritating. Because they don't understand the battle.

You are in a battle and you have to learn to choose between what is truth and what is deceit in this world. The enemy will throw deceitful, lying thoughts at you at random, when you least expect them. Listen, fire destroys. A flaming missile that is allowed to lodge doesn't just inflict a wound but burns and destroys everything in the vicinity of where it landed.

One of the heights of spiritual ignorance is to think you can never fall into temptation. If you start receiving what the devil is throwing at you and if you are not going to get into the Word of God, if you are just going to play around and do church until Jesus returns, the devil is going to destroy some things in your life...

If you think this warfare is something that is just a subject to be debated at a seminar, you don't understand what the Christian life is all about. That is why the apostle Paul says,

"Finally, I am going to put it in a context now that you can understand. You had better put that garment on. You are in a war zone."

That garment becomes your weapon against the devil. You have to purpose in your heart to obey Him. You have to have that shield of faith in front of you.

Now look at what we have seen as a progression so far—a commitment to truth by having our loins girded about with truth, a surrender to Jesus by having put on the breastplate of righteousness, firm footing in the gospel, which means that our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace and our obedience to Christ has been purposed in our heart which means now we have taken up the shield of faith.

Folks, we have talked about it for many years. Sometimes it goes right over our heads and we don't understand what we are saying.

### **We are in a war zone and it is a battle for our minds.**

As a man thinks, so will he also do. God wants to renew your mind. That is why it starts with a total commitment to truth. That is what strengthens us so we can stand in the face of the onslaught of the devil.

You are in a war zone. You were born into the kingdom of darkness. What is going on in your life? I guarantee you we have a lot of wounded saints because in battle they have let down their shield and received the flaming missiles of the evil one. You must make up your mind to trust and obey. The fiery missiles are going to come in like Scuds. But when you choose to obey Christ, at that moment you are protected from the onslaught of the evil one

### **The battle is not a power struggle. It is a truth struggle.**

Am I going to adhere to it or am I not? If I am not, I am going to reap the consequences.

Don't think you are not in a war zone. You need to get serious about it because the evil one is so subtle you don't even see his schemes. He is an invisible enemy who is constantly bombarding your mind with thoughts that are deceptive and will lead to destruction. When you receive those burning thoughts, they will destroy everything around the place they have been received. Folks, if we would just get honest, every one of us have received them at times in our life. The damage they have done we all understand. Let's don't relax the standard.

Sometimes when I preach, people say I am too hard. Nobody can live it. Listen, folks, none of us have arrived. We are pilgrims together. But we are never going to water down God's standard. You know why? Because in the book of Ephesians we have been told we can live it. Don't let anybody ever tell you that you can't. If you say you **can't**, what you are saying is, you **won't**. God has a standard and has given us His Spirit so that we can conform to that standard. That means righteousness, which we have studied. That is the armored threads in the garment of the new life.

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- [Ephesians 6:17 The Armor of God: The Helmet of Salvation](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Armor of God: The Sword of the Spirit](#) - John MacArthur

**Will be able** (1410) (**dunamai** - see study of **dunamis**) means to have power by virtue of inherent ability and resources. Note the **passive voice** which indicates that this is an internal enablement provided by an outside source, the Spirit of God.

Believers thus must guard against quenching the Spirit before they can quench the arrows of the evil one. Remember that quenching the Holy Spirit is to suppress, stifle, or otherwise obstruct His ministry to the individual. In a word to quench Him is to say "No," and replace His will (which is the Father's will) with your will. In short saying no is saying "My will be done on earth" and the result is sin, disobedience and quenching of the Spirit, Who is the One Who enables the believer. Be sensitive to the "little sins" and confess quickly. Solomon spoke of the danger of letting these sins linger...

"Catch the foxes for us, The little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, While our vineyards are in blossom."  
(Song 2:15)

Note that this the third time that Paul has told us we would **'be able'** (Eph 6:11-note, Eph 6:13-note). How are we **"able"** in this passage? Obviously this not be a reference to our intrinsic, fleshly, natural ability. Jesus clearly stated that apart from Him we can do nothing in the supernatural realm (Jn 15:5). Therefore by simple deduction, Paul has to be referring to **supernatural power**. As we believers make the conscious, active, volitional choice to take up the shield of faith, to believe what God says, to fully trust in His provision to battle an unseen foe, then we will find ourselves able to fend off (extinguish) all of the enemy's arrows. Reasoning another way -- how else could one counter or deflect "supernatural missiles", missiles we cannot even see or perceive with our natural senses unless we had supernatural enablement? In other words, attitudes such as **self** confidence, **self** sufficiency, **self**-reliance, **self** assurance, etc, have to be cast off like filthy garments and instead we must rely on the divine empowerment God graciously makes available through His indwelling Spirit (see **Spirit** and **power** [*dunamis*] in Eph 3:16, cf Acts 1:8, Ro 15:19). The Spirit provides the **power**. Our responsibility is to take up the shield of faith.

**Lehman Strauss** echoes our need to jettison self reliance in spiritual warfare writing...

If we put confidence in the flesh, we can never hope to ward off the devil's darts. **Only as we look to our blessed Lord and draw continually upon His strength can we expect to come forth triumphantly.** The believer's mighty bulwark is his confidence in Almighty God. No arrow of fear, no dart of temptation can penetrate the soul that lays hold of the shield of faith. God has provided for us a shield in the Person and finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ, but you and I must believe. (Ephesians Commentary)

**Hendriksen** - In the devil's quiver there are all kinds of fiery bolts. Paul mentions "tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine," etc. Some of these missiles enkindle doubt, others lust, greed, vanity, envy, etc. **Only by looking away from self to God** Triune, placing one's trust in Him for life, death, and eternity, relying on His word of revelation and promise, is it possible to repel this shower of flaming arrows. Things looked thoroughly hopeless to Jairus when his servants arrived with the announcement, "Your daughter is dead, do not bother the Teacher any more." But Jesus answered, "Fear not, only believe" (Luke 8:49, 50). But faith is more than a weapon of defense. It is also "the victory that overcomes the world" (1John 5:4). Surely, this shield must be taken up "in addition to everything else." (Exposition of Ephesians. Baker Book House).

**Extinguish all the flaming arrows** - How many? **All** of them can be extinguished! When you are attacked by what seem to be insurmountable odds wielding overwhelming firepower in the form of burning temptations, crushing circumstances, stormy winds of doubt, all of which threaten sure shipwreck and defeat, then by faith look up and say "I believe every sure word of God" and will stand firm on His unchanging Word (cp Jas 4:6, 7, 1Pe 5:8-note, 1Pe 5:9-note).

**Marvin Vincent** has an interesting insight explaining that...

Temptation is thus represented as impelled from a distance. Satan attacks by indirection—through good things from which no evil is suspected. There is a hint of its propagating power: one sin draws another in its track: the flame of the fire-tipped dart spreads. Temptation acts on susceptible material. Self-confidence is combustible. Faith, in doing away with dependence on self, takes away fuel for the dart. It creates sensitiveness to holy influences by which the power of temptation is neutralized. It enlists the direct aid of God."

**Extinguish** (4570) (**sbennumi** [word study]) means to quench, put out or extinguish referring to a light or a fire. Metaphorically, **sbennumi** speaks of ceasing, thwarting or blocking an activity.

**Expositor's** writes that...

Only in this instance does Paul indicate the effect of a particular piece of armor. With such a shield the believer can extinguish all the incendiary devices flung by the devil (v. 11). Herodotus described how cane darts tipped with tow were dipped in pitch and then ignited. Octavius used such arrows against Antony's fleet at Actium and they were not unknown in OT times. The reference is not, as some have surmised, to poisoned darts producing fever. The Christian's shield effectively counteracts the danger of such diabolical missiles not merely by arresting or deflecting them, but by actually quenching the flames to prevent them from spreading. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing](#))

**Sbennumi** is used 35 times in the Septuagint (LXX)

Lev. 6:9, 12f; 2 Sam. 14:7; 21:17; 2 Ki. 22:17; 2 Chr. 29:7; 34:25; Est. 4:17; Job 4:10; 16:15; 18:5f; 21:17; 30:8; 34:26; 40:12; Prov. 10:7; 13:9; 20:9; 24:20; Cant. 8:7; Isa. 1:31; 34:10; 42:3; 43:17; 66:24; Jer. 4:4; 7:20; 17:27; 21:12; Ezek. 20:47f; 32:7; Amos 5:6

Here are the 6 uses of **sbennumi** in the NT...

**Matthew 12:20** "A battered reed He will not break off, and a smoldering wick He will not **put out**, Until He leads justice to victory.

**Matthew 25:8** "And the foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are **going out**.'

**Mark 9:48** where their worm does not die, and the fire is not **quenched**.

**Ephesians 6:16** in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to **extinguish** all the flaming missiles of the evil one.

**1Thessalonians 5:19** (note) Do not **quench** the Spirit;

**Hebrews 11:34** (note) **quenched** the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

In the Septuagint this verb relates to literal fire that is not to go out (Lev 6:13) and figuratively several times of God's wrath which burns like fire and will not be quenched (2Ki 22:17, 2Chr 34:25, Jer 7:20, 17:27, 21:12, Ezek 20:47, 48, Amos 5:6). It is used in Isaiah 66:24 to describe the unquenchable fire of hell.

There are 35 uses of **sbennumi** in the Septuagint (LXX)

Lev. 6:9, 12f; 2 Sam. 14:7; 21:17; 2 Ki. 22:17; 2 Chr. 29:7; 34:25; Est. 4:17; Job 4:10; 16:15; 18:5f; 21:17; 30:8; 34:26; 40:12; Prov. 10:7; 13:9; 20:9; 24:20; Cant. 8:7; Isa. 1:31; 34:10; 42:3; 43:17; 66:24; Jer. 4:4; 7:20; 17:27; 21:12; Ezek. 20:47f; 32:7; Amos 5:6

Below are some representative uses...

**Leviticus 6:13** 'Fire shall be kept burning continually on the altar; it is not to **go out** (Hebrew = kabah = quench, put out, extinguish; Lxx = sbennumi)

**2 Kings 22:17** "Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods that they might provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be **quenched** (Hebrew = kabah = quench, put out, extinguish; Lxx = sbennumi)."

**Proverbs 13:9** The light of the righteous rejoices, But the lamp of the wicked **goes out**. (Hebrew = daak = be extinguished; Lxx = sbennumi)

**Song of Solomon 8:7** "Many waters cannot **quench** (Hebrew = kabah = quench, put out, extinguish; Lxx = sbennumi) love, Nor will rivers overflow it; If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, It would be utterly despised."

**Isaiah 66:24** "Then they shall go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm shall not die, And their fire shall not **be quenched** (Hebrew = kabah = quench, put out, extinguish; Lxx = sbennumi); And they shall be an abhorrence to all mankind."

**Flaming (4448)** (**puroo** from **púr** = fire; cf **purosis**) means to be ignited or set on fire, to be kindled, to burn, to set on fire. Paul uses **puroo** figuratively here to describe "missiles" or "darts" undoubtedly referring to thoughts. He use the **perfect tense** to describe these missile as having been set on fire and still burning, speaking of the permanence of the burning effect.

The arrows or would be covered with a **inflammable** material (easily set on fire) such as **tow** (the coarse and broken part of flax or hemp prepared for spinning) would be placed and then dipped in **pitch** (a sticky resinous black or dark brown substance which hardens on cooling, obtained by destructive distillation of wood or coal this process yielding tar) and then set on fire. When the arrow hit its target, the pitch would splatter and start little fires on the clothing of the soldier or on a wooden target. What are Satan's fiery darts? They are seducing temptations, flaming arrows of impurity, selfishness, doubt, fear, disappointment, lust, greed, vanity, and covetousness, all part of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1John 2:16). Satan and his minions literally bombard the believer with the fiery darts of seductive temptation to elicit ungodly, evil responses. The only defense we have at that point is the shield of faith. We live in a world which is controlled by the Devil and thus in many forms (television, billboards, internet, magazines, etc) he is capable of continually bombarding us with a wide variety of temptations ("I'm not as attractive as that actor", "I'm not as rich as that man", "I'm not satisfied with my marriage.", "I deserve \_\_\_\_.", etc, etc). That's why we must take up the shield of faith.

