

Ephesians 15-04-26b

We pick up our study now in the Ephesians chapter 6 and we have moved mightily forward another verse to verse 17 and Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God This is a Helmet called a peri kephalion kephale is the Greek word for head I Can't think of any cognates in English that Kephale has come across we have Cabasa, but that's not really close in Spanish. Anyway, Kephale is your head and Peri is you know, it goes around it. So it goes around this is go around your head So do you have any medical? Cephalic.

Yeah. All right. Yeah.

Yeah, so so yeah cephalic Cephalic Cephalic comes comes from this word. I have it on good authority Peri kephalion is the helmet. This is the helmet of so Terry on so Terry you So so Tara so to Ross.

This is the Savior deliverer deliverance group of words But the verb here is interesting because it is deco my Deco my d e c h o m a I You have it translated here to take take the helmet of salvation but if somebody is handing you a plate with a piece of dessert on it and You you take it. What do we normally call that? Receive deco my primarily means to receive it isn't hey, that looks good And you take it this is something that is offered this is something that is being provided and you Receive it you take it in the sense of thank you very much This is a wonderful thing. You're you are giving me get you take something that is given deco my You find this used throughout the Word of God even as early as Luke chapter 2 Where Simeon takes up the child takes him in his arms and blesses him.

He didn't just grab him out of Mary's hands Mary recognized Simeon for who he was and so Simeon took the child that received him Into his arms and and blessed him Just As just just for a few examples here remember Stephen in Acts chapter 7 that's another one of the one of the Chapters that you can recognize like Hebrews 11 and 1st Corinthians 13 and and so on John 3 of course the Nicodemus Conversation well here in Acts 7 Acts 7 is the Stephen chapter This is when Stephen was stoned and he delivers that long review of the Old Testament history to people in Judea Who ought to know from their Old Testament history who Jesus was and is? Remember that Jesus opened the Old Testament scriptures to the two on the road to Emmaus and and Showed himself throughout those scriptures. Well in Acts 7 59 as they stoned Stephen he is Calling out and saying Lord Jesus deco my my spirit Lord Jesus receive my spirit. This is a sort of a voluntary offering you couldn't get a more direct and profound Example of Romans 12 1 & 2 present your body a living sacrifice.

This is literally what Stephen is doing He knows what these people are are going to do and what they are doing And he turns to the Lord Jesus and says receive this as my offering deco my People would receive letters Paul talks about this in Acts 22 5 The high priest bears me witness and all the council of the elders from whom I received Letters to the brethren and went to Damascus to bring in chains those who were there Bring him back to Jerusalem to be punished these that had sort of professed to be faithful in Judaism in the Old Testament religion and then had had converted to Christianity Paul had letters to go bring them back and have them be held to trial He had received these letters these letters were given to him as an authority given to him as a a means of access and means of Doing things he couldn't do without the letters Same that same things referred to in Acts 28 21. So the Word means to take something in hand to lay hold of it because it is being offered it is being given You receive or welcome a thing Jesus told the the

story of the The the steward that Is going to be dismissed because he hasn't been good so he brings in all of his masters Creditors and says what does your bill say? Well, it says I owe 200 denarii well cross that out and write 100, you know, he reduces all of the debts before he gets discharged and In Luke chapter 16 verse 4 as Jesus is telling this story. He puts these words in the mouth of the steward I have resolved what to do that when I am put out of the stewardship They these creditors may receive me into their houses they will deco my me I will be welcomed I will be favorably received.

They will take me in when I am dismissed from this service. I have Cultivated their favor and their goodwill and they will receive me deco mine. This is the idea so in verse 17 receive Take what is offered The helmet the peri kefare of Salvation of deliverance and the Makaira the two-edged short sword the very effective Sword for infighting for close quarters.

This is the pistol of the ancient world You know, they had the long sword that was more of the rifle and you had a spear that was even longer than that but as the distance of active conflict decreases a Spear is too long for Immediate contact Even the long sword is too unwieldy you get one swing with that thing And if the guy survives you're cooked by the time you raise it again, he's gonna have you drawn and quartered so the Makaira the short double-edged sword the Close quarters sword it was sharp and and effective. It's it's like, you know Crocodile Dundee's knife, you know, that's not a knife and you bring out this big thing. That is Sufficient to do great damage, but it's at close quarters.

