

PRAYING THE ARMOR OF GOD OVER AND WITH OUR CHILDREN EPHESIANS 6:10-18

10 A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. 14 Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. 15 For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. 16 In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil (the evil one). 17 Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

(Ephesians 6:10-18, NLT)

In Ephesians 6:10-18, the Apostle Paul tells his readers to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power by putting on His armor (which is Jesus Himself, see below).

12 The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. . . . 14 Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires. (Romans 13:12, 14)

He tells us to do this because our enemies are not people, but rather, they are demonic entities, which Paul describes as, "evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). In other words, we face an enemy that, on our own, we have no chance against, but our Lord Jesus has already defeated that enemy with His death on the cross and His resurrection. So, we must clothe ourselves in Him and in His mighty power and righteousness in order to fight FROM victory rather than trying to GAIN victory. Not only has the Lord Jesus already defeated our enemy, but He makes His victory available to us as we stand in faith against that enemy.

Thus, we must begin each day by taking hold of the resources of heaven, clothing ourselves with the presence of Jesus, in order to successfully walk through the day in His victory. However, our enemy has no qualms about attacking us by attacking our children, especially when they are too young to really understand what it means to put on Jesus as their armor of protection. They don't know about the enemy that they face, nor do they often understand the mighty God who loves them and fights for them. So, once we are clothed in His armor, we must stand in the gap for our young ones, clothing them in the presence of Jesus through prayer until such time as they can begin to put on God's armor by faith for themselves. As they grow and begin to understand more, we should not only pray this over them and for them, but we should also begin to encourage them to pray with us and for themselves. At some point, they will then be able to put on God's armor in faith for themselves, and even begin to pray this armor for others.

With that in mind, here is a prayer guide, if you will, a way to pray the presence of Jesus, the full armor of God, over our children, grandchildren, or any children in our lives. This should be used as only a starting place and not as a rote prayer to be simply read or memorized. Rather, we must, as Paul tells us in Ephesians 6:18, "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion." In other words, use this prayer to help organize your thoughts as you listen for the Holy Spirit's guidance as to how to pray for your particular child/children more specifically.

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for being our Protector. Just as the Apostle Paul encouraged the believers in Ephesus to pray and put on the full armor of God (the presence of Jesus), and having put on Your full armor for myself, I come to you now in prayer for (child's name) to be strengthened in You as he/she faces the coming day, whether at school, at home, or wherever the day takes him/her. I pray Your divine armor covers him/her as he/she begins this day so he/she may have full confidence in Your sovereign, all-powerful, protection over his/her life. May You carry him/her into this day prepared for increased stress, anxiety, and fear as he/she encounters new challenges and unknown circumstances. With Your divine might cover him/her from head to feet.

Praying The Belt Of Truth

May the Belt of Truth protect the core of (child's) faith giving him/her a firm foundation to stand on. Help his/her faith strengthen his/her spirit as darkness and false truths attempt to take root in his/her life. Help him/her have confidence in the truth of his/her identity as a child of the living God. Help him/her to learn to hear Your voice from the Holy Spirit, that You may guide him/her into all truth. May Your truth keep him/her from believing the lies of the enemy and then building the superstructure of his/her life upon those lies, creating demonic strongholds from which the enemy can more easily attack. Help him stand upright in truth so he/she can flee any temptation or evil he/she may encounter, in Jesus' name.

"Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, bearing this inscription: The Lord knows those who are His, and let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness." (2 Timothy 2:19)

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Praying The Breastplate Of Righteousness

God, I pray that (child's) chest be covered by the breastplate of the imparted righteousness of Christ. May he/she have protection from anything that should pierce Your integrity and honor in his/her life so that he/she may live out Your righteousness before You. May he/she be alert to any temptation that would threaten living his/her life in faith before You. As he/she pursues Your righteousness in his/her life may it bring him/her peace and a quiet confidence as he/she encounters the world and its snares.

