

Armor and Power



The Enemies We Face (Part 19)
by Derek Prince

Going on. The next thing we must do is put on the whole armor of God. We need to turn to Ephesians 6 for a moment. Immediately after the 12th verse, which speaks about the kingdom of Satan in the heavenlies, Paul says (in my version the next word is "therefore") in verse 13:

> "Therefore take up the whole armor of God."

And notice, you have to take it up. It does not grow on you. God does not fit it on you. You have to take it up. Paul was writing to people who were Christians, just as much Christians as you and I. But he placed on them the responsibility to take up the armor. And if you look through the armor (we'll go through it very quickly), in verse 14: the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness; verse 15: the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel; verse 16: the shield of faith; verse 17: the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit. If you analyze that, you are completely protected from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet, except one area, which is... the back, that's right. If you turn your back, there is no protection. It is important to remember.

But that's not the full list. There are six items there and in the Bible usually when a thing is complete and it's good, it's seven. And the next one is perhaps as important as any of them, verse 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit." I think it was Charles Wesley who talks about the weapon of "all prayer." And really all prayer is the weapon by which we can reach out into the heavenlies and attack Satan's kingdom at its base. The others are mainly weapons of self-protection. But all prayer is, if you like, it's our intercontinental ballistic missile. It can reach any target, anywhere, if we set the computer right.

The next thing we have to do is realize our need of God's supernatural power. And I want to say supernatural. Christianity is a religion of the supernatural. I once read through the book of Acts, examining it to see what would happen if I removed all reference to the manifestly supernatural. That's not just inward supernatural experiences but things that are visible, that can be perceived by the senses. The book of Acts has 28 chapters and at the end of that I just discovered not one chapter out of the 28 would be left intact if we eliminated the supernatural. And that is the only record we have in Scripture of how the church is intended to operate. We cannot operate effectively and

accomplish the will of God solely by our own natural ability. We have to have the supernatural enabling of the Holy Spirit. And one main form of that enabling is the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12.

We won't turn there but let's look at just one statement of Paul which, I think, is important. It really summarizes what I'm saying. 1 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 20.

> "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."

It's not a matter of theology. Theology has its place. It's not a matter of argument. It's not a matter of intellectual proof. It's the demonstration of the supernatural power of God. I'd like to look at the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians, chapter 2, just two chapters back, the first five verses. 1 Corinthians 1:2–5:

> "And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or wisdom declaring you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

You remember what we said about Galatians, chapter 3? What does witchcraft obscure in the church? Jesus Christ crucified. Paul said, "That's all I'm going to be interested in. Jesus Christ crucified."

I was preaching just recently to a congregation which contained a large number of Jews in Jerusalem and I pointed out to them that really the thing which is supremely esteemed amongst the Jewish people generally is knowledge. And here is a Jew who says, "I determined not to know anything [that's very unusual] except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Why? Paul said:

> "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. [He was not an impressive speaker by any means.] My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit [capital S, the Holy Spirit]."

That was power. That was Paul's secret. Why did the Holy Spirit testify to his ministry with power? Because he focused on Jesus Christ crucified. You can bring all sorts of elegant sermons and theories and quote all sorts of doctors and people, the Holy Spirit is just bored. But when you begin to lift up Jesus crucified, He says, "I will bear testimony to that."

I believe that is the primary need of the church today. Especially here in this country today where we are surrounded by Moslems. Did you realize that? Millions of Moslems. And there is nothing going to reach the Moslem mind but the demonstration of the supernatural. And we have an opportunity. Instead of having to go to them, they have come to us. We could not go to their nations and proclaim the Gospel because we would be put in prison or executed. But God has arranged for them to come here. What's the church doing about it? It is time the church rose up and said, "We will demonstrate to them that Jesus is alive." I say sometimes, "There is no extra charge for that; it is not in my outline but it happens to be true."

Let's turn to 2 Timothy, chapter 3 again for a moment. I just want to point out something there. Remember, this is all about the last days. That's the whole theme of this chapter. And he says in verse 8, 2 Timothy 3:8:

> "Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses... [Jannes and Jambres were the magicians of Egypt. They resisted Moses.] so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, [as was the folly of Jannes and Jambres]."

