

Prepare For Battle

1. We ended last time talking about the need for armor in this race of faith. The “full armor of God” is described in the Book of Ephesians, which is a letter written by Paul to the Church at Ephesus, whom he describes as—

Ephesians 1:1

to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus..

- They were FAITHFUL IN Christ Jesus—this is not simply that they were just redeemed individuals who could classify themselves as the body of Christ. NO.
- This is the same thought we see in the Epistle of I John—

I John 2:24-26

As for you [church], let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal [age-lasting] life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

- “Let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning—what did you hear from the beginning? It goes back to what we heard in Hebrews chapters 1 and 2 that “we must pay much closer attention to”—Jesus is the heir of all things, He, “the firstborn” will again come into the world and all the angels will worship him...He will sit on Mt. Zion and break with a rod of iron those who oppose Him and He will receive His inheritance—and the world to come will not be subjected to angels, but to man...Man=Jesus, Man=mankind.
- Jesus Himself describes those who abide in Him—
 - **John 15:4-5, 10**
Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. IF you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.
 - This is about being faithful IN CHRIST, in an active sense—faithful obedience to His Word.

2. This Church in Ephesus, to whom Paul wrote, was “faithful IN Christ Jesus.” Timothy is described in the same way. Timothy, who was told by Paul to “guard what was entrusted him”—

○ **I Corinthians 4:17**

For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

- Timothy and the Church at Ephesus--faithful, abiding in the Lord, walking by the Spirit, men of sound character and holding to the sound doctrine of the truth of the gospel of which Paul taught.
- As we saw, those that remain faithful IN the Lord and hold true to His Word will have to GUARD themselves, and this Word within them.
- As Paul said to Timothy regarding this—

I Timothy 4:6-11, 16

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. **Prescribe and teach these things. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe (this would be abiding in Christ, being faithful in Christ). Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.**

- So we see that it is for this—the life to come—that we labor and strive—WHY? Because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, *especially of believers*.
- But in order to do this—labor and strive, disciplining ourselves—we must have on our armor. Because...
 - we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the powers in the heavenlies. And why do they fight against us? Because of what is at stake—our inheritance in the kingdom that is presently under Satan’s control. It is a territorial battle. And we need to be victorious.

3. To the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote—

Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to 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. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore.....18 With all prayer and petition pray at all

times in the Spirit, and **with this in view** [the battle], **be on the alert** with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

- Here is a church that understood the things concerning the Christ. They understood the gospel—the “whole counsel of God”—the gospel of grace and the kingdom.

—Acts 20:18-32

¹⁸ “You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, ²¹ solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ²² And now, behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. ²⁴ But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will see my face no more. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose [Lit., *all* the will, or intention] of God. ²⁸ **Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.** ²⁹ I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and **from among your own selves** men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore **be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.** ³² And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

- And they are told to BE ON THE ALERT.
- Peter says the same thing—

I Peter 5:8-9

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist (436) him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

- resist= anthistemi, which means to stand against. Two words, “anti” –against--and “histemi” –stand.

Ephesians 6:13

Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist (436) in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm, therefore...

- THEREFORE/("Because of" or "For this reason"....)—what reason? Because of the battle with the spiritual forces, we are to take up the full armor so that we may be able to resist.
 - The context is VERY clear! We are battling spiritual forces in the heavenlies (sorry to belabor this...but get it!)
 - and having done everything (pertaining to the armor)—STAND, "histemi" same word.
- --I Peter 5:8 also says to stay **firm** in your faith, as you resist the devil. Firm=stereos, which means solid, stable, steadfast. It is my understanding that this Greek word "stereos" comes from the same word as "histemi"-- stand.
 - In both references we see that we are to be IMMOVABLE in our faith. Faith=belief. This goes back to what I said yesterday, about what we have heard, what we must pay much closer attention to...everything that encompasses what we have been entrusted with. Staying FIRM in relation to this as we RESIST.

4. This is what the armor is for.

Ephesians 6:14-17

¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

5. In Summary, the various pieces of the armor are:

The belt of truth ("girding the loins"), which symbolizes our wholehearted attitude to follow the Lord's will, must be put on first because we must settle within our hearts that we WILL follow God's truth regardless of the consequences.

To that piece of armor, we attach the breastplate of righteousness, which symbolizes our choice to live righteously, being faithfully obedient to God's Word, His revealed plans and purposes.

Our feet are to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, which signifies not only our understanding of God's truth but an ability to share the message of the gospel (the whole gospel: the gospel of peace *with* God and the gospel of peace *of* God) with others explain. We must know the message in order to stand firm on the message.