It doesn't go much beyond your reach So take the sword for immediate close quarters application, which is the Word of God so the helmet Protects your ability to to think and to see and to hear This these are things that go on in your in your head right and and to speak interestingly and For reasons that you could reflect on on your spare time Got organized all of the hearing and the seeing and the talking and the thinking in this little Protrusion above our shoulders all of it could have been anywhere You could have a mouth somewhere down on your hand and you could you know, talk to the hand It's gonna talk back or your ears could have been you know under your arms or something. They they protect them You know, it's too loud. I just clamp my arms down and I it's better than earplugs Be interesting trying to shoot put your ear protection on but they could have been anywhere But all these things are well you think about it that Do you start with a blank slate God could have done it anyway? But all of these things are organized in the head.

So when you protect the head with with these helmets that have plates that deflect blows Even our cranium is designed to deflect blows away from our eyes and protect our eyesight and our Hearing apparatus is inside our head not Propending outside your hammer and anvil and stirrup and all that isn't outside where it can easily be lopped off You've got these wonderful flaps here that direct Vibrations of air down into the apparatus, but the apparatus is inside and people that have you've seen people that have been hit with Incendiary Grenades or whatnot have been in a fire. Maybe their entire ear is burned off, but they can still hear maybe not as well But the apparatus is protected inside the head eyes are protected By the eyebrow ridges and things of the skull your olfactory senses the ability to smell and tell when something's burning Such as yourself because a fiery dart got past your shield Is is internal inside you can lose your nose. You don't necessarily lose your sense of smell taste Is inside the mouth all of these things are encased in our head and then we encase our head and something that protects it Gives it a greater degree of survivability.

This is the Perry kept folly the helmet of deliverance now if you're delivered What do you need a helmet for it's a helmet of deliverance so deliverance encases your head but it seems like kind of a Kind of a conundrum there doesn't it? Because if you're delivered then you're not getting attacked and you don't need a helmet How does a helmet of deliverance function? What's what is when we pack up and leave here and we go about our business and we're suddenly in an evil day What is going to protect our? Spiritual senses all of this of course is metaphorical for spiritual things, right? So what are the functions that are represented by what goes on in and on our heads? Well, we take in the Word of God. That's perception. We hear it.

We see it. We see it Work itself out in experience those of us that have lived any length of time at all as active believers Can think back to distinct times when God answered prayer when God fulfilled promises when God miraculously worked in and through circumstances and People can poopoo it and explain it away if they want to I don't care what they say. I was there I know what God did God's presence was real his fulfillment of promise was concrete his answer to prayer was of such an extraordinary nature that You know you want to explain it away That's on you.

I know what happened I was there and these are things that you can't communicate to a skeptic to somebody who is a doubter or a Naysayer that's on them. That's their problem. I know whom I have believed I am persuaded Both by what I believe in the Word of God and what I have seen in my own life And there's no doubt in my military mind.

I know exactly the kind nature frequency and Efficiency of God's deliverance for me sometimes. He delivers us out of a situation like he's going to Yank the church out Send the Lord Jesus Christ to collect us before the tribulation that's deliverance out from We are not of the night or of the darkness that that day would overtake us as a thief We're Children of light and we are to walk as children of light We're not in the night. We're not in the darkness.

We're not uninformed. We can see why? Because we are aware we are conscious of our salvation of our deliverance We know who we are and we know why we're here and that protects and preserves our perceptual equipment We can hear what needs to be heard we can see what needs to be seen what happens to people who don't Receive and use the helmet of their salvation what happens in whom the God of this world Has blinded the minds of them that don't walk in faith Says them that believe not what does it mean to believe not means you're faithless Doesn't necessarily mean you're an unbeliever with a capital U Means you're faithless the God of this world has blinded the minds of the faithless Otherwise the glorious good news of Christ who is the image of God would shine unto them This can be an unbeliever in the sense of being bound for the lake of fire This can also be the faithless believer and the glory of Christ the image of God doesn't shine You can't see because you've been blinded. Why have you been blinded weren't wearing your helmet of salvation? You're not convinced.

You're not aware, you're not treasuring and cherishing identity as a believer saved by grace delivered by the blood of the Lamb. Remember that song that they're gonna sing. Keep your finger here at the last page of Ephesians. Turn over to Revelation chapter 1. Revelation chapter 1.

Even before Jesus gives John messages for the seven churches, John says in verse 4 of Revelation chapter 1, John writing to the seven churches, which are in Asia. Not in Jerusalem, not in Judea, not in Samaria, in Asia. These are the universalized churches that have a blend of Diaspora Jews and converted Gentiles. Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to

come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead and the ruler over the kings of the earth, principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age—Jesus Christ rules over them.

