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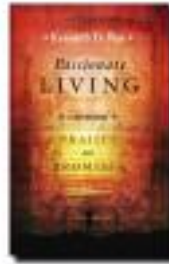
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# THE PROMISES OF GOD

THE FOUNDING FATHER: DEUTERONOMY 9:10

## GOD'S PROMISE TO YOU:

**"You will find my character in the character of my Word."**

What do *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, *The Constitution of the People of Hungary*, *The 1619 English Bill of Rights*, *The 1977 Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, and *The Constitution of the United States of America* all have in common? The represent the will of the founders or current governors of the nations they represent. The purpose of constitutions is to set forth the will of the "founding fathers" about how a nation or people should live.

If you read any constitutional document carefully, you will learn about the identity of the founders. For what founder or founders would compose a document—often stained with the blood, sweat, and tears of a nation's birth—that did not represent its hard-won and passionate beliefs? Reading a constitution is like reading a character sketch of the author(s). So it was with the "constitution" which God delivered to his newly-born nation from atop Mt. Sinai. Perhaps no nation was in more desperate need of guidance and structure than Israel was. They had been the puppets of pagan pharaohs for four hundred years. Their founder Abraham had bequeathed no constitution to them, and their slavery had afforded no opportunity to become organized and "constitutional" about life. Following their release from slavery their earthly leader, Moses, found himself at the head of a rag-tag, sand-lot nation—*sans* constitution.

Fortunately, the heavenly founder of

Israel was prepared. God delivered to Moses two stone tablets with the initial set of guidelines by which the infant nation would grow and live. These laws—known to us as The Ten Commandments—became the initial constitution for Israel. And through the giving of this decalogue, Israel was able to catch a glimpse of its God. He was holy—completely set apart—from the pantheon of gods of the Egyptians. His identity, reflected in his laws, became the mirror in which the Israelites were to find their own identity as a people.

As a New Testament believer, don't fail to study the Ten Commandments. They are the starting point for getting to know the character of our God.

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# REDEMPTION

Having been tenant long to a rich Lord,  
Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,  
And make a suit unto him, to afford  
A new small-rented lease, and cancel th' old.

In heaven at his manor I him sought:  
They told me there, that he was lately gone  
About some land, which he had dearly bought  
Long since on earth, to take possession.

I straight returned, and knowing his great birth,  
Sought him accordingly in great resorts;  
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:  
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth

Of thieves and murderers: there I him espied,  
Who straight, Your suit is granted, said, and died.

— George Herbert (1593-1633)

A TEACHING LETTER TO ENCOURAGE BELIEVERS TO  
DEVELOP A CLEAR MIND AND A WARM HEART





## WARFARE SPIRITUALITY— PART 10

The spiritual warfare is not optional for believers in Christ. Scripture clearly teaches and illustrates the dynamics of this warfare on the three battle fronts of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The worldly and demonic systems are external to the believer, but they entice and provide opportunities for the flesh, which is the capacity for sin within the believer. This series outlines a biblical strategy for dealing with each of these barriers to spiritual growth.

### The Nature and Work of Demons

#### The Weapons of Our Warfare

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses” (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

The spiritual warfare is an ongoing process; though they vary in intensity, battles take place every day. The experience of the conflict often increases when believers get serious about walking with the Lord. This is why it is important for us to grow and mature in areas in which

...we need to be prepared for sudden skirmishes by wielding the weapons God has provided for our victory.

we have experienced healing and deliverance. Because our adversary is relentless, Scripture exhorts us to “be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might” (Ephesians 6:10). We need to be prepared for sudden skirmishes by wielding the weapons God has provided for our victory.

This requires both discipline and dependence; the spiritual life is both a three-front battle and a faith rest in God’s promises. On the side of *discipline*, Jesus tells us to deny ourselves, take up His cross daily, and follow Him (Luke 9:23). We are no longer under the dominion of the flesh; through Christ we can crucify the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24). Yielding to fleshly appetites and becoming comfortable with

things God detests (Galatians 5:19-21) leads to spiritual vulnerability.

On the side of *dependence*, God does not want us to walk in our own strength but in the power of His Spirit. “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). Too many Christians regard the Spirit-filled life as an option. The fullness of the Spirit is essential for genuine victory and ministry (Ephesians 5:18). Unconfessed sin grieves and quenches the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19). We must confess our sins of relying on our own effort and yield all areas of our lives to God (Romans 6:13, 19). As we depend upon the Spirit for guidance and empowering, Christ is glorified in our lives.

