

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## Armed for Battle

By Shane Carrington

**As the strength of the Lord armed David for victory over the giant, Christ enlivens, equips, and emboldens us to battle Satan through the powerful word revealed by the Holy Spirit.**

### Introduction

No one can successfully threaten God, but that does not prevent them from trying. Speaking of Jesus, the prophet declares,

*Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!”* (Ps. 2:1-3; cf. Acts 4:23-28).

Men cannot attain victory over God, but they can lead God’s people away from the truth about Him.

When young David joined the army of Israel, many attempted to discourage him, including his brothers, the Philistines, and Goliath (1 Sam. 17). The enemy was visible and frightening (v. 26), and David’s fellow soldiers refused to engage. His king gave him worthless armor and hollow, uninspiring words. Rather than being distracted by these, David trusted God, who gave him victory.

Satan attacks our faith and our resolve to honor Jesus. The war rages, stirred by this invisible enemy. He attacks our hearts, minds, lives, and souls. He threatens our society, institutions, and our children. Satan tries to produce uncertainty, conflict, and anxiety in us. His manner of attack arises in unusual ways, for he wages an unconventional war.

From a worldly perspective, our enemy’s efforts appear powerful and effective, but God delivers us to victory through His grace. God gave victory to David so that *“all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD’s and He will give you [i.e., Goliath] into our hands”* (1 Sam. 17:47).

### Satan’s Multifaceted Attack

Satan is described as a wild animal – *“a roaring lion”* – lashing out against God’s people (1 Pet. 5:8). He is intelligent and calculating, knowing precisely how to inflict the greatest damage (Eph. 6:11-12). His attacks against God manifest themselves in many ways, including how he tempts us. Every time the devil attacks disciples, he is attacking God (Acts 9:3-5).

Satan is always at the heart of human sin (Gen. 3; Eph. 6:10-20; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; etc.).

*The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning* (1 John 3: 8).

Our sins violate the holy will of God.

*Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin* (1 John 3:4-5).

When we sin, we are at that moment siding with the devil, whether or not we realize it. Sometimes, these transgressions are described as sins against the Holy Spirit. He can be:

- Lied to (Acts 5:3-4)
- Grieved (Eph. 4:30)
- Blasphemed (Mark 3:20-30)
- Quenched (1 Thess. 5:19-22)
- Resisted, rejected, and rebelled against (Acts 7:51-53)
- Insulted (Heb. 10:26-31)

Like the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit deserves better than this. Satan prowls about, opposing God and His people. May we choose God’s side, and repent when we fall short.

## Equipped by the Holy Spirit

As soldiers of Christ, we fight in a spiritual war. The enemy looms, encircling us with temptation, raging to allure us toward sin. ***“The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed”*** (Ps. 2:2).

Satan and his forces also stand against the Messiah by standing against His church. ***“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul”*** (1 Pet. 2:11). ***We must “stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places”*** (Eph. 6:11b-12).

We fight this spiritual war with unconventional means: ***“the whole armor of God”*** (Eph. 6:10-20). Every facet of this armor relates to God’s word.

- ***“Having girded your loins with truth”*** (Eph. 6:14), which is the word of God (John 17:17).
- ***“Having put on the breastplate of righteousness”*** (Eph. 6:14), which comes through the word of Jesus (Eph. 5:6-17).
- ***“Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace”*** (Eph. 6:15) which is the word of God.
- ***“Taking up the shield of faith”*** (Eph. 6:16), which ***“comes from hearing. . . the word of Christ”*** (Rom. 10:17).
- ***“Take the helmet of salvation”*** (Eph. 6:17), which comes from the word of God (Rom. 1:16-17).
- ***“And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”*** (Eph. 6:17).
- ***“Pray at all times in the Spirit”*** (Eph. 6:18) means to pray in harmony with the Spirit-revealed word of God, ***“the sword of the Spirit”*** (v. 17).

This war can neither be fought nor won by carnal means, like human philosophy, personal opinion, or human tradition. Neither can it be engaged through recreation, entertainment, or other things popular in our modern world.

***For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ*** (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

Victory only comes through the plan of the Father, the redemptive work of Jesus, and the revealed word of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:3-14; 3:3-5; 6:10-20).

## Therefore, Arm Yourself!

We need fortification inside our minds and hearts (Eph. 4:18-19a; 5:17-18; Gal. 5:16-17, 22-23). Our information and motivation need to be godly.

We need strength as we make outward decisions about our activities, friends, and also what congregation we join (Acts 9:26; Eph. 4:17, 19b; 5:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21). Making godly choices protects us from spiritual harm and death—strengthening us to shine God’s light and cast down Satan’s strongholds.

Are we prepared for the battle if we are dressing immodestly, drinking alcohol, cursing, or dancing? What if we lack knowledge of God’s word or discernment to make wise decisions? In these cases, rather than engaging in the battle with Christ and against Satan, we will fight for the wrong side, opposing the side of truth and righteousness.

Satan is deceptively strategic in the ways of spiritual warfare. However, we can be wiser than he if we will listen to and wield the sword of the Holy Spirit (see Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; 1 John 4:4).

## Conclusion

The Holy Spirit arms us through His powerful word (Eph. 6:10-20), equipping us to battle Satan successfully. However, if we turn against the Holy Spirit’s message, we defeat ourselves.

We are drawn in battle array against Satan. Like David, God equips us for victory.

The days are evil (Eph. 6:13); dress appropriately (Eph. 6:14-18)! – ***Truth Magazine***, September 2022. ■

***“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish”*** (Gal. 5:16-17).

**Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM**

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