To him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and has made us kings and priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with clouds, and every eye will see him, even they who pierced him. How do I know that the Jews, the Pharisees and scribes and chief priests and elders were believers? Because they are not with the rest of the dead that live not until the thousand years are finished. They are alive and we'll see the return of the Lord Jesus Christ at the second coming.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. That's who guarantees our deliverance; that is the surety for our salvation. Now he there was and is and is to come or he's not. The Lord Jesus is either God Almighty or he's not. We either have a hope of being raised and being entered into eternal life as he was raised and entered into eternal life, or we don't. So what do you believe?

Receive the helmet of salvation. This is how we are to view life. This is how we are to hear what we hear and see what we see. This is how—this is the context in which we interpret the evidence of our senses. There are people who don't like that context, who don't want that context, who have accepted some materialistic earthly view. Well, they got no helmet, and of course their senses are going to be whacked, and there's no help for that.

It doesn't say put each other's helmets on does it? You cannot put somebody else's helmet on they have to receive it They have to take it the proffered gift and put it on for themselves and unless and until they do their perceptions are going to be wacky and There is a way that seems right to a man, but without his helmet the ends thereof are the ways of death fruitlessness pointlessness hopelessness Even as a believer saved yet, so as by fire verse 17 of Revelation chapter 1 John when he sees the glorified Lord, this is John who spent years with the Lord Jesus in close intimacy in Constant contact and fellowship yet when he sees the glorified Lord Jesus John fell at his feet as dead, but he laid his right hand on me saying to me do not be afraid I am the first and the last You can almost put a comma after those first two words. I am Moses says Lord when they ask me who's sending me. What shall I say you tell him I am sent you I Am the first and the last I am he who lives and who was dead and behold I am alive forevermore Amen, I have the keys of Hades and of death You notice Hades and death there hell and death are capitalized because these are personifications the way this is constructed in Greek these are Personified these are not places.

These are persons the way it's presented in Greek Hell and death Hades and death used to have control Once you entered their realm you couldn't get out you were locked in Jesus says I've walked up to them and I've taken the keys out of their hand. That's the authority that he has Write the things which you have seen and the things which are and the things which will take place after this This is something that you know materialism can't Cope with they have to guess they have to estimate they have to surmise they have to theorize they have to hypothesize About what took place in the past they have to guess and estimate and theorize and hypothesize about what's going to take place in the future and they have a real hard Time telling what's going on in the present The Lord Jesus Christ was there before it began. He is present now and

he will be there in the future and there is no doubt There is no Hypothesizing there is no theorizing.

There is no guessing. There is no estimating It is a sure and certain thing The things you have seen already the things which are and the things which will take place after this Then he writes those great letters. So this is the helmet of our salvation now All sounds great Standing here talking sitting here listening But in practical terms when we go out and resume the circumstantial Navigation that is our life How does it pertain What what do we do differently? Remember when people start talking remember when circumstances start unraveling Remember when things don't go according to plan remember when everything is rosy and we're tempted to be carried away on a wave of euphoria and celebration due to circumstances Who we are and why we're here everything we perceive good and bad there are people who celebrate because a certain person gets elected to office or a Certain person gets voted out of office and they say I don't care who gets in as long as this rascal is out There are people who celebrate when the stock market is up There are people who celebrate when inflation is down.

There are people who celebrate and think this is a wonderful good thing Oh look the further Adventures of the Apostles are on TV ain't that great keep your helmet on Be sure your perceptions your eyes and your ears are open and functioning It is our salvation that defines us people are looking for definition. Who am I? I'm on a search for myself I'm on a quest for meaning and significance There are people who say I'm a cowboy and they go buy a black felt hat and get some Western shirts and wear boots and Put a gun rack in their pickup and I'm a cowboy. I'm from Texas.

That's who I am There are people who tattoo themselves and get pierced and ride motorcycles. There are people who decide that they are the Literary effete and they are the intellectual people and they watch old reruns of Firing line and identify with William F Buckley and read Books that are pitched at a high sophisticated level. There are people who say well, I'm I'm my ethnicity.

I'm from people that came from the old world. I'm from people that came from Africa and people that came from America before the Europeans got here. I'm I am this I am that people are looking for definition.

They are looking for meaning and some extra investment of Value that they derive from all kinds of things people Dig through their genealogy trying to find somebody important and say look I'm descended from you know, King Henry the fifth or whatever Your helmet identifies you in a battle when there are great seas of Soldiers in the ancient world. How did you know who the friendlies and the foes were? Well, they got their hats on They got their helmets on remember the Romans with that Brush You can tell you're not a Phoenician. You can tell you're not some wayward Militiaman because you got your Roman helmet on it is not only protection.

