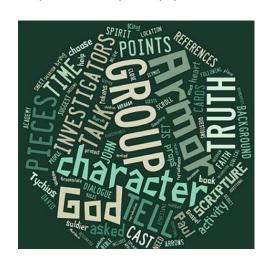


The Armor of God

By Kathy Applebee



Host Packet Youth Group Version

Your host packet contains the following to help you host an engaging and enjoyable event.

Pages 2-6: Brief overview & suggestions Pages 6-10: Reproducibles Pages 11-22: Character dossiers

Brief overview of "The Armor of God"

The activity is based on Ephesians 6. Participants interview a cast of Biblical characters to collect tokens that represent the Armor of God. Participants will have to decide if a character is telling the truth or lying. Players may be asked to perform a task by a character to receive a token. Those who choose unwisely will suffer a penalty, some of which are funny.

Goal - To gather all six pieces of the armor of God without being fooled into taking something that is not the genuine article.

Cast of Biblical Characters

Belt of Truth- Sapphira
Breastplate of Righteousness - David
Sandals of the Gospel of Peace - Paul
Shield of Faith - Abraham
Sword of the Spirit - John
Helmet of Salvation - Esther

Book of Magic - Elymus the Sorcerer Spear of Goodness - Delilah Apple of knowledge - Eve Arrows of Prayer - Aaron Spear of Goodness - Rebekah Scroll - Tychius

SUGGESTIONS FOR "THE ARMOR OF GOD"

Invitations/publicity

We strongly encourage you not to mention Ephesians 6 in any invitations or publicity. If the participants are familiar with it already it will be to their advantage but if too many participants have recently familiarized themselves with it the mystery tends to flop. A sample flyer is included in the reproducible packet. This can be edited to include your specific information

Casting

King David, Abraham, Paul, Sapphira, John and Esther are essential characters. Two to five of the following are also essential: Eve, Elymus, Rebekah, Delilah and Aaron. Tychius can be either an assigned role or one assumed by the group leader. Read the parts carefully and match the participant's ability and personality to the parts you want to cast them in. Characters will not have set lines but rather put the sample dialogue into their own words.

For younger groups or to have more control we suggest having a volunteer teen or adult accompany each group. They should not give any advice or serve as a resource unless the group is hopelessly floundering or deadlocked over a decision; they are merely "along for the ride". Tychius can also serve as a rover once he has dismissed the group to investigate. Other guests can be given Biblical names when they arrive - either by assignment or choosing themselves (as long as they don't pick a character name.) I chronicles has a lot to choose from.

Location

This works in either an indoor or outdoor setting. Designate an area for the opening and closing. If you will have refreshments select a location.

(Note: The first time we did this we used a ranch which allowed the characters to be spread out and finding them in the twilight was an additional challenge. We did set clear boundaries for safety. When we did this

inside a building we designated which rooms were off limits and that participants could not leave the building.) It works best if characters are spaced far enough apart that groups cannot hear or see other groups interacting with the characters.

Menu

Chips and soda or a meal like pizza are fairly easy and popular. You might do this as a potluck - everyone bring something to share. You may want to serve sweet treats for an evening Halloween substitute. Characters could hand out candy with the tokens to the successful groups

If you want a Biblical meal menu try pita or flat bread or wraps with beef or lamb (but not pork), lettuce, a yogurt dressing. A grape flavored drink would be appropriate.

Yogurt Dressing

Combine 1 cucumber, 1/4 teaspoon of salt and one cup plain yogurt in blender and blend until smooth. A pinch of, pepper, oregano, garlic powder or a teaspoon of Greek dressing can be added for more flavor. Serves 8 - 10.

Banners and spokespersons

Each group should have a name and a banner. For example - if you have 12 groups they can each take the name of a tribe of Israel or an Apostle. Banners can be as simple as the name on a sheet of paper or works of art. Group members may elect to add their names. Participants can use colored markers, glitter pens, foam or felt pieces, cut out letters - as elaborate as you and the groups decide to make these. Allow 15 - 20 minutes. This will give your characters time to get into place and set up and allow for stragglers to arrive. They can be hung after the event as memorabilia. Suggested group names are as follows:

- 3 groups Father, Son, Holy Spirit
- 4 groups Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- 5 groups The 5 books of Law
- 8 groups Qualities listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7
- 9 groups the Fruits of the Spirit

Each group should also elect a spokesperson. Although any group member can talk, ask questions or give opinions the Biblical character takes their decision as the final answer after the group comes to a consensus.

