

- (2) The Levite choir's artillery was their singing to the Lord and those who praised Him who said, "Give thanks to the Lord, for His lovingkindness is everlasting." (v. 21)
- (3) As they sang and offered thanks, the Lord set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed. (v. 22)
- (4) For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying them completely and then set about destroying each other. (v.23)
- (5) Afterward, the people gathered to observe the battlefield:

2 Chronicles 20:24 When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, they were corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped.

- (6) While in this passage, let's note the event that took place once the Jews returned to Jerusalem:

2 Chronicles 20:26 Then on the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Berácah, for there they blessed the Lord. Therefore, they have named that place "The Valley of Berácah" to this day.

52. How can we overlook young David's triumph over the colossal Goliath? His response to the giant's challenge in 1 Samuel 17:45–47 reflects his courage motivated and sustained by doctrine:

1 Samuel 17:45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.

v. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you.⁹ And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,

v. 47 and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or spear; for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hands." (NASB)

⁹ 1 Samuel 17:51a, Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.

53. What the Jews may have lacked in knowledge of military science, they made up for it with courage and delegated omnipotence.
54. Rarely was the Israeli army larger than its opponent and so it was with the Romans. Arther Ferrill writes about this subject in *The Fall of the Roman Empire*:

From the days of the Republic, strategists had taken it for granted that Roman armies might easily be outnumbered by barbarian tribes. Discipline and training, sophisticated logistics, the techniques of siege warfare, military engineering, a professional system of command, and high morale based on justifiable confidence had given the Roman armies an edge no barbarian horde could hope to match.¹⁰

55. Flavius Vegetius [Ve-jé-shē-as] was a fifth-century A.D. Roman author who did research on the glory days of the Roman army. He was a professed Christian who believed that military victory came from training and discipline.
56. Vegetius wrote in his treatise, *De Re Militari (Concerning Military Matters)*, that the Roman army's demise occurred when it drifted away from these concepts of training and discipline:

From the foundation of the city till the reign of the Emperor Gratian [Grá-shē-an], the foot soldiers wore cuirasses (kwi-rás-es) [breastplates] and helmets. But negligence and sloth have gradually introduced a total relaxation of discipline, the soldiers began to think their armor was too heavy, as they seldom put it on. They first requested permission from the Emperor to lay aside the cuiráss and afterward the helmet. In consequence of this, our troops in their engagements with the Goths were often overwhelmed with their showers of arrows. The need for forcing the infantry to resume wearing their cuirásses and helmets was discovered after such repeated defeats, which brought on the destruction of so many great cities.

Troops, defenseless and exposed to all the weapons of the enemy, are more disposed to fly than fight. What can be expected from a foot-archer without cuiráss or helmet, who cannot hold at once his bow and shield; or from the ensigns whose bodies are naked, and who cannot at the same time carry a shield and the colors? The foot soldier finds the weight of a cuiráss and even a helmet intolerable. This because he is seldom exercised and rarely puts them on.¹¹

57. What caused SPQR to fall was the fact its military failed to isolate distractions while not submitting to strict training and discipline.

¹⁰ Ferrell, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, 127.

¹¹ Flavius Vegetius, "The Arms of the Ancients" in *De Re Militari* (Bangkok: Harper-McLaughlin, 2019), 15–16.



58. An ill-prepared and poorly trained militia was unable to defend the borders of the world's most powerful nation.
59. Scripture uses the success and failure of the Roman soldier as an analogy to the success and failure of the Christian who fights the unseen battle of the Angelic Conflict.
60. The Apostle Paul made the claim that he was wounded often in this spiritual battle in:

2 Corinthians 11:21 Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about.

v. 22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I.

2 Corinthians 11:23 Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again.

v. 24 Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes minus one.

v. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

v. 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers.

v. 27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

v. 28 Besides everything else, I face daily the pressures of my concern for all the churches. (NIV)

61. For the Roman soldier, victory in battle meant rewards back home.
62. Special crowns were awarded for bravery and efficiency on the battlefield:
 - a. Comparable to our nation's Congressional Medal of Honor was the Corona Graminea.
 - b. The Corona Navalis was the highest Naval decoration.