The shield of faith is our belief in God and His promises— the faith that we live by day to day, the faith that is useless without works, the faith that is necessary to save our souls. Must already be saved (had initial faith) to even put on armor. This piece of armor we are to take up above all, for with this faith we are able to extinguish *all* the flaming missiles of the evil one. Remember I Peter 5:8, ***Resist the devil, firm in your faith...***

Then there is the helmet of salvation, which is the living hope that sustains us as we persevere toward the goal of our faith, the salvation of our soul. With this helmet on we keep our eyes, our mind, our body—everything we do—focused on up ahead, on that future day and the inheritance that is reserved for us in heaven.

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, which is our weapon, to be wielded in a defensive manner only.

- Just for the sake of clarification, one must put on the full armor of God, which means putting on every piece. One cannot pick and choose which piece of armor they would like; one must put on the *full* armor or *no* armor at all.
- All these elements—worn together as ONE piece of armor—are absolutely necessary in order to complete our current race of faith and stand unashamed at the judgment seat of Christ.
- The two pieces of armor that I will be focusing on are the belt, and the helmet. I'll start with the belt.

6. BELT

Ephesians 6:14

Stand firm, therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH

- It is obvious from the text that Paul expects the armor to go on first *before* one is able to stand firm against the enemy.
- Girding your loins is a translation of the Greek word “perizonnumi”, which literally means to gird, or bind, all around, and “osphus” which references the hip, or area of procreation. Hence, the translation “belt of truth”.
- First thing to understand is the literal rendering of armor. Let's for a moment examine what the armor of Paul's day was like. Rome was the world power at the time Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians, and Paul was a Roman citizen, though a Jew. The Roman soldier wore only a tunic under their armor, when putting on the armor they would put on their belt (also known as a “girdle”) *first*. The breastplate, or body armor, would connect to the belt and the belt would transfer some of the weight of the iron mail from the shoulders to the hips. The soldier's legs wouldn't be covered with anything, but they would wear socks and boots on their feet. The Roman soldier's boot looked like a sandal, but it was called a “boot.” The soldier would also wear a helmet and carry a shield and weapons. The weapons attached to the belt.
- The belt comes first because not only is it literally the first piece of armor that is put on, but spiritually this piece must be placed FIRST, before the other pieces can be joined to it.

7. TRUTH

- What truth? What does it mean?
- At first, we might think that the truth is simply God's Word. That wouldn't be entirely correct because Ephesians 6:17 states that the “sword of the Spirit” is God's Word. The belt is

something we put on *first* that will hold the rest of the armor in place; and, as we've already discussed, in order for someone to even *put on* the full armor he/she must already be in possession of a mature knowledge of God's Word.

- We could try to find the meaning of the belt of truth by relying on what truth means in our English language, which is simply being honest and forthright. That, however, wouldn't be an accurate way to interpret this verse either, because as we know, the full armor has to do with standing against the spiritual forces in the heavenly places. Being honest and forthright about any particular matter wouldn't be the foundation of defensive armor. Being honest is something we should do, but it is not considered a piece of armor.
- Let's see how "truth" is revealed throughout God's Word—
 - The word for truth is the Greek word *aletheia* (225), which denotes that which is opposite to a falsehood (deception). It's usage, however (especially by Paul) has a particular, specific meaning. Let's take a look.

Galatians 5:7-10

⁷ You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. ⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough. ¹⁰ I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

- And notice that those being addressed were running well. They were in a race, and they were running well—The race is referencing that which Paul talked about—

I Corinthians 9:24-27

²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵ And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I fight in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷ but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possible, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

- All Christians are in a race—and it is in the hopes of receiving an *imperishable crown*.
- Paul thought he could be disqualified. Sobering thought, huh? Look at his life of faith.
- So something happened to the Church in Galatia. Paul says they stopped "obeying the truth" and were hindered from running. They *were* [past tense] running well, *until* they stopped obeying the truth.

8. Looking at another letter from Paul, we see mention of truth in connection with hope—

Colossians 1:3-5

³ We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven [Lit., the heavens], of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel...

- They heard about the hope laid up for them in the heavens in the word of truth, the gospel. We just saw what Paul meant when he said, “gospel.” The whole counsel of God—the gospel of grace and the kingdom. All things surrounding the Christ. This is the word of TRUTH.

9. And also from Paul to the Church at Ephesus, how would they have understood girding their loins with truth?

Ephesians 1:13

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation (must be the whole gospel, remember)—**having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.**

- All of this with a view to the redemption of God’s possession. Keeping this all in the context of God’s revelation to man—*redemption must be seen in connection with rulership*. Man’s created purpose, which he was disqualified from due to sin, and his redemption (deliverance, ransom) which would place him back in to the position that he originally held.
- The church at Ephesus *listened* and they *believed*...and they were about to endure extreme tribulation because of it.
- Please unlearn what you’ve been taught in your Christian life about the too simple a view of salvation. PLEASE. Please see it as God sees it, so that when you read something like, “the gospel of your salvation” you don’t have to wonder what it’s talking about. Salvation is about 3 parts of man. Total salvation. Past, present, future. Spirit, soul and body. The gospel is the good news. The good news about man’s redemption.
- Salvation is not about heaven and hell...it’s about redemption with a view to rulership.