**Watch out for the devil's "Molotov Cocktails"** -- During World War II in Finland, the soldiers didn't have adequate weapons against invaders, so they learned to fill bottles with gasoline, sand, and soapsuds, and with burning rags in the mouth. These little firebombs became known as Molotov Cocktails.

Paul also uses **puroo** figuratively to describe his righteous indignation (becoming incensed) toward sin writing...

Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not **inwardly burn**? (NIV, 2Cor 11:29)

Paul uses **puroo** figuratively of lust not controlled writing...

But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than **to burn**. (1Cor 7:9) (NIV adds "burn with passion")

Here are the other 3 (out of 6) NT uses of **puroo**...

**2 Peter 3:12** looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by **burning**, and the elements will melt with intense heat! (See **note** 2 Peter 3:12)

**Revelation 1:15** and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been **caused to glow** in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. (See **note**)

**Revelation 3:18** I advise you to buy from Me gold **refined by fire**, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. (See **note**)

**Puroo** is used 18 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)** - 2Sa 22:31; Est. 5:1; Job 22:25; Ps 12:6; 17:3; 18:30; 26:2; 66:10; 105:19; 119:140; Pr. 10:20; 30:5; Isa. 1:25; Jer. 9:7; Dan. 11:35; 12:10; Zech. 13:9). The nuances of puroo in the include to make red hot, to cause to glow, to heat thoroughly, to try in the fire, to purge and to be inflamed or aflame. Here are some representative uses...

**Psalm 66:10** For Thou hast tried us, O God; Thou hast **refined** us (Lxx = puroo = tried with fire) as silver is **refined** (Lxx = puroo = tried with fire).

**Zechariah 13:9** "And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine (Lxx = puroo = tried with fire) them as silver is refined (Lxx = puroo = tried with fire), And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'" (Comment: This event speaks of the purging of unbelieving Israel from the believing **remnant** of Israel, the real Israel of God, this event occurring contemporaneous with the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation, the pouring out of God's wrath in the 7 bowl judgments in the last 3.5 years of Daniel's Seventieth Week.)

**Arrows** (956) (**belos**) is literally something thrown (pointed weapon, arrow, dart) and metaphorically as used here speaking of Satan's temptations as weapons of attack.

This is the only NT use of **belos** which is found 34 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)**

Deut. 32:23, 42; 2 Sam. 18:14; 22:15; 2 Ki. 9:24; 13:15, 17; 19:32; 2 Chr. 26:15; Job 6:4; 16:9; 20:25; 30:14; 34:6; 39:22; Ps. 7:13; 11:2; 18:14; 38:2; 45:5; 57:4; 64:7; 77:17; 91:5; 120:4; 127:4; 144:6; Isa. 5:28; 7:24; 37:33; 49:2; Lam. 3:12; Joel 2:8

**TDNT** adds that **belos** means...

"Pointed weapon," "javelin," "arrow," used also for lightning, rays of the sun, moon, or tire. Greek and Semitic gods are armed with both bows and arrows. In the OT the rainbow is God's bow (Ge 9:13), lightning is His

burning arrow (Ps 7:13) and the arrows of the sun cause drought and sunstroke (Ps 90). God shoots the wicked with His arrows (Lam 3:12, Job 6:4). God's servant is an arrow in (Isaiah 42:9) and (Isaiah 59:17) speaks of ethical and spiritual armament. In the NT in Eph 6:16 we see that the righteous are armed as God's warriors (cf Isa 59:17). They are attacked by the flaming darts of the evil one but they can parry this assault with the shield of faith, which gives union with God. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

**Eadie** writes that...

The Greek fathers, with too great restriction, think that reference (to fiery darts) is made to such lusts and desires as we sometimes term "burning" lusts and desires.

The **darts** appear to be Satanic assaults, sudden and terrible—such suggestions to evil, such unaccountable impulses to doubt or blaspheme, such horrid insinuations about the Divine character and one's own state, as often distract persons, especially of a nervous temperament.

The biographies of Luther and Bunyan afford apposite examples. But the shield of faith must be used to repel such darts, and if brought to intercept them, it preserves the Christian warrior intact. His confidence in God keeps him from being wounded, or from falling a prisoner into the hands of his ruthless enemies. Whatever happens moves him not; his faith saves him from despondency and defeat. The future form of the verb by no means supports Meyer's view as to the period of the evil day. (John Eadie, D., LL.D. The Epistle of St Paul to the Ephesians)

**Blaikie** writes that "Fiery darts" were weapons tipped with inflammable materials, firebrands, curiously constructed, adapted to set on fire. Metaphorically, considerations darted into the mind inflaming lust, pride, revenge, or other evil feelings, emanations from the great tempter, the evil one. That such considerations sometimes start up suddenly in the mind, against the deliberate desire, sometimes even in the middle of holy exercises, is the painful experience of every Christian, and must make him thankful for the shield on which they are quenched. An act of faith on Christ, placing the soul consciously in his presence, recalling his atoning love and grace, and the promises of the Spirit, will extinguish these fiery temptations. ([Ephesians 6 Exposition](#))

**Vincent** has a lengthy comment on "**fiery darts**" writing noting that the Greek literally reads...

*the darts, those which have been set on fire*

Herodotus says that the Persians attacked the citadel of Athens "with arrows whereto pieces of lighted tow were attached, which they shot at the barricade" (8:52).

Thucydides: "The Plataeans constructed a wooden frame, which they set up on the top of their own wall opposite the mound.... They also hung curtains of skins and hides in front: these were designed to protect the woodwork and the workers, and shield them against blazing arrows" (2:75).

Livy tells of a huge dart used at the siege of Saguntum, which was impelled by twisted ropes. "There was used by the Saguntines a missile weapon called falarica, with the shaft of fir, and round in other parts, except toward the point, whence the iron projected. This part, which was square, they bound around with tow and besmeared with pitch. It had an iron head three feet in length, so that it could pierce through the body with the armor. But what caused the greatest fear was that this weapon, even though it stuck in the shield and did not penetrate into the body, when it was discharged with the middle part on fire, and bore along a much greater flame produced by the mere motion, obliged the armor to be thrown down, and exposed the soldier to succeeding blows" (21:8).

Again, of the siege of Ambracia by the Romans: "Some advanced with burning torches, others carrying tow and pitch and fire-darts, their entire line being illuminated by the blaze" (38:6).

Compare Ps 7:13, where the correct rendering is, "His arrows He maketh fiery arrows."

Temptation is thus represented as impelled from a distance. Satan attacks by indirection — through good things from which no evil is suspected.

There is a hint of its propagating power: one sin draws another in its track: the flame of the fire-tipped dart spreads.

Temptation acts on susceptible material. **Self-confidence** is combustible. Faith, in doing away with dependence on self, takes away fuel for the dart. It creates sensitiveness to holy influences by which the power of temptation is neutralized. It enlists the direct aid of God. See 1Cor. 10:13; Luke 22:32; Jas 1:2; 1Pe 4:12; 2Pe 2:9. (Vincent, M. R.. Word Studies in the New Testament 3:409)

Warren Wiersbe asks...

What are the “fiery darts” that Satan shoots at us? I take it that they are **thoughts** of one kind or another—doubts, fears, worries, and so on. I have sometimes been prayerfully meditating on the Word when suddenly a terrible thought would invade my mind. Of course, Satan wants us to think that we are to blame, because this kind of thinking would make us discouraged with our Christian walk. But he is to blame! I have had fiery darts thrown at me while I have been preaching the Word! If we do not quench these darts, they will ignite whatever they touch, and we will have a destructive fire to put out. I have found that trusting God’s promises and laying hold of his Word will quench these fiery darts. How important it is for the Christian soldier to know Bible doctrine! (This explains why the Christian soldier is described in chapter 6 of Ephesians. Paul spends the first three chapters explaining basic doctrine, and the next two on basic Christian living.) We do not quench the darts by faith in ourselves (even our past victories), faith in faith, or faith in some creed. It is faith in Christ and his Word. We cannot stop Satan from throwing the darts, but we can keep them from starting a fire. A great saint has said (was it Martin Luther?),

“I cannot keep the sparrows from flying about my head, but I can keep them from making a nest in my hair!”

The important thing is to quench that dart immediately. Instantly look to Christ by faith, recall some promise of the Word, and believe it. Otherwise the fire will start to spread, and if you add fuel to it it will get beyond your control. Your feelings will get aroused and upset, and before long Satan will be in control. I can recall situations in which fiery darts made me impatient, and I was about to say and do things for which afterward I would have been sorry. I turned to the Lord in faith and believed him for the patience I needed. There came to me a sense of control and calm that quenched the fiery darts. The times I have not turned to him in faith, I have been burned—and so have others. ([Wiersbe, W: Strategy of Satan: How to Detect and Defeat Him](#)) (Bolding added)

**Evil one** (4190) (**poneros**) refers to actively harmful or hurtful evil one. The definite article points to a specific evil entity, undoubtedly Satan. The idea is one who is pernicious, which means highly injurious or destructive, exceedingly harmful, and vicious. Ponerous describes Satan as utterly bad. While admittedly the devil uses men as his agents in his conflict with believers, the devil, aided by his cohorts, is the believer’s real and persistent enemy

The Oxford English Dictionary says that **pernicious** means “having a harmful effect, especially in a gradual or subtle way. (Soanes, C., & Stevenson, A. Concise Oxford English dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press)

**Wuest** adds that “The wicked” is *ho poneros* “the pernicious one,” Satan, who is not content to perish in his own destruction, but seeks to drag everyone else down with him to the utter ruin that will be his in the future eternity. The fiery arrows represent the temptations with which he assails the saints. These saints were saved in the sense that they were justified (**Ed note**: Past Tense Salvation - See The Three Tenses of Salvation). The salvation spoken of here must therefore be salvation from the power of sin in this present life (**Ed note**: Present Tense Salvation = Sanctification - See The Three Tenses of Salvation), salvation from the onslaughts of Satan. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Jesus** used this same word **poneros** for Satan in His prayer in John 17...

"I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 "I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the **evil one**. 16 "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. (John 17:14-17)

Here are all the other 8 (out of a total of 10) NT uses of the phrase **the evil one**", each referring in context to Satan...

**Mt 13:19** "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, **the evil one** comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.

**Mt 13:38** and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of **the evil one**;

**2 Th 3:3** But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from **the evil one**.

**1 John 2:13** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome **the evil one**. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

**1 John 2:14** I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have

written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome **the evil one**.

**1 John 3:12** not as Cain, who was of **the evil one**, and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

**1 John 5:18** We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and **the evil one** does not touch him.

**1 John 5:19** We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of **the evil one**.

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Though many foes beset you round,  
And feeble is your arm  
Your life is hid with Christ in God,  
Beyond the realm of harm.

Weak as you are, you shall not faint,  
Or fainting, shall not die;  
Jesus, the strength of every saint,  
Will aid you from on high.

Though unperceived by mortal sense,  
Fate sees Him always near,  
A guide, a glory, a defense:  
Then what have you to fear?