It is identification and They put that helmet on they receive it with pride You get a officers cover in the Marine Corps, and it's got that quadrifoil on the top Allegedly that little four-pointed Interweaving of line there Supposedly originally identified the officers so that guys that had climbed up in the rigging of a ship wouldn't kill them Hey, I'm a good guy. Look at this thing on my hat, you know used to have those Signs for people flying in planes you look down on a barn roof and it says, you know Acme tractor supply or there used to be a lot of the Baking powder who's the baking powder people used to have those all over the roofs and who is it? Arm and

hammer. Yeah the arm and hammer and and and that so there would be people it was just famously paint barn roofs To be seen from above and by the way, remember If you've got your helmet on you can be seen from above God in heaven knows whose side you're on and where you're fighting and and when you need tactical support The helmet take receive as proffered as given this helmet, which has a dual function of Protection of your senses so that you can see and hear rightly Not be taken out by a blow to the head not receive a concussion be unable to think and Identification it the pattern of helmets is unique to an army the decoration and the insignia help mark out Who you are and why you're there? And the sword of the spirit the makaira, which is the Word of God the best way to employ a sword is when you can see and hear and Identify friend and foe you get your helmet on first Make sure you are fully functional mentally Perceptually, then you wield the sword Somebody blinded has to swing the sword wildly and largely Ineffectually into no purpose.

You need to be able to see to use a weapon effectively Unless it's a grenade and even then you hope you're throwing it in the right direction Then in verse 18 praying always Praying always Now does this mean you can't ever have a conversation, excuse me, I'm praying Can't talk to you. And even what I just said has interrupted my prayer Literally this is Through every prayer and petition it begins with dia What's a Diameter it is the meter. It is the measure through the center of a circle right through dia Through all prayer cross you case this is good speaking before the face of God and They say Oh's prayer and request supplication and You have both the noun and the verb form of praying here praying always with all prayer and supplication Prost you common oi Prost you common oi.

This is a participle that minnow is your clue Prost you common oi and this is a noun. It's it's a verb turned into a noun always being praying ones the prost you common oi are the Praying ones the prayerful ones So always being a person of prayer is The idea if you're a person of prayer, you know when to pray and when to leave off and get about the business at hand But you're a person of prayer you are known Certainly to God and perhaps others as a person of prayer Prost you common oi Through all prayer and supplication being Prayerful ones Being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the Saints There's a lot of all's in there right all prayer and supplication all perseverance all the Saints Once again, we are not alone. We are part of a contingent We have fellow soldiers that shield works best when you're holding it up and it is shielding you and the guy to your left who is Working between his shield and yours with his makaira and This wall of shields.

This is what the Roman phalanx was famous for was the wall of shields Every man's got his shield on the left. He's got his makaira in his right and he is shielding not only himself, but the guy to his left and the guy to his left is operating with the makaira to help defend the guy to his right you are a Phalanx you are a contingent you work together and the whole is greater than the sum of the parts So praying always with prayer and supplication, you know the great thing about supplication prayer about intercessory prayer It forces you out of subjectivity. It forces us out of self-centeredness It forces us out of me myself and I I have to stop and think about someone else and their situation it Objectifies our hearing in our sight.

It's a part of our helmet of salvation. I'm not the only one wearing this helmet I'm not the only one who is delivered. I am part of something larger than myself Again, you don't get this out of materialism.

Oh, I'm a member of the Gardenia Club. I'm a member of this persuasion I'm a member of that Attitude or philosophy it has no glue. There's no Loyalty there is no Commitment unto death laying down your life for a friend spiritually or otherwise it's a very Unpredictable and and roddy kind of fabric that holds the people of the world together.

They say their vows those vows Only good at the moment. They are said and within a week or a month or a year. It can be meaningless Not so in the army of God not so in the body of Christ not so Among believers.

We have a commitment that transcends ourselves and we have a power to keep it that transcends ourselves These are supernatural pieces of armor that God gives us and we take and they are invested with power You know mythology has always tried to make much of this idea Thor's hammer has got special power Excalibur has got special power because I have this sword I can do things others cannot well, we've got the real deal and Don't forget don't fail to receive don't drop the stuff Don't take it off when you get a little sweaty and forget to put it back on Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit being watchful to this end We have to concentrate on this we have to remind ourselves We've got to actively say am I a person of prayer? These days today Evening and morning and at noon am I praying and crying aloud or have I kind of gotten busy? Being watchful that there aren't very many things that we are told to be watchful about There are many things that you know, love one another doesn't say be watchful to love one another Be watchful in prayer. It is easy to get distracted It's easy to forget and this is the communication that goes in both directions as we pray God's Spirit is present and even as he you know, he's for for duplex and communication people He's duplex. He goes he transmits in both directions at once When we pray and that channel is open we receive guidance.

