

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 18, 2014

David L. Keys, Website and Database Administrator at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

SCRIPTURE

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. 11Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. 15As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. 16With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. 19Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

DEVOTIONAL

What if this Christmas you found a simply wrapped box under your tree?

You excitedly rip off the wrapping and take off the lid.

You find a simple note which reads: "This is the Armor of God."

You notice that attached to each article is a note. The *Belt of Truth* indicates to wrap this around your waist to protect yourself from deception and wickedness. The *Breastplate of Righteousness* is present to protect your heart and spirit from those who wish to hurt you. The *Shield of Faith* defends you from evil's powerful bolts of immoral energy. The *Helmet of Salvation* is to help you focus your thoughts on love and compassion and safeguard you from your sinful ways. And finally, it tells you to lift the *Sword of the Spirit* high above your head and proclaim the victory which is born this Christmas day.

After you unbox the contents, you notice on the bottom of the box is simply written, "Be Strong. You are not alone."

In this season of profound love, please cherish these gifts from God. You have been empowered to use them to further the kingdom of God and stand firm against the evil and chaos in this world.

PRAYER

We thank you, Father that you have not left us defenseless. Rather, you have called us to the battleground of prayer and have fully equipped us for the task. Now strengthen us each day to carry forward the gospel of Christ as we wage war against the evil one. Teach us to preach, to pray, and to persevere; and as the dust settles after each victory, may we be found standing our ground, prepared for the next foray into battle. Amen.

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