As surely as He overcame,  
And triumphed once for you,  
So surely you that love His name  
Shall in Him triumph too!  
by John Newton

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**Smart Armor System (November 30, 1994)** - United States Army and Pentagon officials are developing a sophisticated armor system to protect tanks against enemy fire. According to the Army Times, this new system will protect armored vehicles against the latest kinetic energy rockets, which are long, thin, sharp-pointed projectiles that pierce armor when they hit head-on. The Smart Armor System (SAS) will keep these missiles from penetrating the armor of tanks because special reactive tiles will deflect them.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we need protection from the "fiery darts" being hurled at us by Satan. He has some powerful missiles that can stir up within us doubt, fear, disappointment, impurity, lust, greed, selfishness, covetousness, and pride. And he attacks us when we are most vulnerable in these areas. But God has given us the shield of faith for our protection to deflect Satan's most powerful missiles. When we trust God, believing what He tells us in His Word, the enemy's most deadly attacks will be futile.

As you go out into battle today, put on the whole armor of God. Above all, take up the shield of faith. Reassert your trust in God and commit your ways to Him. It's your Smart Armor System. --D C Egnor ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The devil's tactic is surprise,  
He'll stop you in your tracks;  
So keep on guard and trust God's Word,  
Resist his strong attacks.  
-JDB

**Trust in God's Word is a sure defense  
against temptation.**

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**Use Your Weapons December 8, 2005**

While visiting a museum, I was intrigued by a small inscription describing a class of Roman gladiators-the Retiarii-who fought using only a net and a trident. Of all the fearsome and lethal weapons available to those warriors, who often battled to the death, these



men were given two items—a piece of webbing and a three-pronged spear. When they entered the arena, their survival depended on how well they used their weapons.

In the spiritual battle we face as Christians, God has chosen our weapons: "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds" (2Corinthians 10:3,4).

It's worth pausing to look at ourselves in the mirror of Ep 6:10-18 to see if we are properly equipped with "the whole armor of God." From the helmet of salvation to the shoes of the gospel of peace, we are to be protected and armed for a conflict that depends not on human strength but on the power of God.

When we realize the nature of that warfare and the forces against us, it's foolish to enter the fray with anything except our God-given weapons. —David C. McCasland ([Ibid](#))

Does all the world seem against you  
And you're in the battle alone?  
It's often when you are most helpless  
That God's mighty power is known.  
-Anon

**Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. -Isaiah 40:31**

**Ephesians 6:17** And **take** THE **HELMET** OF **SALVATION**, and the **sword** of the **Spirit**, **which** is the **word** of **God**. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [kai ten perikephalaian tou soteriou dexasthe \(2PAAM\)](#) [kai ten machairan tou pneumatos. o estin \(3SPA\)](#) [rhema theou.](#)

**Amplified:** And take the helmet of salvation and the sword that the Spirit wields, which is the Word of God. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** salvation as your helmet and in your hand the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God; ([Erdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Young's Literal:** and the helmet of the salvation receive, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the saying of God,

**AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION: kai ten perikephalaian tou soteriou dexasthe (2PAAM): (**

- [Sa 17:5,58; Isa 59:17; 1Th 5:8](#) - note
- [Ephesians 6:16 The Essential Shield](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:17a Mind Thy Head!](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:17b The Weapon](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:16 The Shield of Faith](#) - D Martyn Lloyd Jones
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Helmet of Salvation](#) - D Martyn Lloyd Jones
- [Ephesians 6:15-16 The Armor of God: The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace and The Shield of Faith](#)- John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:16 The Believer's Armor, Part 4 The Shield of Faith](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Believer's Armor, Part 5 The Helmet of Salvation, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Believer's Armor, Part 6 The Helmet of Salvation, Part 2](#)- John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Believer's Armor, Part 7 The Sword of the Spirit](#)- John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Armor of God: The Helmet of Salvation](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Armor of God: The Sword of the Spirit](#) - John MacArthur



**O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation,  
Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.**

Psalm 140:7

**And (Kai)** - couples this piece of the armor with the preceding pieces of armor. The armor although composed of different pieces is a "unit" and not one piece can be missing if we are to successfully wage spiritual warfare in His power and for His glory.

This figure of a **helmet** hearkens back to Isaiah's description of the Messiah in which he records that...

He (Messiah) put on **righteousness like a breastplate**, and a **helmet of salvation** on His head; and He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. (Isaiah 59:17)

We always have a choice of helmets. And so we see a description of two other helmets, Goliath's helmet and Saul's helmet...

The 1Sa 17:5 And he (Goliath) had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale-armor which weighed five thousand shekels of bronze.

**Comment:** The world system arrayed against God and His people is deceived into thinking it has a defense against God's omnipotent weapons. However, the defeat of every "Goliath" (that fails to bow the knee and receive Christ as Savior) is sure! One little word (or "rock") will fell every Goliath! It may not look that way in your life today, but you know the end of the story! Indeed, "in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us" (Ro 8:37), "for whoever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith...he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." (1Jn 5:4, 5) and even now God "always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place." (2Cor 2:14). Hallelujah!

1Sa 17:38 Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor.

**Comment:** Saul is a man of flesh and so gives David the armor of flesh. But praise God, that in 1Sa 17:39 David recognized that it was not by (man's) might, nor (man's) power, but by God's Spirit that he would win the victory.

**Spurgeon commenting on Ps 140:7 adds:** When he looked back upon past dangers and deliverances, the good man felt that he should have perished had not the Lord held a shield over his head. In the day of the clash of arms, or of the putting on of armour (as some read it), the glorious Lord had been his constant Protector. Goliath had his armour bearer, and so had Saul, and these each one guarded his master; yet the giant and the king both perished, while David, without armour or shield, slew the giant and baffled the tyrant. The shield of the Eternal is a better protection than a helmet of brass, When arrows fly thick and the battle axe crashes right and left, there is no covering for the head like the power of the Almighty. See how the child of providence glorifies his Preserver! He calls him not only his salvation, but the strength of it, by whose unrivalled force he had been enabled to outlive the cunning and cruelty of his adversaries. He had obtained a deliverance in which the strength of the Omnipotent was clearly to be seen. This is a grand utterance of praise, a gracious ground of comfort, a prevalent argument in prayer. He that has covered our head aforetime will not now desert us. Wherefore let us fight a good fight, and fear no deadly wound: the Lord God is our shield, and our exceeding great reward.

**Take** (1209) (**dechomai**) means to accept deliberately and receive readily. The idea is to take or receive or accept into one's hands, a picture especially appropriate in regard to this portion of the armor, which is salvation. In addition to standing firm, having received and having already put on four pieces of armor, we also need to receive and put on two more. The **aorist imperative** is an urgent command from Paul our commanding officer (and of course ultimately from God Who is over all) - do this now! don't delay! Receive or accept the helmet from God so that your head might be protected.

**Expositor's** writes that...

"Take" is really receive or accept (dexasithe). The previous items were laid out for the soldier to pick up. The helmet and sword would be handed him by an attendant or by his armor bearer. The verb is appropriate to the "givenness" of salvation. It is "a present deliverance from sin to be consummated in eternity by complete deliverance from every kind of evil (Beet, p. 373). ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing](#))

**Helmet of salvation** - The Greek text (genitive is one of apposition) means the helmet which is salvation.

Paul is speaking to those who are already saved, and is therefore not speaking here about attaining salvation. Rather, Satan seeks to destroy a believer's assurance of salvation with his weapons of doubt and discouragement. Security is a fact; assurance is a feeling that comes to the obedient Christian. The writer of Hebrews emphasizes this point writing...

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (He 6:11, 12-note) (See study on [The Blessed Hope of the Believer](#))

**Moule** - The head needs protection not only as a vital part, but as the seat of sight. The believer "looks up, and lifts up his head, as his redemption draws nigh" (Luke 21:28)...In Isa 59:17 the Divine Warrior (Christ) wears this helmet; doubtless in the sense of His being the Worker of deliverance, clothed and armed, as it were, with His great purpose. The Christian warrior here wears it in the sense of his being the receiver and possessor of deliverance, clothed and armed in the victory of his Head. In 1Th. 5:8 "the hope of salvation" is the helmet: the sure prospect of the final and absolute deliverance (cp. Ro 13:11), a deliverance of which the present peace and victory of faith is but the outline or prelude, "covers the head" of the soldier. The two passages supplement each other; the hope is based on the actual possession of the thing in its present phase; the sense of possession is vivified by the hope.

**Steven Cole**...

The helmet protects your head from the enemy's attacks. Your head is a very important part of your body, because it contains your brain, which controls everything. Your head determines how you think about all of life. How you think in large part determines how you feel and how you act...To put on the helmet of salvation requires that you learn to think biblically about the predominant worldviews. You must develop a Christian mind, a saved mind. Your head determines how you function in all of life. If your brain is not working properly, it affects how other parts of your body work. A brain injury can affect motor skills or the ability to speak or think clearly. If a soldier got knocked unconscious by a blow to the head, he was probably doomed. He had to guard his head by having his helmet securely in place. Spiritually, salvation determines how we live in this sinful world. We live as pilgrims who have been rescued from this present evil kingdom of Satan. We live in subjection to Jesus Christ as Lord and King. We view everything—values, money, entertainment, the arts, or politics—from the perspective of being saved people. Understanding the doctrine of salvation equips us to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Salvation is the foundational doctrine to understand cognitively and to know experientially. Putting on the helmet of salvation protects everything in your life. Your head determines how you relate to others. Once you put on the helmet of salvation, you realize that all people are in one of two (and only two) camps: either they are saved and going to heaven; or, they are lost and going to hell...But because you have put on the helmet of salvation, you relate to people differently than you did before. You now love the people of God, whom you avoided before. You now view lost people with compassion and understanding, yearning that they would come to know God through Jesus Christ....So when Paul tells us to take the helmet of salvation, he is saying, "Don't go into the world with your head unprotected. Mind thy head!" It determines how you think, how you function in all of life, and how you relate to people. As someone said, "Watch your thoughts, they become words; watch your words, they become actions; watch your actions, they become habits; watch your habits, they become character; watch your character, for it becomes your destiny" (Frank Outlaw, in Readers' Digest [date unknown]). The helmet protects your head....

Someone has said, "What you think means more than anything else in your life. More than what you earn, more than where you live, more than your social position, and more than what anyone else may think about you" (George Adams, in "Bits & Pieces" [11/84], p. 15). God commands you to receive the helmet of salvation to protect how you think about the many worldly ideas that bombard you daily. Thinking that is protected by the helmet of salvation will enable you to live rightly before God and rightly in relation to others. Salvation means that God has rescued you in the past from the penalty of sin through your faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is rescuing you in the present from the power of sin through the resurrection life of Christ in you. He will rescue you in the future from the presence of sin when Jesus Christ returns in power and glory. So, mind thy head! Don't go out into the battlefield of the world without your helmet on! Stand firm against the enemy by taking the helmet of salvation! (See the full message - [Ephesians 6:17 Mind Thy Head!](#))

**Wuest** adds that "These saints were saved in the sense that they were justified. The salvation spoken of here must therefore be salvation from the **power of sin** in this present life, salvation from the **onslaughts of Satan.**" ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Comment:** This is a reasonable consideration because we learn elsewhere in the NT, that salvation is not only a past tense completed one time event -- justification -- but is an ongoing day by day process -- "present tense" salvation = sanctification -- especially learning to walk in the Spirit so that we will not fulfill the sinful

desires of the fallen flesh which is ruled by the old nature. Gal 5:16-note; see related topics Three Tenses of Salvation; Chart contrasting in the flesh vs in the Spirit)

**Helmet** (4030) (**perikephalaia** from **peri** = around + **kephale** = head) means literally around the head or encirclement of the head and thus a helmet.

A Roman soldier who lost his helmet was in danger of receiving severe head wounds which would (at the very least) disorient him and render him ineffective and in danger of further injury. Similarly, a Christian who has no assurance of salvation (or has "lost his hope" --see below 1Thes 5:8) cannot be bold in resisting Satan.

