

TITLE AND NUMBER: 199. Be alert and keep praying!



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Ephesians 6:13-18

Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 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. (v13-17)

LOOKING FURTHER: Galatians 6:9-10; Psalm 55:22; Hebrews 10:23-25

What does this Bible passage tell us?

Uniforms can be ceremonial, or they can be for protection and for battle. The 'full armour of God' is our spiritual uniform. Look up the Belt, Breastplate, Shoes, Shield, Helmet and Sword that Paul mentions!

What is the day of evil that Paul talks about? It can be any day when we are under attack, whether that is mentally, physically or spiritually. We can feel that things are building up and it feels uncomfortable and upsetting. Maybe we have lost that sense of peace when we are near to God, or maybe some circumstance has sprung up and caught us unaware.

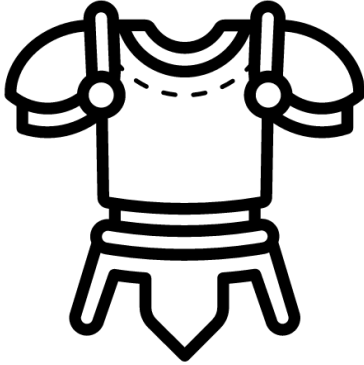
Paul is warning us against such times as this. It is easy to get off balance and to start questioning our faith. Before we know it, we really feel in trouble - especially if we have someone else casting doubt on everything we believe. What should we do in these moments?

To save us from disaster, God has prepared all these items of 'armour' for us to employ. If we think about them, one by one, and ask God to ensure that we have them in place, we can start to take back our strength. With protection and with spiritual weapons, we can stand our ground and not give in to the enemy. We can keep speaking to God 'with all kinds of requests' (v18) that pertain to our situation. Then, when we have encouraged and prepared ourselves, the circumstances can be tackled in the right way - and we are not open to wounding, but rather will be alert and ready to deal with anything that comes our way. We can also use this plan to help others in their battles! So, we should watch out and be ready to 'stand firm'! (v14)

Reflections:

- Why is it necessary for Paul to give us this advice? It is because anyone can get caught out by difficulties. What things have you found hard to deal with? Even now, you can bring them to God.
- What if a friend is in trouble and you want to help? See what Galatians 6 says about 'doing good to all.' You can support them in prayer and keep encouraging them to turn to God as you have.
- What if we didn't manage to 'stand firm' and we feel like failures? Psalm 55:22 says to entrust everything to God. Hebrews 10:23 reminds us that 'He who promised is faithful'.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

