

The Helmet of Salvation



Spiritual Warfare (Part 9)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we follow through our theme for the week, the defensive armor that God has provided for us in our spiritual warfare against Satan and his kingdom.

So far in my talks this week I've dealt with four of these items of defensive armor: the girdle of truth, the breastplate of salvation, the shoes of the preparation of the gospel, the shield of faith. Today I am going to deal with the fifth item of equipment, the helmet of salvation. I will be sharing some precious truths concerning this that I learned from my own conflicts.

When I look back on these conflicts, I am reminded of the words of Paul in Romans 8:37:

> "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." (NIV)

What does it mean to be more than conquerors? I believe it means this, that we not only win the battle but actually come out of it with more than we had when we went into it. That is to be more than conquerors. And I have proved this many times in my own experience.

Dealing with the breastplate, we saw that the breastplate protects the heart. Now that we are looking at the helmet, what does the helmet protect? Obviously, the head. What does the head represent? The mind. So, we are talking about the helmet that protects our minds.

In our talks last week we saw that the battlefield on which this entire spiritual war is being fought out is the mind, the mind of humanity. Because the mind is the battlefield, it is obvious that we need to be particularly careful to protect our own minds.

Of course, you have probably understood by now that I was a hospital attendant in World War II, so I know a certain amount about this from experience. In the natural, a person wounded in the head can no longer make effective use of the rest of his equipment. He may be a very brave and efficient soldier,

he may have excellent equipment but when he is wounded in the head, it becomes very difficult for him to make effective use of his ability and his equipment.

Now, in the spiritual, this is true with many Christian workers and I am saying this from personal observation. I have been privileged to be associated in ministry at different times and in different places with many wonderful servants of God, both men and women, missionaries, pastors, and others. I think particularly of missionaries, who are usually under extreme spiritual pressure. I can look back on some missionaries that I worked with in different places who were dedicated, qualified men and women of God, with great ability and a real calling. But many times they allowed themselves to be wounded in the head. I mean this, that they allowed themselves to become prey to depression or to suspicion, to mistrust of other Christian workers. And this problem in their minds prevented them from being the kind of effective missionaries and servants of God that they could have been. Being wounded in the head, they could not use the rest of their equipment.

I learned a great deal about this in my own personal experience. For many years in the ministry I had a tremendous personal struggle with depression. I know exactly what depression is like. When I talk with those who have experienced it, I always know it. With me it was like a kind of dark gray cloud, a kind of mist, that settled down over me, over my head and my shoulders, shut me in, shut me off, made it difficult for me to communicate with others, gave me a sense of hopelessness and, although in many ways I am a gifted and qualified servant of the Lord, I got that impression, "Others can but you can't. You'll never make it. You're going to have to give up." I struggled with this depression for a good many years. I did everything I could. I prayed, I fasted, I sought God, I read the Bible. And then one day God gave me a revelation that solved my problem. I was reading Isaiah 61:3:

> "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness..." (KJV)

When I read that phrase "the spirit of heaviness," something leaped within me. I said, "That's my problem! That's what I need to be delivered from." I read other passages of Scripture on deliverance, I prayed a simple prayer of faith, and God supernaturally delivered me from that spirit of heaviness.

But then I saw that I had to keep my mind protected. I saw that I needed some special protection for my mind. I was familiar with the passage in Ephesians 6. I said to myself, "That must be the helmet of salvation." Then I said, "Does that mean I have the helmet because I'm saved? Is it automatic?" And I saw that could not be so because Paul was writing to people who were Christians and he said, "put on the helmet of salvation." I was directed to a parallel passage in 1 Thessalonians 5:8:

> "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." (KJV)

And when I read that phrase "the hope of salvation," I had an instantaneous revelation from the Holy Spirit. I saw that the protection of the mind is hope. The protection of the heart is faith. We often get these mixed up. Biblical faith is in the heart. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Biblical faith is the breastplate that protects the heart. But the protection of the mind is hope. We need to see the connection between faith and hope. It is stated clearly in Hebrews 11:1:

> "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for..." (KJV)

Faith is the underlying basic reality on which hope is built. When we have valid faith, then we have valid hope. When we don't have valid faith, we may not have valid hope either. Hope may be mere wishful thinking. But when we have a real foundation of faith, on that foundation we can build a valid hope and that is the protection of our mind.