Roman military helmets were of two types: the **galea** (made of leather) or the **cassis** (metal). The helmet had a band to protect the forehead and plates for the cheeks, and extended down in back to protect the neck. When the helmet was strapped in place, it exposed little besides the eyes, nose, and mouth. The metal helmets, due to their weight, were lined with sponge or felt. Virtually the only weapons which could penetrate a metal helmet were hammers or axes. No soldier's uniform was complete without a proper helmet. A helmet, being hot and uncomfortable, would be put on by a soldier only when he faced impending danger.

A Roman soldier would be foolish to enter a battle without his helmet. He knew that the helmet would protect his head from arrows, but that it's primary function was to ward off blows from the enemy's broadsword (not the small dagger, the machaira, mentioned in Eph 6:17) but the broadsword, which was from three to four-feet long. with a massive handle that was held with both hands like a baseball bat. The soldier lifted it over his head and brought it down on his opponent's head. The broadsword was a vicious weapon that could deal a crushing blow to the skull. The helmet on one's head was the only way to deflect it. An archaeological dig discovered a skeleton with a cleavage right through the skull. Although it is only conjecture, it is quite likely that this fatal would was made by someone who attacked the person with a broadsword.

Beloved, please do not leave home today without your helmet. In fact, don't ever take it off. Not even when you go to sleep (it's a good thing we are speaking in spiritual terms!) because the helmet of salvation is part of the full armor and not an accessory to be added later or from time to time as needed.

**John MacArthur** illustrates how the enemy attacks our heads...

The Roman soldier had to defend himself against a broadsword. Satan's broadsword has two sides to it: discouragement and doubt. Satan wants to belt you in the head with **discouragement** and **doubt**. His attacks of **discouragement** might go like this: "You sure are giving a lot and not getting much in return. You're circumscribing your life to a certain standard and setting yourself apart from the world. But what happens? You just lost your job! Some blessing! You've been reading your Bible every day, but your wife is as cranky as she was before you bought it, and it hasn't had any effect on her. What is God doing in your life? You've been going to church for years, but look at your kids. They don't respect you today anymore than they ever did." That would discourage anyone. You might have been teaching a class for a long time, yet wonder if anyone is getting anything out of it. That could discourage you. Satan also wants to hit you in the head with **doubt**: "How do you know you're a Christian? Are you sure you're saved? You certainly don't deserve to be; look what you just did! Do you think that's what a Christian does?" Many people suffer from doubt and discouragement, but the helmet of salvation is our protection. ([MacArthur, J.. The Believer's Armor. Chicago: Moody Press 1986](#))

**Perikephalaia** is used 10 times in the Septuagint (LXX) (1Sa 17:5, 38, 49; 2Chr 26:14; Isa. 59:17; Jer. 46:4; Ezek. 27:10; 38:4-5). In the NT it is found only here and in 1Th 5:8 (note).

The three witnesses to the believer concerning assurance are

- (1) the witness of the Holy Word (1Jn 5:13),
- (2) the witness of the Holy Spirit (Ro 8:16-note 1Jn 5:10),
- (3) the witness of good works as a result, not a cause, of salvation (Mt 5:16note; 1Jn 2:3, 4, 5).

**Vincent** writes that...

The helmet was originally of skin, strengthened with bronze or other metal, and surmounted with a figure adorned with a horsehair crest. It was furnished with a visor to protect the face. (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament 3:410)

The **helmet of salvation** protects our mind and thus protects against discouragement, doubt, desire to give up, etc, and applying the figure brought out in 1Th 5:8 (note) (below) gives us hope not only in knowing that we are saved (justified by faith - past tense salvation), but that we will be saved daily (sanctification - present tense salvation) and in the future (glorification - future tense

salvation - see related topic Three Tenses of Salvation). It is the assurance that God will triumph. One of Satan's most effective weapons against us is discouragement. When we are properly equipped with the helmet of salvation, it's hard to stay discouraged.

In **1Thessalonians 5** Paul describes believers as **sons of light and sons of day not of night nor of darkness** (1Thes 5:5) and as such he explains that we are to be like soldiers on sentry duty at night, and we are not to fall asleep on our post. Paul exhorts us writing...

**but since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on** (like a new garment - enduo) **the breastplate of faith** ([see notes on faith](#)) **and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.** 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. 11 Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing. (1Th 5:8, 9, 10, 11)

**Comment on 1Thessalonians 5:8** - see note: In this section Paul is saying that if you do the deeds of darkness as a day person, you are behaving contrary to your nature [sons of light and sons of day] and are violating your new identity in Christ as children of light. Paul is saying that our behavior should correspond with our nature. He calls on believers to live soberly, not drunk with the intoxications of the world and thus numbed to spiritual truths which are eternal. And when we are sober, we are more alert and watchful and less likely of being drawn or enticed into doing deeds of darkness. Regarding the deeds of darkness, remember that, night people can only do night deeds. They are not and cannot be day people nor can they do the deeds of the day. On the other hand those who are sons of light and sons of day sadly can do the deeds of the night, tracking back to their old patterns of conduct. Sons of day now have the power to not do the deeds of darkness, but we can still carry out the deeds of darkness. The sad reality is that when day people commit acts of darkness, they do these deeds in broad daylight so to speak, because they have full understanding of their sinful nature and do them in full exposure of this light. In this section, Paul is calling for our behavior to be consistent with our new nature.

How is **love** like a breastplate, defending us from the **deeds of darkness** and **world forces of darkness**? Jesus helps us understand when He declared that "*If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*" (Jn 14:15) In a sense, all sin reflects a failure to love God, as the delight of one's heart, as the supreme Object of one's affection. Whoever is the supreme object of one's affection is going to control how one behaves and lives. It follows that when we sin what we are saying in essence is "Father, You are not the supreme object of my affection. I am! And so I am going to do whatever pleases me, whatever makes me feel good. That attitude is a description of the garment of the old man or old self we once were. Selfish to the very core. Paul says the breastplate of love is part of the wardrobe of the new man or new self. And when we wear this garment, we will demonstrate the sincerity of our love by our unhesitating obedience. In Romans 13:10 Paul writes that **love is the fulfillment of the law**. In the present discussion this means that believers don't need a law that says don't make graven images, because if we love God supremely, we are not going to make graven images and thus we "fulfill the law". Whenever we sin we have failed to love God because we show that we love ourselves more and wanted to fulfill ourselves. And so faith and love are like a breastplate for **sons of light and sons of day** because when we trust in God and we love Him supremely, obedience will be our heart's desire and it will serve to defend us from the fiery missiles of doubt, temptation and fear.

Regarding the believer's **helmet, the hope of salvation** Paul is not saying that we have a hope that at last we will be saved. Believers can know today they are saved forever and are certain of spending eternity with God. Hope is not used in Scripture like the world uses it -- I hope I will be saved. In contrast, hope speaks of an absolute assurance that God will do good to me in the future. This hope in Scripture speaks especially of the return of Christ, our Blessed Hope. And so this **helmet, the hope of salvation** fends off some of Satan's most fierce and powerful blows directed at the believer's eternal security. Therefore Paul encourages believers to have confidence in the salvation they already possess. Paul knew that doubting their security in Christ would render them ineffective in spiritual warfare, just as a blow to the soldier's head would render his physical body incapable of defending itself. **Discouragement and doubt are deflected when you know you're secure in Christ.** Amen!)

[The Church's One Foundation](#)

Samuel Stone

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,  
She waits the consummation of peace for evermore;  
Till, with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are blest,

And the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

**Salvation** (4992) (**soterios/soterion** from **soter** = savior) is an adjective which refers to that which is pertains to the means of salvation = bringing salvation, delivering, rescuing. **Soterios** describes the act of delivering or saving from great danger or peril and of healing, protecting and preserving. In the original Greek text here in Titus 2:11 (note) "**soterios**" is an adjective meaning "saving, bringing salvation" and describes the effect of this grace as being beneficent and redemptive.

**Warren Wiersbe** feels that the **helmet of salvation**...

is here referring to the **hope the believer has in the return of Jesus Christ**. Satan often uses **discouragement** and **hopelessness** as weapons to oppose us. It is when we are discouraged that we are the most vulnerable. We will make foolish decisions and be susceptible to all kinds of temptations. When the mind is protected by "the blessed hope" of the Lord's return, Satan cannot use discouragement to attack and defeat us. Discouragement is a lethal weapon in the hands of the enemy. Moses and Elijah became so discouraged they asked God to kill them. The psalms record some of the occasions when David was "in the depths" and could only hope in God. ([Wiersbe, W: Strategy of Satan: How to Detect and Defeat Him](#))

Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why are you disturbed within me? Hope in God,  
for I shall again praise Him, the help of my countenance, and my God. (Ps 43:5-[note](#))

**John MacArthur** illustrates the importance of the believer's hope writing that "Often when a runner is on the home stretch of a race he suddenly "hits the wall," as the expression goes. His legs wobble and refuse to go any farther. The only hope for the runner is to keep his mind on the goal, on the victory to be won for himself and his team. It is that hope that keeps him going when every other part of his being wants to give up. ([MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**Blaikie** writes that "

The glorious truth that we are saved (Eph 2:5, 8-see **notes** Ep 2:5; 2:8) appropriated, rested on, rejoiced in, will protect even so vital a part as the head, will keep us from intellectual surrender and rationalistic doubt. ([Ephesians 6 Exposition](#))

**John Eadie** offers another thought on the meaning of the **helmet of salvation** "Salvation, and not the hope of it, is here represented as forming the helmet; not salvation in an objective sense, but in conscious possession. It is the assurance of being interested in this salvation that guards the head. He who knows that he is safe, who feels that he is pardoned and sanctified, possesses this "helmet of helthe," as Wyckliffe renders it, and has his "head covered in the day of battle" (John Eadie, D., LL.D. The Epistle of St Paul to the Ephesians)

**Ray Stedman** feels that the **hope of salvation**...

is not talking about the salvation of the soul. He is not referring to salvation as regeneration or conversion. In other words, he is not looking backwards, to the moment of conversion. The first three pieces of armor do so, but the next three pieces of armor, including the helmet of salvation, look forward, not back. Paul is talking about a salvation that will be a future event. It is exactly what Paul refers to in Romans when he says, "Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed" (Romans 13:11)....

So we, as Christians, have the helmet of salvation. We have a hope for the future. We understand that God is working out His purposes and therefore we are not disturbed when human programs go wrong and everything fails. We are not surprised when all the plans and programs for human progress end up in the same old ash-heap--the New Deal and the Fair Deal, the Great Society and the New World Order. We have learned to expect wars and rumors of wars, right until the very end. We expect false teachings and false philosophies and cults and heresies to abound. We have been told that all these things will happen.

**Lehman Strauss**...

The helmet of salvation for the believer is first the knowledge and assurance of salvation. The experience of salvation is not an emotional one merely: it is reasonable and rational as well. The saved man has intelligent understanding and assuring knowledge that God has saved him. He knows whom he has believed. He may not always be able to answer the questions and criticisms of skeptics, yet no one, man or devil, will ever be able to get him away from the fact of his experience of salvation. The knowledge of sins forgiven is a mighty fortress against the attacks of modernism, atheism, communism, and every other ism. If you have the knowledge and assurance of salvation, you have the protection against many of Satan's darts and the solution to many of life's problems. When a man receives the helmet of salvation he can hold up his head with confidence and face the most potent foe.