"The result of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quiet confidence forever."
(Isaiah 32:17)

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."
(2 Corinthians 5:21)

Praying The Shoes Of The Gospel Of Peace

I pray that (student's) legs and feet be secure in Your peace, Your shalom, Your sense of complete well-being because of his/her relationship with You. Many challenges will come his/her way and influence him/her to stumble or create a spirit of fear and anxiety. May he/she peacefully walk in Your ways and in Your path, without fear of whatever struggles lie ahead. Help (child) to know the fullness of your peace so that his/her way will be made straight.

"They have not known the path of peace, and there is no justice in their ways. They have made their roads crooked; no one who walks on them will know peace." (Isaiah 59:8)

"6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

Praying The Shield Of Faith

Father God, help (child) carry Your shield of faith into battle each day, ready to deflect any thought, word, or actions prepared to damage his/her body, mind, and spirit. Give him/her reassurance that the battle of this life has already been won. You are victorious and are placing the shield in his/her hand to also overcome the spiritual war in his/her life. Please help (child) to realize from our teaching and example that Your shield of faith is designed to interlock with the shields of faith of fellow believers, so that the warfare we fight is more effective in community. Help (child) remember Your promises so that he/she may fight the good fight producing stronger faith.

"Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."
(1 Timothy 6:12)

"Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow march down against them... You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you." (2 Chronicles 20:15-17a)

Praying The Helmet Of Salvation

In Jesus' name, I pray that (child's) head be covered by the Helmet of Salvation to protect the hope of God and assurance of salvation in his/her life. I pray that joy be present throughout dark days that may come. When doubt begins to creep in, may he/she be able to rely on the hope and grace of God. When (child) has a choice before him/her, may the hope of salvation help him/her to be obedient to you and the right path before him/her be made clear without temptation. Help (child) to hold onto the truth that he/she is Your child in whom You delight, protecting his/her mind from the lies of the enemy that would build demonic strongholds in his/her life.

"Lord, I hope for your salvation and carry out your commands." (Psalm 119:166)

"4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

Praying The Sword Of The Spirit, The Word (Rhema) Of God

As the lies of the enemy and this world attempt to pierce (child's) armor, may Your Holy Word (both *logos* and *rhema*) counteract each falsehood. Help us to help (child) to make sure that Your scriptures (*logos*) are hidden in his/her heart so that with each blow your truth will help him/her be victorious in the battle. Help him/her to learn to listen to Your voice so that Your word (*rhema*) will be sharp and specific to the situation he/she is facing. May he/she continue to sharpen his/her sword with Your word (*logos* and *rhema*) each day to prepare him/her for whatever he/she might face.

[NOTE: Two Greek words are translated as "word" in the Scriptures: *logos* and *rhema*. Both *logos* and *rhema* are the Word of God, but the former is God's Word objectively recorded in the Bible, while the latter is the word of God spoken to us at a specific occasion and for a specific purpose. All *rhema* is based upon, and will never contradict, *logos*.]

"For the word [logos] of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow." (Hebrews 4:12)

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word [rhema] of God." (Romans 10:17)

"3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' 4 But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word [rhema] that proceeds from the mouth of God."'"

Praying In The Spirit For All Believers Everywhere

Dear Father, I pray that (child) will learn how to hear Your voice from Your Holy Spirit and pray for others as You guide him/her. Let him/her recognize the importance of putting the concerns of others over his/her own. May he/she come to understand that spiritual warfare is not just about himself/herself, but that we fight best in community, praying for one another as we stand together in Your armor, Jesus, against the spiritual enemies You make us aware of. Make of him/her a mighty warrior-intercessor as he/she learns to walk this life each day in love-relationship with You.

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people . . ." (1 Timothy 2:1)

I pray these things in the name (authority and power that comes from praying out of relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit) of Jesus, Amen.

CONCLUSION

As the new school year begins, let us all cover our children in prayer. Thankfully, we have access to the divine armor of God, and He goes ahead of our children in battle to fight any fear, anxiety, or temptation that may come their way. Teach your student to pray and put on each piece of armor so that they can feel confident that God's armor will protect them, as well as those for whom they pray, in the coming months.