I would like to define hope, very simply, according to Scripture. Hope is a quiet, steady expectation of good based on the promises of God's Word. In a sense, it is continuing optimism. That is the protection of the mind. Hope. Optimism. An optimistic attitude that always sees the best, will not give way to depression and doubt and self-pity.

There is one sufficient basis for hope in the Word of God, it's Romans 8:28:

> "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (NAS)

If we really know that everything that happens in our lives is being worked together by God for our good, then there never is a reason for pessimism. Every situation is always a reason for optimism. Optimism is the helmet. While we keep it on, our minds are protected against all Satan's subtle attacks against doubt, discouragement, self-pity, mistrust, and so on.

When the Holy Spirit showed me that the helmet to protect our mind is hope, he preached, as it were, a kind of sermon to

me, an instantaneous sermon. I suddenly brought together a number of passages of the New Testament and all of them dealt with hope. Let me share just a few of them. Romans 8:24:

> "...we are saved by hope..." (KJV)

What does that mean? No hope, no salvation. Hope is an essential part of our experience of salvation. Contrast the condition of the unsaved in Ephesians 2:12. Paul says this:

> "[Before you knew Christ]... ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world..." (KJV)

You see those things: without Christ, without hope, without God. That is the condition of the lost. It should never be the condition of the Christian. If we have Christ, then we have hope and we have God. Again, in Colossians 1:27, Paul says:

> "...to whom God willed to make know what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (NAS)

Do you see what that means? If Christ is in you, you have hope. If you do not have hope, it is just as if Christ isn't in you. I don't mean you are a lost soul, but I mean that you are not living in the experience of salvation. Hope in your mind is an essential part of your salvation experience. In Hebrews 6:17-20, there are two beautiful pictures of hope.

> "Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf." (NIV)

You see the pictures there of hope? The first is an altar. Under the Old Covenant, the altar was a place of protection from the avengers of blood. When you fled to the altar, you were safe. The writer of Hebrews says, when all the pressures are against us, flee to the altar, catch hold of the horns of the altar, and let nothing pull you away. And the altar is hope.

And then he says hope is like an anchor that reaches out of time into eternity, into the very presence of God. In this world we are like a little vessel on the sea, everything around us is temporary, impermanent, unreliable, changeable. There is nothing to give us security and stability. If we are to have security and stability we need an anchor, an anchor that reaches out of time into eternity and fastens in the Rock of Ages. That anchor is hope. When we have hope, we are anchored. Listen to what the writer of Hebrews says finally, in Hebrews 10:23:

> "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess [keep on hoping]..." (NIV)

Keep on hoping, don't give up hope, be an optimist. It's the protection of your mind.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I will be dealing with the sixth item of equipment, the sword of the Spirit.

Radio Program

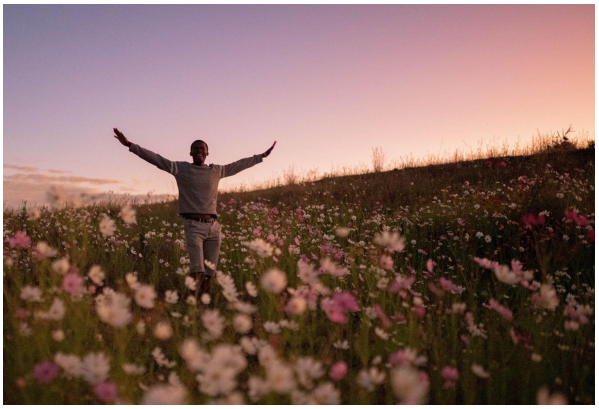
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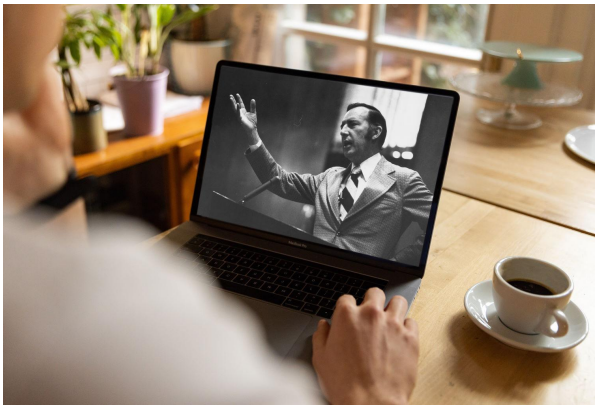
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