To be saved and know it can make us “more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom. 8:37). After the man born blind had been given sight by our Lord, the Pharisees, by their questions, sought to get the man to renounce Jesus. To most of their questions, he could only repeat: “I know not”; but they could never tear from him one thing he did know. He said: “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see” (John 9:25). The Apostle Paul likewise did not know a lot of things, for there were times when he had to acknowledge that “we see through a glass, darkly” (1 Cor. 13:12); but at no time were the enemies of the gospel able to put Paul to shame, for he could always testify: “I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed” (2 Tim. 1:12).

Salvation was Paul’s helmet. Is it yours? If you have any doubt as to your being saved, you will not be able to stand with real confidence when facing the foe. An experiential knowledge of salvation removes all sense of doubt and all fear of condemnation, giving to the believer a sense of security in his Lord.

In one other passage Paul mentions the helmet. “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation” (1Th 5:8). Salvation is not only the beginning of hope for man, it is future also. Salvation touches the past, the present, and the future, saving from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and the presence of sin. The Scriptures teach that we are saved (Eph. 2:8), that we are being saved (2 Cor. 1:10), and that we shall be saved (Rom. 5:10). The helmet of salvation must be worn at all times for every circumstance and occasion. Every Christian can stand in the calm confidence that the death of Christ has saved him, the resurrected Christ is keeping him, and the coming Christ will preserve him safely throughout eternity. “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6).

Beloved, if you have trusted Christ, you can fight, knowing without any doubt whatever that you are saved. As you wear the helmet of salvation, no power in heaven or on earth can rob you of confidence and boldness in battle. The professing Christian, without the helmet of salvation, is an easy target for the devil. If you have any doubt that you are saved now, or if you’ll fear that you might not be saved in the next life, you cannot confidently meet the enemy of your soul from day to day. Assurance of salvation that is based upon the Bible protects the believer from false doctrine, doubt, and fear. Take the helmet. It is God’s gift to you. What an anchor for our thinking;! ([Ephesians 4-6 Notes](#))

## **Biblical Illustrator...**

### **The helmet**

I. Describe the warrior’s helmet.

1. The object of hope. Salvation.
2. The origin and source of this hope. It is a grace of the Spirit, and the effect of a renewed heart.
3. The basis and ground of hope.
  - (1) The promises of the Father.
  - (2) The work of the Son.
  - (3) The influences of the Spirit.

II. The advantages he derives from it.

1. It animates for the warfare.
2. It supports in sufferings.
3. It will put us in possession of the victory and reward.

Application:

1. Cultivate and preserve this hope of salvation.
2. As your hope is, so will be your comfort and joy.
3. Address those who have not a good hope. (J. Burns, D. D.)

### **The hope of salvation**

He (Knox) had a sore fight for an existence, wrestling with popes and principalities; in defeat, contention, life-long struggle; rowing as a galley slave, wandering in exile. A sore fight; but he won it. “Have you hope?” they asked him in his last moment, when he could no longer speak. He lifted his finger, pointed upwards with his

finger, and so died. (T. Carlyle.)

### **The helmet of hope**

No suit of armour could be complete without a protection for the head. This great ruling member, the very citadel of intelligence and vital energy, is too important to be left unguarded. Hence, from the remotest ages, the helmet has been in use amongst all martial nations. The champion of the Philistines had a helmet of brass upon his head, as had also the king of Israel who commanded the armies of the living God. The Persians and Ethiopians also wore this martial cap in the day of battle, as did likewise the warlike Greeks. The helmet of the latter was usually made of skins, rendered hard and impervious to the weapons then in use; but the glittering brass or iron helmet of the Jewish warrior seems the most fit type of that piece of panoply which the apostle places in the armour of the Christian soldier. With this brazen or iron casque upon his head, the Jewish warrior could stand unhurt under the strokes of the brandished sword, or come out uninjured from amidst the storm of arrows. With its "dazzling brightness, its horrific devices of gorgons and chimeras, and its nodding plumes which overlooked the dreadful cone," his helmet struck terror into the hearts of his enemies. Hence the apostle very properly, when pointing out to us the panoply, designates the helmet as a piece of armour the Christian soldier must put on. In the letter to the Thessalonians, the nature of this helmet is more specially revealed, where we are exhorted to take for a helmet "the hope of salvation." Hope, then, is the helmet of the Christian soldier; and as there was usually graven upon the ancient helmet some single word or sentence as a motto, so must the soldier of the cross have graven on his crest, as emblematic and descriptive of the spirit of his warfare, the word "Hope." How aptly does this brief motto set forth his belief as to the ultimate result of his conflicts! This good hope of salvation is the helmet of the gospel panoply. Hope! how beautiful that word! how expressive and suggestive! How hope paints the future in bright and joyous colours! how it speaks in the hour of sorrow and trial, of the breaking away of the storm, and the sunshine to come after! Let me warn you, however, to be on your guard against availing yourself of false hopes in your onward march to eternity. See that you bind not on your brows such a helmet as the enemy's sword may cleave in twain, or through which his arrows may enter to lay waste life's citadel. You will beware, for instance, of taking for a helmet the hope of future repentance. A common refuge is this for the gospel-taught worldling. You must also be guarded against wearing for a helmet the hope of being saved by the mere general mercy of God. Nor must we pass from this part of the subject without warning you against wearing for a helmet the hope of being saved because you are in connection with the visible Church ... The hope of the Christian has to do with better things than those which are confined within the bounds of time, or which derive their value solely from the estimate put upon them by a mere grovelling, earthly mind. But the hope of the believer stands on a firmer basis, rises higher, takes hold of better comforts, and speeds on the footsteps of the pilgrim soldier with the prospect of far brighter joys to come, than that mere common principle which cheers universal humanity on its march from the cradle to the grave. The hope of the believer has been well defined to be that grace "whereby, through Christ, he expects and waits for all those good things of the promise he has not yet received." The helmet of hope and the shield of faith are intimately connected. The two pieces of armour are joined together, and serve a purpose to each other, much as their position would seem to separate them. Hope and faith are sister graces of the Spirit. Faith is in some sense the minister of hope. Had we no faith in things to come, how could we hope for them? Hope has not to do with things present, "for what a man seeth, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Now, "faith is the substance of things hoped for." Faith sits at home receiving the promise, whilst hope looks from the lattice for the approach of the blessing. Faith tells us the story of good things in reserve, and then hope quietly and peacefully expects them. Let us examine the qualities of the helmet of salvation. The believer's hope is well-founded; unlike those refuges of lies to which your attention has been called. The hope of the Christian soldier is also reasonable. "Be ready always," says the apostle, "to give to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." The spiritual warrior is supposed to be a social being; he is joined with others in the march from the city of destruction to the New Jerusalem; and it is to be presumed that these wayfaring warriors, in the midst of their long journeyings, and their night watches, will sometimes question each other as to their views and motives in joining the service. The hope of the Christian soldier has also a good object in view. How vain are oftentimes those objects which call out the hopes of the worldling. The difference between the hope of the Christian and that of the sinner, is worldwide in this, that the Christian has in his view objects which are always real, which never disappoint, and which are of immortal value. Then, once more, the hope of the Christian soldier is steadfast. "Which hope," says Paul, "we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." We freely admit that, practically, the Christian's hope is not always as steadfast as it should be, or as it might be. The hopes of most believers are extremely fluctuating. The infirmities of our physical nature have much to do with shutting out the light of hope from the soul. We are beings of a two-fold organization, and the physical and



spiritual man have an intimate relation. A diseased or wearied body may make a dull and beclouded mind. But these temporary fluctuations of the believer's hope do not destroy it. We need only observe further, that the helmet of hope is strengthened and brightened by experience. "We glory in tribulation also," says the apostle, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." It is the nature of successful experience to impart confidence. (J. Leyburn, D. D.)

### **The helmet of salvation**

The helmet was necessary to the completion of the apostle's military picture; and the grace to be symbolized by it we should suppose to be one vital to the soul's prosperity. And such a grace is Hope. For it guards the vital parts; it enables us to exhibit a fearless front in the day of battle; it forbids the entrance of any unworthy and coward fears; saying to us in the thick of the spiritual encounter, "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." And now we may proceed to take some other views of the Christian's hope. For example, let us consider it in its source, as having God for its Author. And then, consider next, the strength of hope, as having Christ for its foundation. We must have something to hang such a hope upon, and this hope can come to us only through a Mediator, But take up another view, the victories of hope over all spiritual difficulties and impediments. Thus it is hope which makes us victorious over outward trials. And so, in like manner, hope makes us victorious over all difficulties and discouragements. "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Again, Scripture notices as an especial attribute of hope, that it should enable us to overcome shame, that it should take away all foolish regrets, all ungrateful misgivings as to whether in entering upon the Christian course we may have made a right choice or not. "O Lord, let me not be ashamed of my hope," said David. "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me," said the Lord by His prophet. "Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which He hath given unto us." But consider, lastly, the blessedness of hope, as having life and immortality for its end. "Take the helmet of salvation," says the apostle. Now, salvation takes in the whole circle of the Divine promise, the entire aggregate of blessings promised for both the life that now is, and for that which is to come. It includes salvation from the curse of the law, salvation from the guilt of sin, salvation from the power of the grave, salvation from the tyranny of spiritual and eternal death. (D. Moore, M. A.)

## **AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD: kai ten machairan tou pneumatou, o estin (3SPA1) rhema theou:**

- Isaiah 49:2; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 1:16; 2:16; 19:15) (Matthew 4:4,7,10,11; Hebrews 12:5,6; 13:5,6; Revelation 12:11
- [Ephesians 6:16 The Essential Shield](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:17a Mind Thy Head!](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:17b The Weapon](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:16 The Shield of Faith](#) - D Martyn Lloyd Jones
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Helmet of Salvation](#) - D Martyn Lloyd Jones
- [Ephesians 6:15-16 The Armor of God: The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace and The Shield of Faith](#)- John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:16 The Believer's Armor, Part 4 The Shield of Faith](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Believer's Armor, Part 5 The Helmet of Salvation, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Believer's Armor, Part 6 The Helmet of Salvation, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Believer's Armor, Part 7 The Sword of the Spirit](#)- John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Armor of God: The Helmet of Salvation](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:17 The Armor of God: The Sword of the Spirit](#) - John MacArthur

The Christian life is not a playground;  
It is a battleground.

**See related topic - The Power of God's Word**

**The sword of the Spirit** - this is genitive of apposition which conveys the idea of "the sword supplied by the Spirit".

Scottish pastor **Thomas Guthrie** said that

The Bible is an armory of heavenly weapons, a laboratory of infallible medicines, a mine of exhaustless wealth. It is a guidebook for every road, a chart for every sea, a medicine for every malady, and a balm for every wound. Rob us of our Bible and our sky has lost its sun.

The **NET Bible** note writes that...

The Greek term translated sword (machaira) refers to the Roman gladius, a short sword about 2 ft (60 cm) long, used for close hand-to-hand combat. This is the only clearly offensive weapon in the list of armor mentioned by the author (he does not, for example, mention the lance [Latin pilum]). ([NET Bible](#))

**Vincent** writes that...

The word of God serves both for attack and to parry the thrusts of the enemy. Thus Christ used it in His temptation. It is the sword of the Spirit, because the Spirit of God gives it and inspires it. The Spirit's aid is needed for its interpretation. Compare John 14:10; Heb 4:12-note, in which latter passage the image is sacrificial. (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament 3:410)

**David Guzik** writes that...

The idea is that the Spirit provides a sword for you, and that sword is the word of God. To effectively use **the Sword of the Spirit**, we can't regard the Bible as book of magic charms or tie one around our neck the way that garlic is said to drive away vampires. To effectively use the sword, we must regard it as the word of God... If we are not confident in the inspiration of Scripture, that the sword really came from the Spirit, then we will not use it effectively at all. But we must also take the sword of the Spirit in the sense of depending that He helps us to use it. Not only did the Spirit give us the Scriptures, but also He makes them alive to us, and equips us with the right thrust of the sword at the right time.