We receive comfort We receive divine intervention in the act of praying It isn't just I don't even know why I'm praying God knows all these things already Well, I'm telling him something he already knows it is in the act of establishing and maintaining that communication that God Communicates in the other direction be watchful to this end with Perseverance stick with it work a little make an effort Can you think of any example of perseverance that requires no effort? I can't I Try it. I thought surely there's some Perseverance Without effort. This is why even in the passive sense if people have cancer, they never say well He he survived a long time with his cancer before he died.

What do they always say? He fought a battle with cancer. How do you fight cancer? Well, you're watchful for any Potential treatment if they say we can try this and it might slow it down or it might give you more time with your family Whatever people will try it. They're willing to do it.

They think about it. They they invest in it they Stick with it when it's painful and uncomfortable and it has all kinds of adverse side effects. They do it anyway persevering Lasting getting through a thing always takes effort.

It takes mental discipline. It takes some fight to persevere persevere be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the Saints Well, this brings us to verse 19 where Paul turns the attention to himself pray for me that utterance may be given to me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel the previously unrevealed features of church age truth For which I am an ambassador in change that in it. I may speak boldly as I ought to speak You know what is most surprising about that and we'll talk more about it next

time Why does he turn to the first-person pronoun here? If Christianity is what modern evangelicalism defines it as why doesn't he keep in the second person? prayer and supplication for all the Saints and Pray that utterance may be given to you that you may open your mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel That in it you may speak boldly as you ought to speak prime Occasion is it not if that were the Christian life if all of us are to be ambassadors Everybody is to be a fourth teller.

Everybody is to be an active Proactive intrusive get after and get it done evangelist. Why isn't this second person? I'll tell you why The whole body is not a mouth It's that simple people who are a mouth Think everybody ought to be a mouth Well, we're not Paul is a Prophet of God Paul is an apostle of God Paul is an ambassador of God and he prays Giving himself as an example pray for me. You see my situation.

You realize I am imprisoned Pray for me and this he gives it as an example because this is how we pray for each other You know when you're a little kid you say God bless mommy God bless daddy God bless my brother and my sister and my Grandma and grandpa and you just go down the list of everybody you could think of God bless. God bless. God bless That's not really thought Paul gives himself as an example why if we are to pray always with all prayer and supplication for all the Saints What do you pray? Think of them in terms of their gift think of them in terms of their ministry opportunities If they are an encourager pray that they themselves are encouraged and that they have opportunities and wisdom and what they say and speak that they'll know when to speak and when to just put an arm around somebody to Remain silent if somebody is a support person pray that that God will continue to spark their motivation and and give them satisfaction and recognition of what they do and how valuable it is and the difference that it makes to people if they are a pastor that God will give them insight and wisdom as they study and Facility and and eloquence and communication ability as they speak And that they're not deflected or distracted or that they don't get it wrong when you think about supplication for all the Saints pick each Saint Individually and think about their situation and pray in the light of where they are and what they're doing Of course this requires some fellowship.

You have to know if you're gonna pray intelligently what somebody's Situation is and this is why local churches by definition are local. They are small They are intimate so that we can pray always with all prayer and supplication for each other That's the nature of it We have people in our group who are helpful in helping us organize our prayer and I think it's an underutilized resource I think it's something we need to think more about we need to take more advantage of it's a command of Scripture And it helps all of us So if there is a prayer need let's share it. It is a group effort we are all to pray always for all the Saints and Keep people updated when it's time for a thank thank you and a Thanksgiving and move on to new subjects We need to let each other know that God has answered prayer or that it's a continued need Praying always with all prayer and supplication Paul says I'm an example I'm an ambassador.

I'm in chains Can you think of something to pray for me? Pray that I might be able to speak boldly pray that I'm not suppressed and hampered pray that I can speak boldly as I ought to speak it's an example Believers have situations they have gifts pray specifically fire a rifle bullet not a shotgun well Pick up in verse 21 next time and we're very near to the conclusion of our Study of this letter to the laodicean churches. We've got just four verses to go. We'll close here in a word of prayer father Thank you for this day Thank you for the truth of your word and the the bright light that it shines on our souls and on our path we pray that God the Holy Spirit will

Facilitate our Application that he will impress these truths on our hearts in a meaningful way that will result in a Greater reflection of your glory and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray these things in his name. Amen