So what Paul is saying is the contest that took place between Moses and the magicians of Egypt in the court of Pharaoh is going to be re-enacted in these days—between the servants of Jesus Christ and the practitioners of the occult. And it is not going to be settled by theology. It is a contest of power, whose power is greater. And bear in mind the magicians of Egypt had a lot of power. The first three miracles that Moses did they could repeat. They could turn their rods into snakes. They could turn water into blood. They could call up frogs out of the river. All of that was supernatural. But when they got beyond that and Moses went further, they said, "This is the finger of God. Now we're out of our depth."

I don't know what you ever thought about Moses. I particularly like this Moses and Aaron. They went there with the rod and Pharaoh said, "Show me what you can do, you guys." So (I think it was) Aaron, threw down the rod and it became a snake. Amazingly enough, Pharaoh was not much impressed. So he said to his magicians, "Can you do that?" And they said, "We can." They threw down their rods and they became snakes. But there was one thing that further happened. Moses' snake ate up the snakes of the magicians. I don't know whether you ever thought about the scene that followed? The magicians walked out without any rods and Moses' rod was much thicker and stronger than before! That's how it is going to be, you understand? It is going to be: whose rod wins. If people disagree with me and sometimes I say, "Well listen, don't let's argue. Let's throw down our rods

and see which snake wins." Really, that's where it's at. It's not argument. It's demonstration. That's what's needed. And particularly in the gifts of the Spirit we need the three revelatory gifts: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits. The word of knowledge shows us Satan's operations, how he is working in the supernatural realm. The word of wisdom shows us how to counter his actions and defeat him. And discerning of spirits shows us when we are face to face with demonic power and activity. We desperately need those in the church today.

Let's move on. The next and sixth point in my outline is: We must apply the power of jubilant praise and bold proclamation. And there is one Scripture has become a favorite with me, in Jeremiah, chapter 31 and verse 7. Jeremiah 31:7. This is concerning the restoration of Israel in these last days.

> "For thus says the Lord, sing with gladness for Jacob and shout among the chief of the nations. Proclaim, give praise and say: 'O Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.'"

There are three weapons, or three activities, spoken of there, which are crucial for us to understand. They are praise, proclaim and pray. Praying is this, saying, "O, Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel." Now the Lord has declared He's going to save the remnant of Israel. You could say, "Well, He could do it without our praying." But God says in another place, "I will not do it until I'm inquired for to do it." You understand? Praying is our contribution to the outworking of God's purposes in the earth. And God, somebody said, has chosen to need us. He could have done without us but He is not going to.

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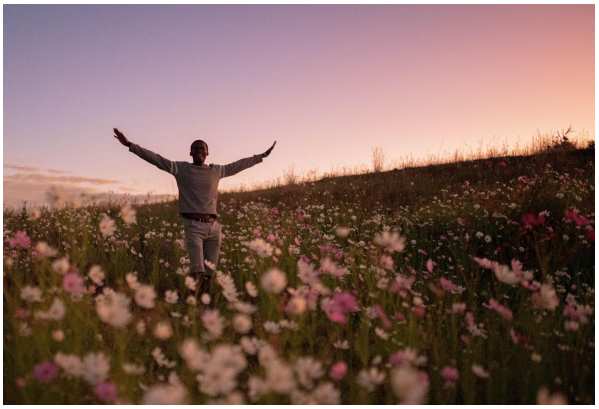

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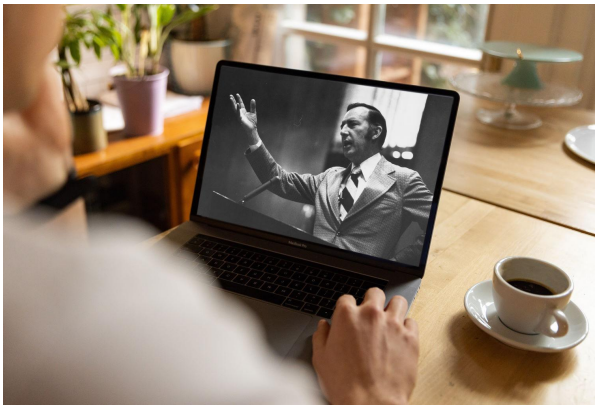

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