Think of a soldier or a gladiator in training, practicing sword thrusts and moves and positions. Now, he must practice them ahead of time, and if he is a superior fighter, and has a great fighting instinct, at the time of battle he will instantly recall which thrust, which position suits the precise moment. He will never be able to use the thrust in the fight if he has not first practiced it, but he still needs to make the move at the moment. Therefore, effectively using the sword takes practice. The great example of this was Jesus combating the temptation of Satan in the wilderness (Mt 4:4,7,10,11). Luther was another example of this, when he came to any understanding of Psalm 31:1-note: *deliver me in Your righteousness*. This helped him understand the real meaning of the just will live by faith. ([Ref](#))

[Awake! for the Trumpet Is Sounding!](#)

by Fanny Crosby

Awake! for the trumpet is sounding!  
Awake to its call, and obey!  
The voice of our Leader cries, "Onward!"  
Oh, let us no longer delay!

#### Refrain

*No truce while the foe is unconquered;  
No laying the armor down!  
No peace till the battle is ended,  
And victory wins the crown!*

Then gird on the sword of the Spirit,  
With helmet, and breastplate, and shield;  
And valiantly follow your Captain,  
Determined you never will yield!

#### Refrain

Then forward! O army of Zion,  
With hearts that are loyal and brave!  
Stand firm by the Cross and its banner;  
And rest in the "Mighty to save"!

**Sword** ([3162](#)) (**machaira** from **mache** = a knife, sword) refers to a relatively short sword (even dagger) for cutting and stabbing. It

was extremely difficult to approach a soldier well trained in the use of the **machaira** for it was short and could be moved rapidly. The fact that it was two-edged made it possible to strike on either side without changing its position in the hand, and its razor-sharp point could pierce armor. Proper use of Scripture in spiritual warfare enables the Christian to stand fast "against the wiles of the devil".

**Machaira** is used about 156 times in the Septuagint (LXX) and 29 times in the NT

Matt. 10:34; 26:47, 51f, 55; Mk. 14:43, 47f; Lk. 21:24; 22:36, 38, 49, 52; Jn. 18:10f; Acts 12:2; 16:27; Rom. 8:35; 13:4; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; 11:34, 37; Rev. 6:4; 13:10, 14

The writer of **Hebrews** explained that "the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, (machaira) and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Heb 4:12-note)

**Expositor's Greek Testament** - The sword is the only offensive weapon in the panoply. But it is indispensable. For, while the Christian soldier is exhibited here mainly in the attitude of defense, as one who stands, in order to take his position and keep his ground, thrust and cut will be required. The preached Gospel, "the power of God" (Ro 1:16-note, 1Cor 1:18), is the weapon provided by the Spirit for meeting the lunge of the assailant and beating him back. With this the description of the panoply comes to an end. (Nicoll, W Robertson, Editor: Expositors Greek Testament: 5 Volumes. Out of print. Search Google)

**Blaikie** writes that "The sword supplied by the Spirit, the Word being inspired by him, and employed by the Spirit; for he enlightens us to know it, applies it to us, and teaches us to use it both defensively and offensively. Our Lord in his conflict with Satan, and also with the scribes and Pharisees, has taught us how this weapon is to be used, and with what wonderful effect. Paul, too, reasoning from the Scriptures and proving from them "that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is the Christ," or (going back to the Old Testament) the author of the hundred and nineteenth psalm, showing us how the soul is to be fed, quickened, strengthened and comforted out of God's Law, indicates the manifold use of the sword, and shows how earnestly we should study and practice this sword exercise, for our own good and the good of others. ([Ephesians 6 Exposition](#))

**Word (4487)** (**rhema** from verb **rheo** = to speak - to say, speak or utter definite words) refers to the spoken word, especially a word as uttered by a living voice. **Laleo** is another word translated speak but it refers only to uttering a sound whereas rheo refers to uttering a definite intelligible word. **Rhema** refers to any sound produced by the voice which has a definite meaning. It focuses upon the content of the communication. In the plural **rhema** ("words"), means saying, speech or discourse.

**Rhema** speaks of a specific statement. Just as a small dagger is applied with skill and precision to a vital area of the body, so we must use the Word carefully and expertly, applying specific principles from it to every situation we face. How's your skill with the spiritual sword? Do you have a thorough grasp of Scripture and know how to apply it with precision? If you learn how to use it properly, the Word can be an effective weapon for any challenge. If you waste time and energy with manmade, plastic weapons, however, you'll find yourself a defenseless victim in the spiritual battle.

**MacArthur** explains that "the term Paul uses here for word is not **logos**, which refers to general statements or messages, but is **rhema**, which refers to individual words or particular statements. The apostle is therefore not talking here about general knowledge of Scripture, but is emphasizing again the precision that comes by knowledge and understanding of specific truths. Like Jesus did in the wilderness, we need to use specific scriptural truths to counter specific satanic falsehoods. ([MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**Paul** writes to the Roman saints that...

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word (rhema) of Christ. (Ro 10:17note)

One of my favorite uses of **rhema** is in Luke's record of the angel's words to Mary...

"For nothing will be impossible with God." (Luke 1:37)

**Comment:** You are probably asking "Where is **rhema** in this verse?" The Greek can be rendered "No word of God can fail." Only a few English translations render **rhema** in this way.

The 1901 **ASV** has "For no word from God shall be void of power!"

The **Weymouth** has "For no promise from God will be impossible of fulfillment."

The **Amplified** has "For with God nothing is ever impossible and no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment." This is a powerful verse about God's powerful spoken word!

**Vincent** has a long note on **rhema** in **Luke 1:37 - Rhema**, word, as distinguished from **logos**, word, in classical Greek, signifies a constituent part of a speech or writing, as distinguished from the contents as a whole. Thus it may be either a word or a saying.

Sometimes a phrase, as opposed to **onoma**, a single word. The distinction in the New Testament is not sharp throughout. It is maintained that **rhema** in the New Testament, like the Hebrew *gabar*, stands sometimes for the subject-matter of the word; the thing, as in this passage. But there are only two other passages in the New Testament where this meaning is at all admissible, though the word occurs seventy times. These are Luke 2:15; Acts 5:32. "Kept all these things" (Luke 2:19), should clearly be sayings, as the A. V. itself has rendered it in the almost identical passage, ver. 51. In Acts 5:32, Rev. gives sayings in margin. In Luke 2:15, though A. V. and Rev. render thing, the sense is evidently saying, as appears both from the connection with the angelic message and from the following words, which has come to pass: the saying which has become a fact. The Rev. rendering of this passage is, therefore, right, though a little stilted: No word of God shall be void of power; for the A. V. errs in joining *ouk* and *pas*, not every, and translating nothing. The two do not belong together. The statement is, Every (*pas*) word of God shall not (*ouk*) be powerless. The A. V. also follows the reading, *para to theo*, with God; but all the later texts read *para tou theou*, from God, which fixes the meaning beyond question. (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament 1:260)

**Rhema** is used by Jesus in His refutation of Satan's temptation to turn the stones into bread, Matthew recording that Jesus...

answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD (**rhema**) THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.' (Mt 4:4)

**Ray Stedman** explains that...

It is important to see that Paul doesn't mean the complete Bible when he says "the Word of God." There are two words that are used in the original Greek Scripture for "the Word of God." There is the familiar Greek word **logos**, which is used in the opening verse of John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Logos [Word], and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God."

Then there is another word, used less frequently, **rhema**, which is somewhat different in meaning than the first. The word **logos** refers to the total utterance of God, the complete revelation of what God has said. The second word, **rhema**, means a specific saying of God, a passage or a verse that has special application to an immediate situation. It implies a use of the Word of God that is applied to a specific experience in our lives.

The second word, **rhema**, is the one used here. The "sword of the Spirit" is the saying of God applied to a specific situation in your life. That is the great weapon placed in the hands of the believer. Perhaps you have had some experience with this. Sometimes, when you are reading a passage of Scripture, the words seem to suddenly come alive, take on flesh and bones, and leap off the page at you. Sometimes they seem to grow eyes that follow you around everywhere you go, or develop a voice that echoes in your ears until you cannot get away from it. Perhaps you have had that experience in some moment of temptation or doubt when you were assailed by what Paul calls here "the flaming arrows of the evil one." And immediately a passage of Scripture that supplies the answer comes flashing to mind. That passage of Scripture is God's **rhema** for you.

Or perhaps you have been asked a question that caught you off guard for a moment and you were about to say, "I don't know," when suddenly you had a moment of illumination and a word of Scripture came to mind that provided the answer. Perhaps this experience has happened while sitting in a meeting where some message has come home to your heart with an unusually powerful effect. You were greatly moved, and in that moment you made a significant and lasting decision. That illuminating word of Scripture was God's **rhema** for you.

The **rhema-word** of God in your life is called "the sword of the Spirit" because it not only originated by the Spirit as the author of the Word but it is also recalled to your mind by the Spirit and made powerful by Him in your life. It is His specific, well-chosen answer to the attack of the devil. Like a swordsman with a trusty blade in his hand, the Spirit brings a flashing, sharp-edged, highly polished word to our mind to parry the sword-thrust of the devil.

But a sword is useful for both defense and for offense. So it is with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. As a sword, the Word is useful for both defensive and offensive purposes. It is, in fact, the only part of the armor of God that can be used for offense. It protects us for attack, in that it can be used to parry and deflect the vicious sword-strokes of the enemy--but it goes further, in that it can also be used to pierce other human hearts with the truth and to hack away and kill the lies of the devil in others besides ourselves. That is its great effect...A man once came to me for counseling. He was in the grip of a terrible emotional and spiritual depression--one of the most lonely, isolated, miserable people I have ever met--and we met together every week for over a year. His liberation began when he decided to pray a single phrase of Scripture whenever he was in the grip of his depression. It was the one portion of Scripture this man could, in faith, lay hold of. He rejected everything else I tried to point out to him. But one phrase stuck with him, and he prayed it again and

again, the words of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Not my will but Yours be done." At last, slowly, like the sun coming up, the light began to dawn, and you could see the change in his life. Today he is living a normal, free life. He was set free by "the sword of the Spirit," the **rhema**, the saying of God given specifically for his situation. ([Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare](#) - Available online and highly recommended!)

**Henry Morris** illustrates the power of God's word...

Great stores of chemical energy are locked in the earth's reserves of coal, oil, peat, timber, gas, etc. This has originated from the sun's light energy which through the marvelous process of photosynthesis has caused the growth of plant life, and this in turn has been used to sustain animal life. When the plants and, at least in some cases, animals too have died and been buried, the energy stored up in their cell structure has been preserved in the ground over many years. This energy remains chained up, so to speak, until released through the process of burning to be converted into useful work. When set on fire, however, chemical energy in its various forms provides a great portion of the power used in industry and transportation. **The Word of God is like this form of power, too.** Says Jeremiah:

"Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (Jer. 5:14);

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9).

Chemical energy is one form of potential energy, whereby its capacity for doing work is stored up, motionless and ineffective until released. (Henry Morris: *Bibliotheca Sacra*: Volume 116, Issue 461, Page 66)

**D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones** wrote that Martin Luther

was held in darkness by the devil, though he was a monk. He was trying to save himself by works. He was fasting, sweating, and praying; and yet he was miserable and unhappy, and in bondage. Superstitious Roman Catholic teaching held him captive. But he was delivered by the word of Scripture—"the just shall live by faith." From that moment he began to understand this Word as he had never understood it before, and the better he understood it the more he saw the errors taught by Rome. He saw the error of her practice, and so became more intent on the reformation of the church. He proceeded to do all in terms of exposition of the Scriptures. The great doctors in the Roman church stood against him. He sometimes had to stand alone and meet them in close combat, and invariably he took his stand upon the Scripture. He maintained that the church is not above the Scriptures. The standard by which you judge even the church, he said, is the Scripture. And though he was one man, at first standing alone, he was able to fight the papal system and twelve centuries of tradition. He did so by taking up "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (*The Christian Soldier* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977, p. 331)

**Martin Luther** gave the following charge in a sermon he delivered in 1531...

Christendom must have people who can beat down their adversaries and opponents and tear off the devil's equipment and armor, that he may be brought into disgrace. But for this work, powerful warriors are needed, who are thoroughly familiar with the Scriptures and can contradict all false interpretations and take the sword from false teachers—that is, those very verses which false teachers use and turn them round upon them so that they fall back defeated.

