

Camp of the Saints

- Camp- Gk.3925- *battle array, encampment or barracks*: -army. This is the “**church militant**”!

Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, **Gog** and **Magog**, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the **camp of the saints** (*the church militant*) about, and **the beloved city** (*New Jerusalem- the church*): and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. (*Emp. added*)

1,000 years- (*not literal but spiritual period*). 2 Pet 3:8 shows that God is not constrained by time (*even though He works within it for man's sake*), 1000 years being God's perfect timeline according to completing His will.

Luk 18:8 ... Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?

"Very near the end, faith will practically vanish from the earth."- Coffman.

- Gog- Gk.1136- a symbolic name for some future Antichrist. Magog- Gk.3098- (figuratively) an Antichristian [*1 Jn 2:18*] party. Thus Gog and Magog consist of denominationalism and all other forms of Satanic institutions and beliefs that do and will surround the “camp of the saints”. At the time of the end, though, their number will have increased to such that Satan will be able to “deceive even the elect” (*Mk.13:22*) as was Jesus' warning to those who were to experience the fall of Jerusalem (*70 AD*).

The enemy of the camp...(no enemy...no army)

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which **deceiveth the whole world**: he was cast out **into the earth**, and his angels were cast out with him. (*Emp. added*)

"...when men turn away from the word of God, that old nemesis will again seize the whole world."
Coffman

1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your **adversary the devil**, as a roaring lion, **walketh about** (*Gk.4043- occupied with*), **seeking** (*Gk.2212- to plot*) **whom he may devour** (*Gk.2666- to drink down: -drown*): 9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (*Emp. added*)

Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman (*who represents the people of God, the Messianic community, the “remnant according to the election of grace” [Rom 11:5]*) which brought forth the Man Child (*Christ*).

Satan's only interest is in the destruction of the souls of mankind, especially being focused on “the camp of the saints”, the church. In vanity he must think he can defeat God Who created him holy but who left his position in Heaven when he “beguiled Eve through his subtilty” (*2 Cor 11:3*).

...and his minions.

1Jn 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. 18 Little children (*Gk.3813- immature Christian*), it is the last (*Gk.2078-final*) time (*Gk.5610- Thayer: "any definite time, point of time, moment"*) [*thus the last, or Christian, dispensation*]: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there **many** antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They **went out from us**, but they were **not of us**; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they **might be made manifest** that they were not all of us. (*Emp. added*)

Those who “denominated” the church in teaching false doctrines were, are and will be, known once their teachings are compared to the truth found in scripture.

1Jn 2:20 And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and have known all things; (*YLT*)

- anointing- Just as kings of the Old Testament were anointed with oil (*1 Sam 10:1 with Saul; 16:13 with David; 1 Kings 1:39 with Solomon, etc.*) as a sign of their elevated position before God, the “kings” of the New Testament (*Rev 1:6; 5:10 speaking of the saints*) receive such a position (*anointing*) through obedience to Christ. And being obedient to Christ includes knowing His will through His word. With such knowledge we “by reason of use” then are able to “discern both good and evil” (*Heb 5:14*).

The Battle

Rev 12:11 And they **overcame** him **by the blood of the Lamb**, and **by the word of their testimony**; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (*Emp. added*)

Today we still overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb (*Jesus*) and the evidence we produce through reasoning and “rightly dividing the word of truth” (*2 Tim 2:15*).

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the **whole armour of God**, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we **wrestle not against** flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. (*Emp. added*)

Daniel chapter 10 gives us some insight into the spiritual battles that go on behind the scenes and out of our view. Not only are they between the forces of good and evil, they flow over into the everyday events that shape the church and her battle with Satan and his ungodly army.

Dan 10:13 But the **prince** of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the **chief princes**, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. (*Emp. added*)

- The prince of the kingdom of Persia was “*an evil spirit which was at the back of (influencing) the king of Persia*” (*Gospel Light Publications*). Michael here was the archangel himself. He came to help the messenger who remained with the actual physical kings of Persia that were ruling at that time. Therefore these “princes” were spiritual beings, both good and evil.

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the **prince of the power of the air** (*Satan*), the **spirit** that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (*Emp. added*)

Before becoming Christians we all behaved according to our carnal nature thus in disobedience to the word of God. And some still do to one extent or another. Therefore, the battle is more fierce with the faithful saint than it is with the unfaithful. Those who are not in the thick of the war against sin are the ones who have succumbed to it in so many ways, some of which are complacency, in-fighting and in continuing to live according to the prince of the power of the air (*i.e., Satan*). But we are to ...

Eph 4:22 ... put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Pro 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. (Emp. added)

- wrestle- “of two soldiers who in the midst of battle faced off one against the other for a very personal hand-to-hand combat.” – Summers. Wrestling takes an abundant amount of strength and fortitude. To the Christian, ours is not a battle against a physical enemy that can be seen but against spiritual evil which cannot be seen, but in the results which evil creates. We don’t see evil itself. We see the results of it.