10. So how would we gird our loins with this gospel, this hope, this TRUTH about Christ and His coming Kingdom? How do we make it the foundation of our armor (it goes on *first*, righteousness is *attached to it*)? Let’s look at David—

I Kings 2:1-4

¹ As David’s time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying, ² “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. ³ And keep the charge of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His

ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn, ⁴ so that the Lord may carry out his promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’”

- David, a man who received the promise from the Lord regarding His descendant’s kingdom lasting forever. David, whose distant relative would be God’s Son and God would be His Father (remember Hebrews 1?). David, a man who wrote Psalm 8 (again, remember Hebrews 1) about what is man, God, that you would think of him and put all things in subjection to him? David, a man who truly knew that the way to please the Lord and receive His promise was through a life of obedience and repentance.
- David’s charge to his son Solomon is this—
 - Keep the charge of the Lord
 - Walk in the ways of the Lord
 - Keep the Lord’s statutes
 - Keep the Lord’s commandments,
 - Keep the Lord’s ordinances
 - Keep the Lord’s testimonies
 - Do all of this in accordance to what is written in the Law of Moses
- WHY????
 - David says why. In order that you (Solomon) may succeed in all that you do
 - In order that the Lord may carry out his promise—

If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’

- Walking in truth, with all your heart and with all your soul is synonymous with OBEDIENCE to the Lord’s commandments.
- But notice where the “walking in truth” comes from...HEART and SOUL. It is not an external keeping of the law by rote. It is an internal issue of dedication and determination of your whole being.
- And as for the promise to Solomon if he were to do this, we can see this: Solomon would have a part in an everlasting theocracy if he were to remain faithfully obedient. And we, too, will receive a part in an everlasting theocracy if we remain faithfully obedient.

If we are to put on the belt of truth, which is the foundation that holds together the rest of the armor, we must not only possess a mature knowledge of what the truth is, but we must possess an unfaltering commitment to knowing and believing that it is indeed The Way, the Only Way, THE Truth.

11. Back to the I Timothy passage—

I Timothy 4:7b-11

...discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy

statement deserving full acceptance. For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. Prescribe and teach these things.

- It is for this—the promise for the present life AND also for the life to come—that we labor and strive!
 - Labor=“kopiao”, which means to feel fatigue, toil, work hard
 - Strive= --“oneidizo” which means “suffer reproach”, “chide”, “defame”

Matthew 5:10-12

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men cast insults at you (“oneidizo”), and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- Continuing—

I Timothy 4:15-16

Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them (gird your loins with truth), so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching (gird your loins with truth); persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

- Walking in truth and obeying the truth are just other ways of saying *faithful obedience to God's Word*. *Truth* is belief in what God has said and obedience to it! It is being absolutely committed to being victorious! Now we'll put these thoughts together with the words of Christ Himself—

John 14:5-6

⁵ Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

- There is only one way to the Father. There is only one hope and one race, with one goal. There is only one way to get the finish line—through Jesus Christ the Prophet, the Priest, the Judge, and the King.

It is your knowledge of and determination to run this race, to fight this fight, and stand firm before the enemy which comprises the belt of truth. It is the fortitude to hang on to your hope no matter what the enemy throws at you. It is what holds the rest of the armor in place. And all of this—ALL of it—is done through Christ Jesus, THE TRUTH.

12. Ephesians 6:14

Stand firm, therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH...

- particularly notice the word “gird”—

I Peter 1:13

Therefore, gird your minds for action (*which means doing something*), **keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

- We see in the armor something specific with which we are to use in relation to the protection of our heads/minds—

Ephesians 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation,

- How would we define this? Scripture gives us a clear definition—

I Thess. 5:8

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.

- Remember the context in which we find the battle mentioned in Ephesians (and in relation to Timothy and Peter)? Within the Church that understands the battle—who, what, when, where, and WHY. The same is true for I Thessalonians. Pay attention to whom it is directed—

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹ **Now as to the times and the epochs** [of the return of the Lord Jesus, *check context*], brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² **For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.** ³ **While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.** ⁴ **But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief;** ⁵ **for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;** ⁶ **so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.** ⁷ **For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.**

⁸ **But since we are of the day** (meaning *not* of night and darkness), **let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.**

⁹ **For God has not destined us** (the ones not of night and darkness, those who will not be overtaken by the day of the Lord because we’re watching for it!) **for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,** ¹⁰ **who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him.** ¹¹ **Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.**

- Again, the admonition to BE ALERT!