But as not all Christians can be so capable in defending the Word and articles of their creed, they must have teachers and preachers who study the Scriptures and have daily fellowship with it, so that they can fight for all the others. Yet each Christian should be so armed that he himself is sure of his belief and of the doctrine and is so equipped with the sayings from the Word of God that he can stand up against the devil and defend himself, when men seek to lead him astray.

**Roy Aldrich** remarks that the word **rhema** represents...

a concrete expression or quotation from the Bible, not logos, the entire Bible. The thought is that the Christian soldier is to know his Bible so well that he can use the right saying (phrase, verse, or verses) to answer each different onslaught or thrust of Satan. This method of warfare is perfectly seen in the temptation of Christ (Mt. 4:1-11). Each thrust of Satan was blocked with an appropriate quotation of a verse or sentence from the Bible. This wielding of the sword of the Spirit requires great skill. It is dependent upon thorough knowledge of the Bible. The efficient soldier keeps fit, like the godly man of Psalm 1, by constant meditation (see topic **Meditation**) in the Word of God. Only thus can he have more understanding than all his teachers who get their

**MacArthur** writes that...

In the name of grace, some Christians insist that a believer's only responsibility is to "let go and let God." The statement made to King Jehoshaphat, "The battle is not yours but God's," has been taken to mean that believers have only to sit back and watch God work. That ever-present philosophy was held by the Quakers and Quietists of past centuries, who emphasized surrender and passivity above commitment and self-discipline. Abiding in Jesus does not mean we are to do nothing ourselves. In the same passage in which He tells us to abide in Him, He explains that this abiding involves keeping His commandments (John 15:4-10; cf. 1Jn 3:24). The truly surrendered life is the life committed to aggressive, confrontive, and unreserved obedience to all of God's commands.

Some advocates of that truncated view of the surrendered life have taught that the person who is fully surrendered will never experience temptation, because Christ intercepts every effort of Satan to tempt us. This philosophy is perhaps most clearly and popularly presented in Hannah Whithall Smith's *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*...One of the problems with that view is that it makes no allowance for sin...Even more importantly, that view is not supported by Scripture. Surrender and submission to the Lord are cardinal and oft-repeated New Testament truths, but they do not stand apart from—much less opposed to—the many other New Testament commands for Christians to be actively involved in the Lord's work. To "depend on God for everything" and then not use His provision to do the other things He commands is not dependence but presumption. ([MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**David Watson** sums up the believer's armor

God gives us all the protection that we need. We must see that there is a "ring of truth" about our walk with the Lord, that our lives are right ("righteous") with God and with one another, that we seek to make peace wherever we go, that we lift up that shield of faith together to quench the flaming darts of the evil one, that we protect our minds from fears and anxieties that easily assail, and that we use God's word to good effect in the power of the Spirit. Remember it was by the repeated sword thrusts of God's word that Jesus overcame his adversary in the wilderness. (David Watson, Discipleship)

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The **spiritual battle is real** as the following example demonstrates...

**ONE NIGHT, [JOHN PATON \(biography\)](#) AND HIS WIFE**--a missionary couple in the New Hebrides Islands--were awakened by chants outside their mission station. Looking out, they saw that scores of hostile islanders had surrounded the station with torches, intent on burning the place down and killing the missionary couple. The Patons got down on their knees and prayed throughout the night, asking God to deliver them. The tense, dark hours passed, yet the islanders kept their distance.

Finally, around daybreak, the Patons looked out the window--and the hostile tribesmen were gone. John Paton was baffled. There seemed to be nothing preventing the islanders from attacking, yet no attack came. Paton didn't find out why the islanders left so mysteriously until a year later, when the chief of the tribe was won to Christ. Remembering the night-long siege of a year before, John Paton asked the newly converted chief why the tribesmen had departed instead of burning the mission station to the ground. "We were afraid of the men who were with you," the chief replied.

"What men?" asked Paton.

"There were a hundred tall men around the mission house that night," said the chief. "Their clothing shone with light, and they had swords in their hands. We knew that they would never let us harm you, so we went back to our village."

That is spiritual warfare at its most extreme! God does not always have to intervene in such a dramatic way on behalf of His children. Yet the battle is just as real, just as deadly, for you and me in our everyday lives as it was that night for the Patons in a mission station on the New Hebrides Islands. You and I are hemmed in by enemies every day, but God has provided a defense for us that will enable us to stand against the schemes and flaming arrows of the enemy. The apostle Paul has listed for us three steps we must take in order to "be strong in the Lord," and to resist the attacks of Satan ([Ibid](#))

lives if we will use it. Aqaba in 1917, seemed impregnable. Any enemy vessel approaching the port would have to face the battery of huge naval guns above the town. Behind Aqaba in every direction lay barren, waterless, inhospitable desert. To the east lay the deadly "anvil of the sun." The Turks believed Aqaba to be safe from any attack, but they were wrong. Lawrence of Arabia led a force of irregular Arab cavalry across the "anvil of the sun," which was scorching miles of barren desert. Together, they rallied support among the local people. On July 6, 1917, the Arab forces swept into Aqaba from the north, from the blind side. A climactic moment of the magnificent film Lawrence of Arabia is the long, panning shot of the Arabs on their camels and horses, with Lawrence at their head, galloping past the gigantic naval guns that are completely powerless to stop them. The guns were facing in the wrong direction. Aqaba fell, and the Turkish hold on Palestine was broken, to be replaced by the British mandate and eventually by the State of Israel. The Turks failed to defend Aqaba because they made two mistakes. They did not know their enemy, and they did not have the right weapons. We must be careful not to make the same mistakes. Ephesians 6:12 makes it very clear that Satan and his forces are our enemy. Stand for Christ! (From Rod Mattoon)

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### **The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. - Ephesians 6:17**

The samurai warriors of medieval Japan believed their swords had spiritual reality and power. These swords were always with them, from birth to death, whether in the bedroom or on the battlefield. Those who made the swords approached their craft as a spiritual endeavor, fasting, praying, and even wearing priestly white robes. They mixed and hammered layers of hard and soft steel to forge swords that excelled in both sharpness and strength. To the warriors, these swords represented their honor.

We should take the "sword of the Spirit" with equal seriousness, for its truth and power come from God. Today's reading describes the "armor of God," by which we put on His strength rather than relying on our own (v. 10). Spiritual warfare is real, for the Devil is scheming how to put stumbling blocks in our path, and if we trust in ourselves to fight these battles we will surely fall (vv. 11-12).

The sole offensive weapon in Paul's extended metaphor is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (v. 17). Under house arrest at the time that he wrote Ephesians (v. 20), he may have been using his guards as a visual reference as he described the belt, breastplate, shield, sandals, helmet, and short sword.

While a typical Roman soldier also carried a spear, these guards wouldn't have needed one for this assignment, which probably explains why there's no spear in Paul's picture. (from TODAY IN THE WORD)

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I discovered rather quickly that a young boy quoting Scripture in a children's program at church didn't know much about the Bible. He was quoting Ephesians 6:17 from our study on spiritual armor: "**Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God**" When he tried quoting the reference, he said, "**I didn't think I needed to memorize the numbers, since that's just the time of day.**" That's what he thought the numbers meant since it was close to 6:17 p.m. at the time! I smiled, opened my Bible, and showed him that the numbers refer to the chapter and verse. While knowing the Bible reference is helpful, hiding God's Word in our hearts is what is truly important (Psalm 119:11). Memorizing Scripture allows us to have it in mind so we can ward off Satan's attacks (Ephesians 6:10-18). For instance, when the Devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Christ withstood him by quoting the Scriptures (Matthew 4:1-11). Likewise, when we are tempted to disobey God, we can recall what we've learned and choose to obey. We can also share the teachings of the Word with others to encourage them to trust Him too. No matter what time of day it is, we should always take the spiritual armor of the Word of God with us. (Our Daily Bread)

### THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

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Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesians 6:17

"I thanked God over and over for his Word, for his truth, for answering my prayer and revealing himself to me."  
(The Mark , 116)

"FOR THE WORD of God is living and active," says the writer of Hebrews. "Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (4:12, NIV).

When was the last time you felt the blade of God's sword pierce your heart? Can you remember a time when the steel ripped your conscience to conviction, bringing you to your knees in repentance? Can you still feel the piercing sting of remorse? Did the blade make an indelible mark on your spirit? If so, then you understand the power of God's Word. You know why the writer of Hebrews would describe it as a "double-edged sword." You also understand why it would be the only weapon we need against Satan and the fury of hell that he brings to battle.

"Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," writes Paul (Ephesians 6:17). It is the only piece of armor on his list that isn't



meant for defense. The belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of readiness, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation—all are meant to protect the heart, mind, and soul. All are intended to keep the soldier alive and fresh and ready for battle. All are critical pieces of armor in the fight against evil.

But the sword of the Spirit is different. It doesn't protect; it maims. It isn't passive; it's active. It is intended for combat—a weapon for frontline spiritual warfare.

When the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert, the enemy came to do battle. "If you are the Son of God, change these stones into loaves of bread," Satan taunted him. And Jesus charged forward with the Word of God. "The Scriptures say, 'People need more than bread for their life; they must feed on every word of God.'"

Two more times Satan mounted an attack, and each time Jesus wielded the sword of the Spirit (see Matthew 4:1–11).

Never underestimate the power of God's mighty Word. Hide it in your heart, and wield it with confidence and authority. Satan will not be able to withstand its fury.

## REFLECTION

What can you do to know God's Word well enough to wield it as a weapon?

How can you better prepare yourself for spiritual battle? (From *Embracing Eternity: Living Each Day with a Heart Toward Heaven* - Frank Martin, et al)

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## THE SPIRIT'S SWORD - Jerry Bridges

Take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (EPHESIANS 6:17)

If you desire to appropriate God's grace, you must have the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—available in your mind for the Spirit to use. In fact the structure of Ephesians 6:17 provides a very instructive insight into the interaction between the Holy Spirit and the believer. Paul said we're to take the sword of the Spirit. That's something we must do. And yet it is the Spirit's sword, not ours. He must make it effective. The bare quoting of Scripture does not make it effective in our hearts; only the Spirit can do that. But He will not make His sword effective unless we take it up.

Often God's Word is not made effective immediately. In fact, there are many times when I struggle over an issue for a period of days, mulling over several pertinent passages of Scripture and crying out for grace, before the Holy Spirit finally makes them effective and gives His grace, helping in time of need. The Spirit of God is sovereign in His working, and we cannot squeeze Him into the mold of our spiritual formulas: "Pray for grace, quote some verses, and receive a guaranteed answer."

God also has His own timetable. Sometimes He grants grace to help almost immediately. At other times, He allows us to struggle for days, perhaps even weeks or months, before we receive the grace to help. Regardless of the delays He may impose, we must continue to come to the throne of grace believing His promise to grant grace to help, and we must continue to resort to appropriate Scripture until He makes it effective in our hearts. Our responsibility is to take up the sword of the Spirit; His prerogative is to make it effective.

