



Managing GOD's Money

Theme for the October: Satan Is Active

Church folks are growing more “religious” and further away from Jesus. In a June 2000 study, “Church Lay Leaders Are Different From Followers,” Barna Research Group Ltd., of Ventura, California reported 39% of lay church leaders in the USA said there is no Satan. And a 2010 PewResearch “U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey” shows even more ignorance of the Bible. Among other things, it states, “on questions about Christianity – including a battery of questions about the Bible – Mormons ... show the highest levels of knowledge.”

Preachers push easy believe-ism to grow congregations so we have scores of people ignorant of the Bible in churches. This month we try to shed some light in the following areas:



October 1-7: The god of this age

October 8-14: Dress suitably

October 15-21: Wear your helmet—use your sword

October 22-31: Walk in the light

October 15-21: Wear your helmet—use your sword



Ephesians 6:16-18

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Apostle Paul continues to encourage fellow believers in Ephesus about the protection needed in the daily battles with Satan. He mentions three more weapons in the Roman soldier's armory. As well, he shows matching spiritual

counterparts available to followers of Messiah. Last week we discussed three pieces the soldier wore while on the battlefield: *the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and shoes for the gospel of peace.* The Roman soldier used three extra weapons during battle; this week we will discuss these.

1. Shield of Faith
2. Helmet of Salvation
3. word of The Spirit

S h i e l d o f F a i t h



The Roman soldier's shield was just over four feet by two feet, protecting his entire body from weapons of the day: spears,

arrows, and fiery darts — arrows dipped in an inflammable substance. Soldiers stayed close so their collective shields formed a protective wall against the enemy's weapons.

The believer's shield is his faith in Jesus. We need to stay close to Jesus to be sensitive and alert to the devil's fiery darts of lies and innuendoes.

To spot counterfeit currency, you must study the real thing, so you know it. Likewise, we must know Messiah Jesus; we must know we can trust Him. Our faith in Jesus isn't blind, but based on much evidence in the Bible and personal life experiences. It represents the essence of our beliefs, the protective clothing for our being.

When the devil shoots his fiery darts at you daily, use your shield of faith, trust God (**John 14:1**).

Stand firm as you recall promises in His Word and the things He has done in your life. This is the faith to which Paul refers: the unshakable trust we can place in God despite our circumstances that may be huge in human terms, but small for God. Let's not forget this.

In Hebrews **12:2-3**, Apostle Paul, uses the same Greek word, *pistis*, as in **Ephesians 6:16** to encourage believers not to lose heart but to stand firm:

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ...

We have victory over the *god of this age*. Like the Psalmist, be assured the Lord is with you and will defeat the enemy:

The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The LORD is with me; he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies. (**Psalms 118:6 - 7**)

Helmet of Salvation



The helmet is a basic protective gear in several sports, more so in close up combat. No Roman soldier would have entered battle without his helmet. He needed to



Memory Verse

Psalm 119:2

Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart..

wear this protection to complete his battle-gear. The believer's helmet is the result of his one-time decision to surrender his life to Messiah.

After a follower of Messiah Jesus enters God's Kingdom by trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior, the devil starts a relentless battle to regain his heart; he doesn't give up. Each Messiah-follower needs to accept this fact: he is in a continual battle with the enemy. And we must enter each battle confident we passed from condemnation to everlasting life.

The helmet of salvation represents the believer's confidence that in time he will be with Messiah Jesus who will glorify him in heaven. Paul describes the salvation path that leads to the believer's glorification in **Romans 8:29-30**:

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also

called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

When we accept Messiah Jesus' invitation, surrender our lives to Him, we secure our place in heaven. At the same time, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us as our Comforter and Teacher. We are set apart, or sanctified, to do God's work as the Spirit works in our lives continually to change us into Messiah Jesus' image — a change completed in heaven but evident here and now — **2 Corinthians 2:15**.

Because Satan attacks us relentlessly during the sanctification journey, Paul reminds us followers of Messiah that the war with Satan will end only when we get to heaven. So don't despair, have confidence in your salvation. Messiah Jesus lived a sinless life then died so we may get eternal life with Him in heaven.

The Apostle John tells us he wrote to us that we believers may know we have eternal life.

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. - **1 John 5:13**

Daily put on the helmet of salvation by staying in the Word, listening, talking, and obeying Jesus. The believer never loses his salvation. But he or she should understand that trials are a normal part of a believer's journey. If you are not facing trials, you need to reflect on your walk with Jesus.

As you face each trial, adopt the eternal view: everything on earth will pass away. The key question is this: Considering eternity, how important is this matter that seems so large and so urgent yet will be irrelevant in eternity?

Believers in Messiah, give thanks; comfort each other because we know we have eternal life; we have won the war with Satan (**1 Thessalonians 5:8-11**).

Sword of the Spirit



In **Hebrews 4:12**, Paul speaks about God's Word as a sword:

For the word of God is living and active. 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.

The sword was the Roman soldier's only close-fighting weapon; it could pierce the opponent's body. Similarly, God's Word is convicting and piercing. When Satan tempted Jesus in the desert, Jesus used God's Word to expose his lies.

Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt not by fighting a physical battle using physical swords, but by depending on God and using His Words to Pharaoh. In the same way, believers should recognize the need to know God's Word to use in our defense against Satan's attacks.

Our challenge today is to remove clutter from our lives to create room to invest time with Jesus and His Word.

The Roman soldier carried his sword on his body. We need to carry our sword wherever we go. We will be defenseless if we do not know the Word—that's our sword. Without the Word, we will accept Satan's lie as he appeals to warped human logic.

Stay in the Word so you will have your sword of the spirit ready to repel Satan's attacks. Every Word of God is true (**Proverbs 30:5-6**) and piercing.

Application



Matthew 4:1-4

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted[a] by the devil.
2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

After he finished discussing the armor, Apostle Paul provides the perfect implementation guide: pray in the Spirit continually.

Let prayer become habitual: pray often throughout the day. Structure your life, your wishes, your hopes, and your dreams around God's best. God will reveal Himself to us.

Let's move away from me-centered to God-centered lives. Then, outfitted with the full armor of God, we will love Jesus with all our hearts, souls, and minds, and stand firm against the devil.

Satan is the *god of this age*. He is at war with God and believers. Never enter the battlefield without the full armor. The Roman soldier wore the belt, breastplate, and shoes whenever he was on the battlefield. That's what we should do, too:

1. Be armed with the Truth
2. Do His will
3. Spread the Gospel

Daily put on the full armor by trusting God, staying in His Word, and taking an eternal view of events.

Will you commit this week to let prayer become a part of your life? As God's child, merely listen and speak like a child to your loving heavenly Father who knows your every need, even before you ask. The Holy Spirit will teach you what you need to know; only be open to receive His voice and counsel. Amen.



Daily Reflections



October 15:
Ephesians
6:16-18

October 16:
Hebrews 12:2-3

October 17:
Psalm 118:6-7;
John 14:1

October 18:
Romans 8:29-30

October 19:
1 John 5:13; 2
Corinthians 2:15

October 20:
Hebrews 4:12;
Proverbs 30:5-6

October 21:
Psalm 119:2

Considering the month's theme, and the period's topic, daily reflect on verses on the left. These questions might help your reflections:

1. Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
2. How do these verses apply to me today?
3. What lessons from these verses can I start today?

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