

# TRUTH & RIGHT

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 WELLSBURG  
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## SOLDIERS OF CHRIST

November eleventh is known as “Veterans Day” in this country. Its origin was that on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day on the eleventh month of 1918, the armistice was signed between the U.S. and Germany, effectively ending the first World War. While Memorial Day is a day designated to honor veterans who have passed on, November eleventh has become known as a day on which this country celebrates the service of all living U.S. military veterans.

When we look to the Scriptures, we see God is familiar with the acts of the military. In addition to His angels being known as a “host” or army, God has raised His army of men from time to time. In the days of Moses, He had Israel fight against the wicked nations (Ex. 17). Joshua was a

leader of God’s army and led the people into many battles over thirty years of conquering Canaan (Joshua). Many of the judges such as Othniel, Ehud, and Gideon served as leaders of God’s army. Of course, the kings, beginning with Saul, would also serve in this role when they reigned over God’s people. In fact, a short search will reveal that God was called the “*Lord of Hosts*” (Lord of Armies) 245 times in the Old Testament!

When we read the New Testament, we see that God is still called “*the Lord of Sabaoth*” (Rom. 9:29; Jas. 5:4). Notice that the word used is not “Sabbath”! Some will mistakenly pronounce the word as “Sabbath,” but this is not it. “Sabaoth” (Sab-A-oth) means “army.” In other words, Paul (quoting Isaiah) and James

called God the "Lord of Hosts"! His army today, however, is not one who fights with swords, spears, guns, bombs, etc. (II Cor. 10:3-6; Eph. 6:12). Instead, those who are in God's army are spiritual soldiers. We fight against spiritual wickedness, and the false teachings of men in an effort to bring people to the truth (Jn. 8:31-32, 17:17).

When the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, he compared the Christian and his work to a soldier's work. He wrote, "*Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*" (II Tim. 2:3-4). In other words, Christians are to be considered soldiers for the Lord. As a soldier, we need to be ready to "*endure hardness*" (suffer, do without the comforts of this life, etc.). We need to make sure we know where our loyalty stands and please Him who has called us into His service!

Such is the high calling of God! God does not want the "summer soldier and the sunshine patriot" in the ranks (II Tim. 3:10; Rev. 3:15-17). Rather, He needs the soldiers ready to "endure

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Such is the high calling of God! God does not want the "summer soldier and the sunshine patriot" in the ranks (II Tim. 3:10; Rev. 3:15-17). Rather, He needs the soldiers ready to "endure affliction," and ready to take up their cross (Mk. 8:34, 10:21). Is this us? Are there soldiers we can look up to today? I believe they are in our ranks! While we honor those who have gone on, let us also remember to honor those still among us who serve God daily and faithfully (Lk. 9:23; I Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10; Rom. 13:7).

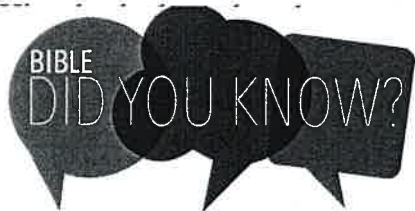
Our "fighting men and women" in all branches of the U.S. armed services deserve credit where credit is due. Those folks doing their job allows me to do my job in freedom! Let us pray for this freedom to continue (I Tim. 2:1-2)! I am thankful for their service and sacrifice. At the same time, a greater war continues. It is a war against "*principalities ... powers ... the rulers of the darkness of this world ...*"

against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). Every one who is a child of God must fight and must wage war against our common enemy – Satan! Let us thank God for the soldiers of the cross who are with us this day, and let us be active in winning more soldiers to the side of God while we have breath!

*"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto*

*with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:11-18). – Jarrod Jacobs*

The second chapter of Colossians has much to teach us. Each verse is packed with truth and encouragement for the Christian. In Colossians 2:14, Paul reminds the Christians that in addition to Christ saving us from our sins, He also blotted out the *"handwriting of ordinances that was against us."* To blot out something means to smear or wipe away (Strong's). There is a parallel statement to this found in Ephesians 2:15 where those brethren are taught that when Christ came and died on the cross, He *"abolished ... the law of commandments contained in ordinances."* In II Corinthians, he also spoke about the law that was *"abolished"* (II Cor. 3:6-17). All of these passages make it clear that Christ's work at the cross was not only to free men from sin but to also end one law that He might usher in another. This is explained in greater detail in Hebrews 8:5-13, and 10:9. In fact, we see that in order to have a New Testament, Christ had to die (Heb. 9:15-17).



***"An arrogant man stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the LORD will prosper."***

***Prov. 28:25***

# People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



## **PHILISTINE CITY OF GATH**

In the Bible, Gath was one of the five Philistine cities (“the Pentapolis”) established in Canaan and home to the giant Goliath, who famously fought David (1 Samuel 17). The site of Tell es-Safi, located on the border between the southern coastal plain (Philistia) and the Judean foothills (Shephelah) in central Israel, has been identified by most scholars with Biblical Gath. There, archaeologists uncovered evidence of continuous occupation in the Iron Age. Recently, the Ackerman Family Bar-Ilan University Expedition to Gath, led by Bar-Ilan University archaeology professor Aren Maeir, announced that the entrance gate as well as fortifications belonging to the Philistine settlement have been found. During the early period of the Iron Age, the Philistines began to extend their rule beyond Philistia and were therefore in constant conflict with the neighboring Israelites. In recent years, some scholars have claimed that Philistine Gath was not a dominant, well-fortified city during the Iron Age IIA (10<sup>th</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> centuries), the period immediately after the separation of the neighboring “United Kingdom” of David and Solomon into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. This summer, the archaeological team under the direction of Maeir began to excavate in the lower city at Tell es-Safi to investigate whether or not Gath had been fortified in the Iron Age. What they uncovered were the remains of a monumental city gate and large-scale fortifications of the Iron Age city. “In the past, we saw evidence of this, but could not find definite proof,” Prof. Aren Maeir told *Bible History Daily*. “Once the remains were found in the specific trench, we ‘connected the dots’ regarding other features we could see on the surface, and then began excavating them as well.” The archaeological team also uncovered evidence of a metallurgical production area in the Iron IIA city. In previous seasons, the excavation made a number of exciting discoveries that helped paint a picture of life in Philistine Gath, including houses, cultic finds, Philistine burials and a large homed altar whose dimensions are similar to those given in Exodus 30:2. “We can also see influences from the Israelite and other local cultures on the Philistines.”