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## Time For The Armor

Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. — Ephesians 6:17

Today's Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

I discovered rather quickly that a young boy quoting Scripture in a children's program at church didn't know much about the Bible. He was quoting Ephesians 6:17 from our study on spiritual armor: "Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

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No matter what time of day it is, we should always take the spiritual armor of the Word of God with us. By: Anne Cetas

For Further Study What specific temptations do you face? Look in a concordance in the back of a Bible for verses that can guide you

in those situations. Review them often.

No evil can penetrate the armor of God. ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

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### **AT EVERY TURN - Greg Laurie**

Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:17 NLT)

During the Korean War, a unit known as Baker Company was separated from the regiment, and enemy forces were advancing on them. For several hours, no word came from Baker Company. Finally, radio contact was made, and when asked for a report of their situation, Baker Company replied: "The enemy is to the east of us. The enemy is to the west of us. The enemy is to the south of us. The enemy is to the north of us." Then, after a brief pause, a voice continued, "And this time, we're not going to let them escape."

It seems that way in the life of the believer. The Enemy is at every turn. Yet some Christians don't realize that the Christian life is not a playground, but a battleground. They are oblivious to the fact that a war is raging. And in this war, they are either winning or losing.

In a battle, it's always better to be an aggressor instead of a defender, because the defender is simply waiting for the enemy's next attack, hoping he will survive. If we, as believers, are always defending, then the devil is in the superior position. But if we are attacking, then we are in the superior position. When the Apostle Paul wrote about the armor of God in Ephesians 6, he mentioned one offensive weapon: "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17NLT).

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### **REMEMBER YOUR SWORD - Greg Laurie**

Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:17 NLT)

Many believers have all their spiritual armor in place, but they never use their sword. They talk about it. They study it. They compare swords with others. But they never use their sword in spiritual battle. In fact, the devil would be pleased if believers would just keep their sword in its sheath. The devil knows too well the power and the authority of the sword of the Spirit, which is God's Word.

Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are." God says of his own word in Isaiah, "I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it" (55:11). There is power and authority in the Word of God. That is why the devil doesn't want you to use this incredible weapon God has given you.

Remember how effectively Jesus used the sword of God's Word to defend Himself when He faced spiritual attack in the wilderness? Jesus was God. He didn't have to stand around and deal with the devil. He could have gotten out of the situation very easily. But instead, He stood and modeled for us the right way to fight temptation: with the Word of God.

So when the devil tries to attack you with temptation, fear, doubt, or brings up past sins you've already confessed and of which you've been forgiven, remember the sword of the Spirit. Pull it out of its sheath and use it aggressively to defend yourself.

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### **DRAW YOUR SWORD - Greg Laurie**

Make no mistake about it: there is authority and power in the Word of God. God's Word sticks. God's Word breaks through. God's Word impacts. When the Enemy has you surrounded, keep him on the defensive with the Word of God.

In the listing of a Christian's spiritual armor in Ephesians 6, the sword stands alone as an offensive weapon. When I go into battle, I don't beat my enemy with my shield or try to defeat him with my belt or chase him down with my sandal or throw my helmet at him. I pull my sword out of the sheath and I use it.

Ephesians 6:17 tells us to take up the sword of the Spirit. When we are tempted, the most effective weapon that God has given to us as believers is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Jesus modeled this so beautifully during His temptation in the wilderness. When the devil tried temptation after temptation against Him, Jesus used the sword of the Spirit (see Luke 4:1-13). The devil said, "Why don't You turn a rock into a piece of bread? I know You're hungry."

Jesus said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil said, "Why don't you worship me right now?"

Jesus responded, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord God only. Him only you shall serve.'"

"Why don't you cast yourself off of here, and the angels will catch you," Satan said, quoting Scripture out of context.

Jesus responded, bringing the Scripture back into context, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

The sword of the Spirit...it is sharp, it is powerful, and the enemy cannot stand before it. So draw your sword, Christian.

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### **The sword of the Spirit - C H Spurgeon**

'Take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.' Ephesians 6:17

What is the matter this morning? 'Oh,' says one, 'I have been in the habit of sinning and the habit is very strong upon me.' Fight with sinful habits with the word of God, as the sword of the Spirit: so only will you conquer your evil self. Find a text of Scripture that will cleave your sin down to the bone or stab it to the heart. 'Alas! Satan tempts me horribly,' cries one; 'I have been lately assailed in many ways.' Have you? You are not the first. Our divine Lord in the wilderness was tempted by the devil. He might have fought Satan with a thousand weapons, but he chose to defeat him with this one only. He said, 'It is written; it is written; it is written.' He pricked the foeman so sorely with this sharp point that the arch-adversary thought to try the same sword and also began to say, 'it is written'. But he cut himself with this sword, for he did not quote the passages correctly nor give the whole of them, and the Master soon found the way to knock aside his sword and wound him still more. Follow your Lord's example. 'Oh, but,' says one, 'I am so low in spirits.' Very well; fight lowness of spirits with the word of God. 'The doctor recommended me,' says one, 'to take a little spirits to raise my spirits.' Those doctors are always having this sin laid to their charge. I am not so sure that they are not often maligned. You like the dose and that is why you take it. Try the word of God for lowness of spirits and you will have found a sure remedy. I find, if I can lay a promise under my tongue like a sweet lozenge and keep it in my mouth or mind all the day long, I am happy enough. If I cannot find a Scripture to comfort me, then my inward troubles are multiplied. Fight despondency and despair with the sword of the Spirit. I cannot tell what your particular difficulty may be at this moment, but I give you this direction for all holy warfare: 'take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God'.

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### **THE BEST OFFENSE - David Jeremiah**

Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. EPHESIANS 6:17

Depending on whom you talk to and about which sport, people may say "the best defense is a good offense" or "the best offense is a good defense." Perhaps they both have value in different situations. But when it comes to living the Christian life, it appears the apostle Paul is going with "the best offense is a good defense."

In Paul's discussion of the Christian's spiritual armor, all the elements of armor he mentions are defensive in nature—the belt, the breastplate, protection for the feet, the shield, and the helmet—except for one: "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." The Bible is the only offensive weapon we have at our disposal among the armor of God. Because Christians are constantly subjected to the "fiery darts" of the evil one, it makes sense that our ability to stay spiritually alive is a function of our defensive armor. But there are times for offense as well—for going on the attack. And our weapon is the same one that Jesus used to defeat Satan: the promises of God (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).

How sharp is the edge of your sword? How quickly can you access a promise of God when you are under attack? Don't be caught off guard in the midst of the battle.

The Bible is a rock of diamonds, a chain of pearls, the sword of the Spirit. THOMAS WATSON

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### **J C Philpot - Scanderbeg's sword**

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephesians 6:17

There is only one weapon whereby we can fight Satan to any purpose—and that is the word of God (ED: I HEAR THIS ALL THE TIME BUT DISAGREE- Eph 6:18 says we are to pray in the Spirit, and I believe therefore that prayer is in a very real sense a weapon we should use in spiritual warfare). But observe, that it must not be merely the 'letter of the word.' It must be the sword of the Spirit—and therefore a spiritual sword—which can only be taken in hand when the word of God is applied with a divine power to your heart—and it is made 'life and spirit' to your soul. It is of no use my bringing forward a text to resist a temptation of Satan—unless I can make that text my own. In other words, unless I can handle that sword as one who knows how to wield it. To take up a text and not know the sweetness and power of it, would be like a child taking up a warrior's sword—without having the warrior's arm. He might play with the sword, but what is the sword of a giant in the hand of a child?

The sword of Scanderbeg, a famous Albanian warrior against the Turks, used to be shown at Vienna. A man who once looked at and handled it said, "Is this the sword which won so many victories? I see nothing in it—it is but a common sword." The answer was, "You should have seen the arm that wielded it!" So it is not merely taking a text—adopting scripture language—and quoting passages—which will beat back the fiery assaults of Satan. This is having Scanderbeg's sword—without having Scanderbeg's arm. But it is having the word of truth brought into our heart by the power of God—faith raised up to believe that God Himself speaks it to our heart—being thus enabled to wield it in the strength of the Spirit—and by the power of faith in living exercise, to resist every hellish thrust!

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**Vance Havner** - Christians are defeated in daily living because they have fought the devil with the weapons of earth: their own resources, will power, moral stamina. Our Lord vanquished the adversary with three verses from Deuteronomy. Then certainly we should conquer him with the whole Bible! We can carry nothing in hand that will rend the lions of Timnath. The SPIRIT must destroy them with the sword of the Word.

There is misunderstanding here. You will observe that Gideon and his followers carried no weapon against the Midianites. They held lamp and pitcher and trumpet, but there was no weapon in hand and their cry was, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." It was the invisible weapon that prevailed; the Midianites furnished the visible swords when the Lord set everyman's sword against his fellow. Now, **the sword of the SPIRIT is the Word of GOD** (Ephesians 6:17) but, mind you, it is the sword of the SPIRIT. It is not your sword or mine. We cannot wield the Word.

All we can do is so to yield to the indwelling SPIRIT that He can use His sword. Christians make the grievous mistake here of trying to handle the sword themselves; they try wielding instead of yielding! I cannot understand the Word, nor teach it, nor preach it, nor use it against the adversary. I must go forth empty-handed, but yielded to the SPIRIT Who lives in me, confident that when the lion roars, He Who is greater than he that is in the world will use His sword. If I go forth carrying even the sword of the SPIRIT in my own hand as though I could use it, I shall fail.

The SPIRIT of the Lord must come mightily upon me and wield His weapon -  
and His wielding follows my yielding.

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### **A Constant Companion**

Direct my steps by Your **Word**, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. —Psalm 119:133

Establish my footsteps in Your word, And do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.

Read: Psalm 119:129-136

When my wife and I are preparing for a trip, one of the first things we do is get out the road atlas. We study it intensely to learn the best routes, determine the number of miles we'll have to travel, pick out interesting places to visit, decide how far we can get in a day, and estimate expenses. On the journey, the atlas is our constant companion, and we consult it many times a day. We couldn't get along without it.

For Christians, the Bible is an atlas for their spiritual journey, but it is much more. It is described as:

1. sweeter than honey (Psalm 19:10; 119:103)
2. a lamp (Psalm 119:105)
3. rain and snow (Isaiah 55:10,11)
4. a fire (Jeremiah 23:29)
5. a hammer (Jeremiah 23:29)
6. water (Ephesians 5:26)
7. a sword (Ephesians 6:17)
8. solid food (Hebrews 5:12)
9. a mirror (James 1:23)
10. milk (1 Peter 2:2)

Like the highway traveler, we as Christians are on a long and sometimes hazardous journey. We face many decisions and will have many needs on our pilgrimage to paradise. The Bible has been given to us to help us make those decisions and to meet those needs. It should be our constant companion—studied diligently and consulted often along the way. We can't do without it.

I have a companion, a dear, faithful friend,  
A union of blessing that never shall end;

Till Jesus returns with His saints from on high  
We'll travel together, my Bible and I.  
—Anon

The Bible is like a compass—it always points the believer in the right direction.

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### **THE WORD OF GOD NO VAIN THING Deuteronomy 32:47**

I. What the Word Of God is Not. "It is not a vain thing."

1. Because its QUICKENING power is needed (Psa. 119:5).
2. Because it has ILLUMINATING power (Psa. 119:105).
3. Because of its IRRESISTIBLE power (Jer. 23:29).

II. To Whom it is No Vain Thing. "It is no vain thing for you." For you who have heard and believed.

III. Why it is No Vain Thing. "Because it is your life."

1. It is the SOURCE of your life (1 Peter 1:23-25).
  2. It is the SUSTENANCE of your life (1 Peter 2:2).
  3. It is the STRENGTH of your life (Eph. 6:17).
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a sword (Ephesians 6:17-[note](#))

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