### The Armor of God

Paul exhorts us to “put on the full armor of God” so that we can “stand firm against the schemes of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11). This metaphor makes it clear that the spiritual warfare is proactive; we must be prepared, ready to resist, and empowered to advance into enemy territory. Christ is the Victor who calls us to stand on the ground He has won through His blood. As long as we are prepared for battle, we need not retreat before any intruder. It is wise to pray on the armor of God each morning, because without it we are open to attack. The prayers in Mark Bubeck’s *The Adversary* and *Overcoming the Adversary* are excellent for this purpose. This is particularly important for people who have introspective and passive personalities, since they can be more susceptible in the warfare if they do not develop the discipline of the active stance upon the truth of Christ’s authority.

As we have seen, the key to warfare with the flesh is *reckoning*, the key to warfare

with the world is *renewing*, and the key to warfare with the devil is *resisting*. The spiritual armor in Ephesians 6:14-18 relates to our victory over all three of these forces.

### The Belt of Truth

The Roman soldier’s belt was used to hold his tunic and sword scabbard in place. Satan and his forces are deceivers, and the belt of biblical truth is a weapon that will defend us against their lies. The more we understand about the person of Christ and our invincible position in Him, the more we will be able to stand firm in Christ’s authority against the forces of evil. We should not fear the adversary, because we are more than conquerors in Christ. The Lord Jesus defeated Satan at Calvary, and we are united with Him in His crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension, and reign. He has given us His life and we are secure in Him. As we focus on our “in Christ” relationship and ask God to make it not merely a theology but a reality in our thinking and behavior, the word of God will abide in us, and we will overcome the evil one (1 John 2:14).



### The Breastplate of Righteousness



A soldier’s breastplate protected the vital organs that would otherwise be vulnerable. In the same way, we are vulnerable unless we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. This righteousness was imputed to us (placed on our account) the moment we trusted in Christ.

The Lord wants us to be righteous not only in our position, but also in our practice. Paul tells us to “put on the breastplate of faith and love” (1 Thessalonians 5:8), and this is the outworking of righteousness in Christian conduct. We must be careful to walk in dependence on Christ’s righteousness, and not in our own goodness. When we fail, we need to deal promptly with sin in our lives and be quick to forgive those who sin against us so that we will not be victimized by unfor-giveness, hate, bitterness, and resentment.

### The Sandals of Peace

The soldier’s sandals protected his feet and enabled him to hold his ground or move quickly



because the soles were studded with hob-nails. The “preparation of the gospel of peace” speaks of a readiness to enter the fray and share the only message which leads to peace with God (Romans 5:1). This peace with God (reconciliation) is the basis for the peace of God (Philippians 4:7) in the believer’s experience. When we walk in fellowship with God by humbling ourselves and casting our anxieties upon Him (1 Peter 5:6-7), we enjoy inner peace even in the midst of adversity (Romans 16:20).

We have fellowship with God by submitting to His purposes for our lives. Similarly, we have fellowship and peace with other believers when we are “subject to one another in the fear of Christ” (Ephesians 5:21). We need the strength that comes from the body of Christ; the sheep that wanders from the flock is the most assailable. Hebrews encourages us to “consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together” (Hebrews 10:24-25). This also involves submission to spiritual authority (Hebrews 13:17).

### The Shield of Faith

The large oblong shields used by Roman soldiers actually interlocked and protected them from spears and flaming arrows. The Lord is our shield and protector in all circumstances; our faith should be in Him, not our circumstances or efforts. As we trust in Him, He becomes the source of our confidence and hope. Adopting a faith stance reveals Satan as a defeated foe and enables us to walk in the victory Christ has won for us. It is important that we be preoccupied with our Lord and keep our eyes on Him, not the enemy. He calls us to submit to His sovereign purposes even when we are unable to understand our trials and afflictions. When we affirm His will and cling to Christ in times of adversity, the fruit of the Spirit comes forth. Total commitment means that God is the center of our existence, not our families, careers, or aspirations (Matthew 22:37; John 12:26).



Ken Boa, President Reflections Ministries

## THE VALLEY OF VISION

Lord, high and holy, meek and lowly,  
Thou hast brought me to the valley of vision,  
where I live in the depths but see Thee in the heights;  
hemmed in by mountains of sin  
I behold Thy glory.

### Let me learn by paradox

- that the way down is the way up,
- that to be low is to be high,
- that the broken heart is the healed heart,
- that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit,
- that the repenting soul is the victorious soul,
- that to have nothing is to possess all,
- that to bear the cross is to wear the crown,
- that to give is to receive,
- that the valley is the place of vision.

Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from deepest wells, and the deeper the wells the brighter Thy stars shine;

### Let me find Thy light in my darkness,

- Thy life in my death,
- Thy joy in my sorrow,
- Thy grace in my sin,
- Thy riches in my poverty,
- Thy glory in my valley.

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a teaching letter of