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of **his own** lust, and enticed.
15 Then when **lust hath conceived**, it **bringeth forth** sin: and sin, **when it is finished, bringeth forth death** (*the final result of evil is death*). (*Emp. added*)

Armor and Weapon of the Christian Soldier

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins (*Gk.3751- hip*) girt about (*Gk.4024- to fasten on one’s belt*) with **truth**, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness**; (*Emp. added*)

If a belt is what holds and supports then the same can be said for truth. Without a firm understanding of truth Christians are left exposed to all manner of false doctrines and deceptions of men. This “girting about” shows the effort necessary to “*know the truth*” which can “*set you free*” (Jn 8:32). And **the** truth can only be found in **the** Gospel.

Gal 1:7 ... but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.

Eph 1:13 ... the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation...

- breastplate- Gk.2382- Thayer: “...consisting of two parts and protecting the body on both sides from the neck to the middle”. Such spiritual armor, as what our justification through Christ can give, is what protects us by covering that “hidden man of the heart ... which is not corruptible” (1 Pet 3:4) and is what the enemy tries to reach (*the inner man*) with his subtilty. If the subtilty of Satan can find a weak spot in our armor he can defeat even the most Godly of saints. Even when we are attacked from out of nowhere (*from the rear and/or*) from all directions (*family, friends, etc.*) we are covered.

Eph 6:15 And your **feet shod** with the **preparation of the gospel** of peace; (*Emp. added*)

How can we hold our ground if we're not prepared to do battle? By studying, in advance, the good news of peace which can only be found "with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Rom 5:1*). And Gospel in this context concerns the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It is what God created in order for us to make peace with Him (*Rom 1:16*).

"To hold his ground in even the worst conditions, the Roman soldier wore hobnailed sandals. The Christian is prepared, or ready, for the battle when he has on his Gospel shoes."
Gary Hampton

Eph 6:16 Above all, taking the **shield of faith**, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. (*Emp. added*)

- Above all- should read (*Gk.1909-επι*) "upon (*over*) all" in consideration of the size of the shield (*about 2 1/2 feet wide x 4 feet high according to Lipscomb*). This item of defense wasn't to be considered as more important than the others, just key in protecting them. Without faith the rest of the armor (*truth, righteousness, gospel of peace and salvation*) would be vulnerable to the enemy's ammunition which includes subtilty, persecution, lies and a host of other snares.

Heb 11:33 Who **through faith** subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. (*Emp. added*)

Eph 6:17a And take the **helmet of salvation**,... (*Emp. added*)

1Th 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**. (*Emp. added*)

In Eph 6:14 it is the "breastplate of righteousness" but here in 1 Thes 5:8 it is "the breastplate of faith and love". And there could exist other interchangeable parts to the armor without changing the necessity of having it on in the first place. The helmet here is "the **hope of salvation**". It is what salvation produces. The confidence and expectation of being saved. Without which all is for not. (*Emp. added*)

"The idea is, that a well-founded hope of salvation will preserve us in the day of spiritual conflict, and will guard us from the blows which an enemy would strike. The helmet defended the head, a vital part; and so the hope of salvation will defend the soul, and keep it from the blows of the enemy."
Barnes

Eph 6:17b ...and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God: (*Emp. added*)

The sword was used for both offence and defense. The Great Commission gives an example on how the word of God can be used, not to offend anyone but, in winning over lost souls to Christ.

Mat 28:19 **Go** ye therefore, and **teach all nations, baptizing them** in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 **Teaching** them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen. (*Emp. added*)

To use the word in the defensive mode would be to “rightly divide” it (*2 Tim 2:15*) by...

Tit 1:9 Holding fast (*Gk.472- adhere to*) the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able **by sound** (*Gk.5198- uncorrupt*) **doctrine** (*Gk.1319- instruction*) both to **exhort** and to **convince the gainsayers** (*Gk.483- to dispute: -contradict*). (*Emp. added*)

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and **watching** thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (*Emp. added*)

Another crucial duty of any soldier is to consistently be on guard. Watching here then means (*Gk.69*) “to be sleepless” and “keep awake” in case the enemy were to attack when you might least expect it. Not that the faithful Christian isn’t to “physically” rest but that our spiritual guard is always to be up when it comes to the subtle nature of sin. We are to question **everything!**

Finally, it is the duty of every Christian to guard the “camp of the saints”. Our conduct in doing so is to be considered militant in nature, not physically militant but spiritually. To be spiritually militant is to do everything persistently in love, with patience and forgiveness, not waffling out of hate, aggressiveness or lack of a forgiving heart.

Mat 5:9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers (*ambassadors between God and man*): for they shall be called the children of God.

Jesus was spiritually militant when He confronted the Jews for their lack of understanding but also when He “humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”(*Phil 2:8*)

Eph 2:15 Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that He might reconcile both (*Jew and Gentile*) unto God in one body (*the church*) by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Jesus defeated the powers of darkness through His humble submission to the Roman cross on Mt. Calvary. We also are “spiritually militant” when we can humble ourselves to the point when “whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” (*Mat 5:39*) And also when we can “be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince” those who contradict the Gospel plan to save and thus also their own selves. But to be “added to” (*Acts 2:47*) the “camp of the saints” in the first place...

Hear: Romans 10:17 ...“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Believe: Heb 11:6 ...“for he that commeth to God must believe that He is”...

Repent: Lk 13:3 ...“except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

Confess: Mat 10:32 “Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in Heaven.”

Be baptized: Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

Remain faithful: Rom 6:4 ..."even so we also should walk in newness of life."

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