

Gathering Question: Some of you in the group have played sports before. What kinds of protective armor did you wear during your sports activities and what did that armor protect?

The Armor of God

How can we truly be protected from our enemies? For a Roman soldier, the answer was his armor. A bronze breastplate covered him from his neck to his thighs. A backpiece was commonly worn as well. A wide belt secured the breastplate and the backpiece, and a loop on the belt held the scabbard and the sword. A bronze helmet covered not only the soldier's head but also the sides and back of his neck. A leather chinstrap held it firmly in place during battle. The soldier's shield was made of two pieces of wood glued together, covered with linen and hide and then bound with iron. It was much larger than most warriors' shields and it offered protection from the neck to the knees. Heavily soled sandals with metal studs on the bottom enabled Roman soldiers to march long distances and to stand against the enemy on uneven or slippery ground. Finally, the soldier's offensive weapon was a short, two-edged sword used for both cutting and thrusting.

In Ephesians 6, Paul uses the image of Roman armor to help us understand the help we have in combating the evil one. Each part of the armor has a certain function and it protects an important part of our bodies. The whole idea of why Paul uses this imagery is to remind us that we are in a battle. It is a spiritual battle against the forces of evil in the heavenlies. We are given all we need to take our stand in the battle that rages around us and win. Satan has no power to defeat us unless we let down our armor and allow him to win. As long as we wear the armor he gives us and continue to allow him to fight for us, we will win.

Read:

Ephesians 6:10-20

Reflect:

1. If Paul were to write this passage today, what imagery would he use and why? What "armor" would he have us wearing?
2. What does Paul mean when he states that our struggle is not against flesh and blood? Are there really no enemies of the flesh with whom we should be concerned?
3. Describe a time in your life when you felt surrounded by God's protection?
4. What are some of the "flaming arrows" that Satan is flinging at you each day? What are you doing to quench them?