- c. The Corona Muralis went to the first soldier to scale the wall of a besieged city.
 - d. The Corona Castrensis was awarded to the first soldier to reach the enemy in a charge.
 - e. The Corona Triumphalis came to the victorious commanders.
63. Accompanying these awards were tax-free monetary grants of up to a quarter of a million dollars a year; freedom from paying taxes; his children were educated at public expense; a statue was placed in the public square.
64. Paul uses metaphors from the military in his Epistles to describe the believer's functions in the Angelic Conflict.
65. Lucid communication of Biblical orders are compared to the trumpet call in battle in:
- 1 Corinthians 14:8** If the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? (NASB)
66. The soldier by virtue of the fact he is in uniform precludes his participation in otherwise legitimate pursuits.
67. He must train to do battle and in doing so he must isolate himself from the distractions of civilian life.
- 2 Timothy 2:3** Suffer hardships with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
- v. 4** No soldier when serving on active duty in a military campaign becomes entangled in the functions of civilian life in order that he may strive to serve and please his Commander in Chief. (EXT)
68. The good soldier is recruited by Jesus Christ Who is the Commander in Chief. We are to fight the battle without distractions in order to serve Him.
69. When a Roman soldier completed his training, he was literally branded, the mark indicating his lifetime commitment to the Roman Eagle.
70. Paul claims to have the brands of service to Christ on his body in:
- Galatians 6:17** From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand marks [στίγμα (*stigma*)] of Jesus. [See 2 Corinthians 11:21–28 on page 10 above.]



71. Paul speaks of those who turn away from the truth as deserters of the gospel in:

Galatians 1:6 I am amazed that you are so soon removed from Him [**God the Father**] Who called [καλέω (*kalēw*): **election**] you into the grace of Christ unto another of a different kind of gospel which is not another of the same kind of gospel except there will be some legalist that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. (EXT)

72. Paul instructs the Galatians to march in step with the Holy Spirit in:

Galatians 5:25 Since we live by means of the Holy Spirit, let us keep on marching in step with the Holy Spirit. (EXT)

73. The well-trained soldier, isolated from distractions and armed for combat is described by Paul in:

Ephesians 6:10 Keep on becoming strong in the Lord by means of the power of His delegated omnipotence.

v. 11 Wear [**aorist middle imperative** of ἐνδύω (*endúō*)] for yourselves the full armor from God, that you might be able to hold your ground against the tactics of the devil.

- a. “Full armor” is the word, **πανοπλία** (*panopliá*) and consists of the helmet, breastplate, belt, boots, shield, sword, and backpack.
- b. This is not a suggestion, it is a command from the Commander-in Chief, Jesus Christ.
- c. Your ability to fight efficiently in the Angelic Conflict depends upon your willingness to utilize your assets.
- d. Those assets are doctrines in your soul with which you dress your stream of consciousness for combat.

Ephesians 6:12 Because our combat is not against blood and flesh [Homo sapiens], but against the rulers [demon general officers, i.e., Beelzebub, a demon in charge of covert warfare against believers], against authorities [demon commissioned officers], against world rulers of darkness [special forces], against the spirit forces of evil in the heavenlies [rank and file demons].

v. 13 Because of this conflict, pick up and put on the full armor from God, in order that you might have the ability to resist in the evil day, even after having achieved everything [spiritual maturity] to oppose the forces of Satan.

v. 14a Stand fast, after having buckled around your waist the belt of doctrine in your soul, also having put on the breastplate of righteousness [δικαιосύνη (*dikaíosúnē*): the Royal Law],



- a. The belt was the foundation item in the military dress.
- b. Upon it was attached many of the necessities of the soldier such as the scabbard for his sword and his rations.
- c. The breastplate was attached to it.
- d. It is called the belt of doctrine and therefore speaks of *epígnōsis* doctrine in the soul upon which all depends.
- e. The breastplate encircled the body and thus protected it from attack.
- f. The believer is classified as righteous when he fulfills the Power Plan of God by advancing to spiritual maturity.
- g. It speaks of the security of the mature believer who with maximum doctrine does battle in the Angelic Conflict.
- h. He is protected inside the Divine Power System by means of maximum doctrine resident in his soul.
- i. Consequently, the breastplate of righteousness is a metaphor for the believer who is spiritually self-sustaining.

Ephesians 6:15 and having put on your feet the combat boots of the gospel of reconciliation;

- a. In Scripture, feet are synonymous with service.
- b. The service we are to perform in the conflict is to win over as many of the enemy as possible.
- c. We help defeat the demonic enemy when we offer the gospel of reconciliation to one of his troops causing him to defect to the Army of God.

Ephesians 6:16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

- a. In the ancient world, the enemy would fire flaming arrows at the advancing Roman soldier.
- b. By shielding himself behind his shield, he could defend himself against this type of assault.
- c. Paul refers to this as the “shield of faith” and speaks of the basic problem-solving device of the faith-rest drill.



- d. No matter what exigencies the devil's world fires at us, we are able to maintain our confidence by having faith in the promises and doctrines of the Word of God.

