

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
Ephesians 6:17

Protecting the Noggin

The Armor of God – The Helmet of Salvation Ephesians 6

Head injuries are a serious issue. There have been accidents where victims had what seemed to be minor injuries, but because there was a blow to the head, they had serious head trauma. Even people riding bicycles can have serious head injuries if they fall. Think about it. Would you want to play professional football with no helmet?

I remember a time playing basketball in high school. I got the ball and was headed down court on a fast break. An opponent behind me went to knock the ball and hit my ankle instead. I went tumbling forward, headed for the cement wall at the end of the court. Fortunately, there was a mat that hung on the wall to protect people from injury. Unfortunately for me, I hit the wall just below where the mat was hanging. I was taken to the hospital and had my head examined. I had a concussion, but they found nothing more.

I still use that for an excuse.

Paul explains that God gives us a piece of armor to protect the head. Why do you think the head, spiritually speaking, needs protection?

It is in our head that we formulate doubt and discouragement. Have you ever had those moments where you have gotten all worked up on an issue? Maybe it was because of something that was said. Suddenly, in your mind, you are having a conversation about how it was taken and who will be offended by it. Then you begin to build your defense of what was said. Finally, you conclude that you will never talk again. If I am the only one who has done this then maybe there is something wrong with my head.

We are called to take up the helmet of salvation. This piece of God's armor is represented by the Roman soldier's helmet, which he never entered battle without. Some of the helmets were made of thick leather covered with metal plates, and others were of heavy molded or beaten metal. They usually had cheek pieces to protect the face.

Let's brainstorm about the dangers for a moment. What did the soldier's head need to be protected from?

There were primarily two kinds of swords; one is the short sword that Paul talks about later. The other is the three- to four-foot long double-edged sword usually carried by cavalry. The cavalry would come in on horses and swing at heads. The helmet was to protect against these attacks. The fact that the helmet is related to salvation indicates that

"But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation."

1 Thessalonians 5:8

Satan's blows are directed at the believer's security and assurance in Christ. That is why we need this protection.

Satan has a double-edged sword that he attacks the believer with: discouragement and doubt.

Have you had a recent attack from discouragement? How did you handle it?

Satan will use Christians and non-Christians to discourage a believer, and he does a great deal of this. Satan has been successful in getting us to fight people rather than fighting what is causing people to be the way they are. Another way Satan discourages us is when he points to our failures, our sins, our unresolved problems, our poor health, or to whatever else seems negative in our lives in order to make us lose confidence in the love and care of our heavenly Father.

What about doubt? Has the enemy attacked you with doubt recently? How did you work through it?

Doubt is what separates us from truly knowing and following Christ whole-heartedly. Doubt is the very reason why a person has trouble knowing God more, through prayer and scripture. We may be tempted to doubt our calling, our choice in marriage partner, our job, our abilities, and so many other things. Doubt has a tendency to cripple us just as a head injury may cripple someone who otherwise is perfectly healthy.

Take some time later to read through 1 Kings 18-19 and see how a man of God had to work through discouragement and doubt.

The helmet of salvation protects us from doubt and discouragement in two ways.

There is a present sense of protection in that believers are saved and sealed. We are presently a child of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In that way we are set free from the bondage of sin and are protected from the blows which Satan tries to hit us with.

Do you know Christ as your personal Savior? If not visit www.libertyonlineministries.com and click on the "Who is Jesus?" button. If you have made that decision, when was it? How did it happen?

It is good to remember back to that day, as it reminds us that we are His child.

The second protection is in the future sense. It is the hope of salvation as seen in 1 Thessalonians 5:8. It is the knowledge of the victory that we

*"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4:7*

have in Jesus now and in the age to come. It gives us strength from discouragement and doubt because our future is secure.

The battle that we are in is a constant battle and the enemy will not give us a break. From the time you accepted Christ as your Savior until this very moment you are in the battle. Satan will try every opportunity to discourage you and cast doubt in you.

What are the things that are causing doubt and discouragement in your life right now? Make a list of them.

Now take each one of those things and give it to the Lord. Ask Him to remind you of your present salvation and the hope of salvation. Let your helmet of salvation be a protection to you.

We must not lose heart in struggles, victories, or defeat so that in the end, we may gain. It is only when our work on earth is finished can we say with Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith," (2 Timothy 4:7) and no matter what our spiritual enemies may throw against us, we are secured by salvation through God's own power.

So protect your noggin!

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?

