

THE NEW HUMANITY OF JESUS THE CHRIST:

MEDITATIONS IN THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL'S ADDRESS TO THE EPHESIAN FAITHFUL

THE HOLY WARRIORS OF GOD, IV:
SALVATION AND THE SPIRIT
(EPHESIANS 6:17)

I. Introduction

II. The Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17)

- A. Paul has introduced us to four pieces of the armor of God:
1. The belt of truth
 2. The breastplate of righteousness
 3. The boots/shoes of readiness
 4. The shield of faith
- B. "And take the helmet of salvation..." (6:17a).
1. The helmet is an essential part of a soldier's armor.
 2. Paul associates the helmet with *salvation* (cf. Isa 59:17).
 3. How does salvation-in-Christ function as a helmet?
 - a. The hope of future salvation keeps our wits intact (1 Thess 5:8; 1 Pet 1:13).
 - b. The reality of present salvation must control our thoughts (Col 3:1-2).
 4. Taking up the helmet of salvation is simply to *think* as a saved person.
 5. Once again, the armor of God is active behavior.
 - a. The best way to defend the Christian life is simply to live it.
 - b. Ask: "What would a saved person do in this situation?"
 6. **The helmet of salvation protects the Christian from the false beliefs and discouragements of the cosmic powers.**
- C. "...and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (6:17b-c).
1. Paul has in mind a *machaira* or "short sword."
 2. The Roman soldier's sword was useful for close quarters combat.
 3. "The sword of the Spirit" means "the sword *given* by the Spirit," not "the sword who is the Spirit."
 4. The sword is the word of God (v 17c; 2 Tim 3:16).
 5. So the word of God is the sword that God's Spirit gives to the Christian.

- D. **The sword of the Spirit/the word of God destroys the lies of the cosmic powers—and therefore damages their rule.**
- E. We destroy Satan's kingdom not by yelling God's word into the air but by projecting it into the lives of flesh and blood people.
1. We wield the sword of the Spirit in evangelism.
 2. We wield the sword of the Spirit in word ministry to one another.
 - a. In preaching
 - b. In teaching Sunday School or a Bible study
 - c. In encouragement
 - d. In rebuke
 —In short, we are back at Ephesians 4:15: "...speaking the truth in love..."
 3. God wants us to see that all our word-projecting ministries are a wielding of the sword of the Spirit.

III. Onward, Christian Soldiers

God calls his children to stand firm with him against the evil one with the helmet of his salvation upon their minds—and to force back the dark kingdom with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.

IV. Ecclesia Triumphans

But salvation ultimately belongs to the Lord (Rev 19:11-16).