- And while being alert, and sober, we are to have on as a helmet (that which guards our minds) the HOPE OF SALVATION.
- We probably all already know what this is referencing, but let's go through it—

13. Hope of salvation...obviously, referencing “hope”— it would not be something that we presently possess-duh. It is referencing the salvation of the soul.

And the HOPE of this is to gird and protect our minds.

Romans 8:18-19, 23, 24-25 (KJV)

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (future focus) For the earnest expectation of the creature [waits] for the manifestation of the sons of God (future focus)...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body (future focus). For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

- Hope that we see is not hope! We wait patiently for that which we hope for.
- And faith, our belief, is connected to *that which we do not see*—

Hebrews 10:39-11:3

But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving [lit. saving] of the soul. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it [faith of things not seen] the men of old gained approval. By faith WE understand that the [ages] were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

- What does the preparation of the ages have to do with our hope and faith?
 - The rulers of this age are Satan and his fallen angels.
 - The rulers of *the coming age* are Jesus and His co-heirs
 - Do you believe that?
- SO what are we hoping for?
 - **Titus 3: 7**
...that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal [age-lasting] life.
 - **Colossians 1:27**
...to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in [or “among”] you, the hope of glory.
 - **Colossians 1:4-5**
...since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel.

- Hope of glory, hope of age-lasting life...Paul's gospel, the word of truth, contained information concerning the HOPE that is laid up for us in heaven

I Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

- Glory, the salvation of the soul, life for the age to come, the inheritance reserved in heaven are all facets of the *complete picture of the hope* that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ made possible. This hope is to encourage us, to strengthen us, to help us to stand firm in the battle against the heavenly forces. It is to be our focus; it is to be our anchor—

Hebrews 6:18-19

¹⁸...in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul

14. ANCHOR. STEADFAST. STANDING FIRM. IMMOVABLE. SURE.

- Do we? Do you? Do you *really*?

Is your helmet of the hope of salvation firmly in place?
Is your belt of truth firmly in place?

- Are you like Caleb, who stood alone with Joshua, against 10 other leaders and an entire congregation, stating –

Numbers 13:30

Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it.”

And they all said—

Numbers 14:10

But all the congregation said to stone them with stones.

- But so what...Caleb waited another 38 years to receive his inheritance. He waited amidst the grumbling, complaining lot of them who would not be receiving their inheritance in the land. *He waited...and he received it.*
- Are you like Rebekah, who told the oldest servant that she would indeed go with him to marry the son (the son of promise)? She said I WILL GO, when her family told her to wait around for ten more days. She went on the journey. *She left everything behind her and went on the journey.* And at the end of the journey, she received the son's inheritance by becoming his wife.
- Are you like Ruth, who also left everything behind her to travel to a land...a land in which she found rest in house of her husband (after laboring for a complete period of time) and received through him the inheritance. She went—she went by faith, hoping....
- Or, are you like Lot's wife? She started out all right; she was moving in the right direction and knew exactly where she was going. She was told to "escape for your life!" to the mountains, and specifically to NOT look back, *but she looked back anyway.* She thought that what she was leaving behind was much more important than what lay ahead of her.

15.

I Peter 1:13

Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- the KJV says, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind (wrap up, bind, cinch, fasten), be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
- And notice the "Therefore" or rather "Because of"—it must be seen in context—
- What I am about to read is WHY we must do this. Please notice that every single context we have covered regarding being alert, being sober, being on guard has to do with Christians who *know* and *believe* and are *obedient* to all the things that we have been learning regarding the mature teachings! We must pay much closer attention to it!

I Peter 1:1-16

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen (same word in Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen [called out]) **according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distress by various trials, that the proof (or "testing) of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have**

not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of [literally, with respect to] Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you [Paul, Timothy] by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look. Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- Gird your minds for action, be obedient children—be holy...*because of the inheritance reserved in heaven for you.*
- The battle rages...*because of the inheritance reserved in heaven for you.*
- Rejoice over your various trials—*because the testing of your faith is necessary in order to achieve the goal, or outcome, of your faith---the salvation of your soul, ALL OF WHICH IS NECESSARY TO RECEIVE THE INHERITANCE THAT IS RESERVED IN HEAVEN FOR YOU.*

The battle is about a land. It's territorial, it's unceasing, it's personal. Satan does not want to give up what he has. And you now know that you are poised to take it from him.

Having the armor on is how you will stand in this evil day...it is how you will resist the devil who wants to devour you...it is how you will be victorious against everything around you that seeks to pull you away from the goal of your calling.

Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm, therefore...