Ephesians 6:17 Also put on the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Holy Spirit which is the Word of God. (EXT)

- a. The helmet preserves the cranium in which is located the soul.
- b. The Roman Soldier who lost his helmet in battle was considered to have committed the ultimate battlefield error.
- c. The soldier must never lose his helmet. This emphasis on the permanency of the helmet speaks of the fact the believer never loses his salvation no matter how intense the battle might become.
- d. The sword is the **μάχαιρα (máchaira)** and was the soldier's offensive weapon for close combat.
- e. You unsheathe your sword when you make application of truth to life.
- f. You are doing battle in the Angelic Conflict when you meet the challenges of the hour with the doctrine you have learned in training, i.e., Bible class.

74. Training is the academic environment of Bible class.

75. This is where you isolate all distractions of secular life and concentrate intensely on the orders and mandates of the Christian Drill Manual: The Word of God.

76. The writer of Hebrews speaks of the discipline and training of the Christian warrior as well as his advance in the conflict in:

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we also keep on having such a great battalion of witnesses motivating us, having stripped for action every impediment and the sin which so easily ensnares us, let us advance on the run with endurance in the conflict marked out for us. (EXT)

III. τῷ νικῶντι (tōi nikōnti): To the winner.

1. This is a phrase used by the Apostle John to designate those who fulfill the power plan of God in the Church Age.

2. It is translated, “to the winner,” and introduces the list of escrow blessings which awaits the Church-Age believer at the Judgment Seat of Christ.¹
3. The winner is described in the New Testament Epistles by means of athletic metaphors.
4. These examples center specifically on the four Grecian games:

(By) the end of the 6th century BC at least four Greek sporting events, sometimes called “classical games,” had achieved major importance: the Olympic Games, held at Olympia; the Pythian Games at Delphi; the Nemean Games at Nemea; and the Ísthmian Games, held near Corinth. The Games, held every fourth year, were abolished around ad 400.

 - a. **The Olympic Games** were played in the first year of each Olympiad in honor of Zeús. These games were held in Olympia. Winners were presented a crown of wild olive leaves.
 - b. **The Pythian Games** were conducted at Mount Parnassós near Delphī. They were played in honor of Apollo. Winners were awarded a crown of laurel.²
 - c. **The Nēmēan Games** were held at Nēmēa. The competition was played in honor of Zeús. Winners were awarded a crown of fresh wild celery.
 - d. **The Ísthmian Games** were held near Córinth. They were played in honor of Poseidon. Winners received a crown of dry wild celery.
5. These games first consisted of a footrace in heats of four. The winner of the final heat was declared the winner and received the victor’s crown. Later the games were expanded to include races which were measured by the length of a stadium which measured 606 feet, 9 inches or 203 yards. The various distances of the races were 6, 7, 8, 12, 20, and 29 stadia.
6. The expansion also included a Pentáthlon of five events: leaping, running, quoit,³ spear throwing, and wrestling. Also included was boxing, pancrātium (a combination of both boxing and wrestling), racing in armor, and chariot racing.

¹ 2 Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” See footnote “5:10” in the *Scofield Study Bible*.

² “An evergreen shrub or tree of southern Europe with small yellow flowers, fruits that are ovoid [egg-shaped] blackish berries, and evergreen foliage once used by the ancient Greeks to crown victors in the Pythian Games (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc. 2014), s.v. “laurel.”

³ “quoit (kwoit): 1. Quoits. A game in which players toss rings of metal, rope, or rubber at a stake, trying to get each ring to land with the stake through its center or close to the stake. 2. One of the rings used in this game.” *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co., 2016), s.v. “quoit.”



7. The opening ceremony consisted of all participants taking an oath that they had completed the ten-month training period and that they would not violate any of the rules of the games or resort to unfair tricks.
8. Paul spent a lot of time in Corinth and was obviously aware of these games, especially the Ísthmian games held near Corinth.
9. John, as well as Peter, Paul, and the writer of Hebrews, use these games as a metaphor for the Christian way of life.
10. The training and discipline one must go through in order to prepare for the games is seen as an example of the sacrifice required to advance in the “Power Plan of God.”
11. This idea is applied to the individual who must withstand the pressures of standing fast for truth. The following texts highlight their references to the importance of being a winner believer. First, by Paul:

Philippians 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel

v. 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God.

v. 29 For it has been granted you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for him,

Philippians 1:30 since you are going through the same struggle [ἀγών (*agón*)]⁴ you saw I had, and now hear that I still have. (NIV)

12. This confidence and courage is seen in several other passages:

Galatians 5:7 You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? (NIV)

⁴ “ἀγών. Strife, contention, contest for victory or mastery such as was used in the Greek games of running, boxing, wrestling, etc. Paul applies the word to the evangelical contest against the enemies of man’s salvation. A struggle, contest, contention (Philippians 1:29, 30). (Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 78.

