

Dynamic Spiritual Martial Arts

Adjusting the Helmet of Salvation

Re'eh

See

Learn to Discern G-d's Purposes

Torah:

Deut. 11:26-1617

(1) **12:7.** *It is there that you will eat before the L-RD your G-d, you and your families, and you shall rejoice in all the good things by which the L-Rd your G-d has blessed you.* An essential objective of obedience and holiness is to set us free from things which will cause us to be harmed spiritually or physically, so that we can rejoice in the blessings we have received from the L-RD.

(2) **12:8.** *You shall not act as we do now, where each does that which he feels is good.* Until things get set up, you have to make do and do your best until things are properly set up – which is part of what this life is all about, until we reach the kingdom. But we do not do according to our own standard; we should do according to His standard, more and more, instead of less and less.

(3) **12:23.** *Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the life is in the blood and you shall not eat the life with the flesh.* The Canaanites had some pretty macabre eating habits – they wanted to get at the spiritual and sexual power of the animals they ate by both eating them alive and by boiling a little goat in its mother's milk. The only spiritual power we are to access is that which comes from faith and obedience – no tricks or shortcuts. Spirituality does not try and get control over G-d, it seeks to come under the control of G-d.

(4) **16:17.** *Each shall give that which he is able, according to the blessings which the L-rd your G-d shall have blessed you with.* In all of the ups and downs of our financial fortunes, we return a portion of what we are able to the L-RD. 10% of a little is worth the same to the L-RD as 10% of a lot.

Haftarah:

Is. 54:11-55:5

(5) **54:17.** *No weapon forged against you shall prosper and every tongue which rises up in judgment against you, you shall condemn.* Gen. 12:2,3 is both protective as well as positive. Israel shall bless all nations, but the nation or nations that rise up against it shall not succeed, even through all the discipline the L-rd may bring their way.

(6) **55:4.** *Behold, I have established Him as a witness unto the peoples, as a leader and commander of the peoples.* The Messiah has always been G-d's will and plan for the nations of mankind to bring them healing and to bless them.

Brit Chadashah:

John 7:37-52

(7) **7:46.** *The temple guards replied – never has a man spoken like this man.* Our L-RD expounded on the Scriptures and brought all the themes of redemption together into a clear picture. It is the one who is biblical that we should listen to, not the one who delves into speculations.

Ps. 97

Jewish Hero: Temple Guards who recognized truth

In this series we are talking about a comparison between the *battle equipment* of an ancient Roman soldier and the *spiritual equipment* of a modern spiritual warrior. Paul wants us to see that we are in a conflict which needs as much preparation and care as an actual war, even though neither our weapons nor our opponents are physical.

In other words, we may encounter people and situations which oppose us, hurt us and even try to destroy us, but they are not our real enemy. We need to understand that the **true nature** of spiritual warfare means we are fighting against **spiritual opponents** and **spiritual influences** and not against the people who have succumbed to these forces – they are merely victims, and not our real enemies.

Let's do a bit of review. We are studying Eph. 6:12-18 and so far, we have dealt with what it means to stand firm in the fight and how to handle the first four pieces of our equipment.

We have dealt with the **belt of truth**, which helps us to hold ourselves together in the midst of a world of deception and lies, where we both learn what truth is and also where we learn to tell the truth. We also learn to put on the **breastplate of righteousness**, where our lives have no holes or weak spots where the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh and the pride of life break through our defenses and cause us spiritual or moral damage. Morality is the practical application of spirituality and spirituality links how we live to the truths of G-d's word.

We are also called to be wearing the **good news shoes** and understand that how we live should always leave the footprints of the Gospel – not that we should always be looking for ways to sneak our faith into every situation, but where the application of our faith to every situation prepares the way for us to explain why we live the way we do. As this is occurring, we need to **shield ourselves with our faith** against the attacks of a society which does not believe, without letting either our shield get too hot to handle or our straps get burned. We need to understand the basics of our faith and not lose our grasp of them, without being drawn into heated arguments when we should be having meaningful discussions.

This week we are talking about adjusting the **helmet of our salvation** and I have three things to say to you about this part of our spiritual equipment as we continue to examine **dynamic spiritual martial arts**.

First, no matter how good a soldier you are, sometimes you are going to get a **whack on the head** and you've got to be ready to take the blow and to recover from it, which may take some time. There are going to be times in spiritual combat where we are not in top form and we just have to do the best we can as we recover from the blow.

The kinds of blows we may receive may want to knock us off kilter that we question our own salvation, either because we feel that we are so **bad** or that so many **bad things happen** that we are no longer sure about salvation and we need to readjust our helmet and let the dizziness from what blows we receive diminish, as we let our heads return to normal. This may even mean fixing a few dents in the helmet.

Secondly, we need to **let the helmet take the blows** and realize that painful experiences do not really affect the final outcome, but are only part of the **bumpy ride** we are on from as we journey from the cradle to the grave. When we take one for the team, and it hurts, we need to take it to the Lord and let Him help us come to grips with what happened so that our personal grasp of spiritual things is not lost, because we cannot explain everything, which brings me to my third point.

One pitfall we can fall into is to try and **explain everything**, instead of surrendering some things to G-d. The Book of Ecclesiastes and the Book of Job both examine situations where life seems to stop making sense and they wrestle with **pain** and **suffering** and the **success** of the wicked and the **failure** of the righteous and where things do not always seem fair. How do they answer these questions?

Two kinds of solutions are offered. Job learns that **G-d can do what He wants to whomever He wants whenever he wants and that in the process He never loses control**. Faith means we do not try and explain everything, but we trust in the control of G-d.

Solomon said that in spite of all the confusing contradictions of life, our duty is to **keep the commandments** throughout the whatever's of life because we know that everything that is done will be brought into judgment and **no one escapes this reality forever**, even if they appear to get away with it in this life.

So here are **three** adjustments, I would like to suggest you make to your helmets when you get whacked – they are three realizations that will help us when we get whacked by life.

(1) G-d can do what He wants and when things do not make sense, we still trust in Him, even when He doesn't do things the way we want Him to. **He is L-rd not us.**

(2) Our job is not to figure out why creepy people get away with murder, theft and scandal, our job is to keep our own nose clean and follow the commandments. **Our obedience should not be based on circumstances, but on His word.**

(3) Finally, in the face of generational injustice, and the repeated victory of evil over good, we need to believe that judgment is coming and surrender the horrible things of this life to Him – not bitterly, but peacefully. **Everything will be dealt with forever, even if it is not in this life.**

So, instead of getting discouraged when the whacks come, **expect them** and let the helmet take the force of the blow and don't let the **dizziness** cause you to lose faith in your helmet.

So even if they cause you to doubt or you get that strange sensation where you do not "feel" saved anymore, don't panic, take it to the L-rd and wait for the "feeling" to return as you recover your perspective.

For me, the hardest part of living, is the need I have to want to explain things and see how they all work, but sometimes, instead of trying to explain everything, I need to concentrate first on the things I can explain, like His love and the wonder of salvation and of His protection through all the storms of life. Then when I encounter things I cannot explain and that make no real sense to me, I need to learn to leave them to Him so they do not discourage me or cause me to go against His Word – **you have to trust Him when your trust in Him is all you have to hang on to.**

So instead of being **hard headed**, we need to make sure we understand how hard our helmets are and we need to learn to let them do their job and learn not to let the dizziness of life cause us to lose our grip on our faith.

We have to let the whacks come and go, without letting them make us whacky!

Let's pray