Academy and other awards

As an option have the participants vote for the characters that deserves an Academy Award for best acting. This is usually fun and encourages your cast. Ballots and a certificate are included in the reproducible packet. If you wish to award winning or all group members certificates some samples are included as well.

Props/set

The cast should provide their own costumes. You may ask them to bring their own props or provide them once they arrive. For a more elaborate activity, areas can be furnished in Biblical style. For example Esther and David can sit on thrones or Delilah next to a cot. Paul could have no set location but be on the move like he was during his life.

If the activity will take place in dim light have at least one flashlight available for every 2 participants and cast members need their own light source.

Online games

Try the following free online games

Ephesians 4-6 rags to riches (plays like Millionaire) http://www.quia.com/rr/890890.html

David http://www.quia.com/jg/1507855.html (matching) http://www.quia.com/jw/286456.html (unscramble)

http://www.quia.com/ba/221938.html (battleship) http://www.quia.com/rr/394838.html (rags to riches)

Hall of Faith http://www.quia.com/rr/365749.html People in Acts 1-12 http://www.quia.com/jg/1475029.html

Paul's first missionary journey http://www.quia.com/rr/564937.html

Abraham http://www.quia.com/cb/809178.html (challenge board) http://www.quia.com/jg/1487145.html (matching)

Esther http://www.quia.com/jg/1474983.html (chapters 1-2 matching) http://www.quia.com/rr/380647.html (3-

6 rags to riches) http://www.quia.com/jw/264855.html(7-12 jumbled words)

http://www.quia.com/hm/448168.html (hangman)

Delilah http://www.quia.com/cb/611412.html

Temptation rags to riches http://www.quia.com/rr/546356.html

Aaron and the priesthood http://www.quia.com/rr/898614.html

HOST TIME LINE FOR "THE ARMOR OF GOD"

To start:

Select a date, location, who will be invited

Decide who you will ask to take the various character roles

Decide if you will have additional adults/teens to accompany the groups.

Arrange for any additional support staff needed

Plan any publicity

Decide if refreshments and/or a devotional lesson or discussion groups will follow the activity

Two to three weeks before the activity:

Finalize your menu.

Get character sheets to your cast/ have an organizational meeting

Gather up the needed props (or assign them to the cast to bring)

Start publicizing

Decide the boundaries of your location

Along with boundaries decide on any rules specific to your group.

Decide if the participants will vote for an "Academy Award"

A couple of days before the activity:

Run off needed materials such as tokens, awards and rules.

Double check that your cast and key people are ready

The day of the activity:

Set the scene with any music, additional props and the set up for refreshments that you have chosen.

Remind the cast where they will be located, to take their tokens, etc and to ask who the group spokesman is early. They will accept the group's decision from that person only. Remind them what the signal is for moving to the closing activity and where Tychius will be at that time. Tychius can move around observing the groups when the groups set out to interview the cast. When your participants arrive if they are bringing some of the refreshments indicate where they should be placed.

A) Opening of the activity (20-30 minutes)

Welcome the group and introduce Tychius.

Tychius explains the mission

Group the participants so you have 4-8 in each group. We strongly suggest you mix the groups as far as age and Bible knowledge so no one team has an unfair advantage.

Groups make their banners and select a group spokesperson.

Tychius once again explains the mission, designates meeting places and times, sets boundaries in which to find the characters and explains how the groups will know to meet back together in the designated area (whistle, bell, flashing lights, etc)

- B) Groups interview the characters (50-75 minutes) (depending on how far apart the characters are space)
- C) Closing Activity (20 or more minutes) Groups turn their tokens and cards in to Tychius

Brief discussion of the event with the whole group. ASK: How many of you made no mistakes? Who was the hardest character to interview? (If you are doing an Academy Award pass out the ballot forms now)

Announcement of the scores

If serving refreshments dismiss them in the order of scoring - the group with the most points first, etc. ending with the group with the fewest points.

Announce the winner of the Academy Award

Discussion groups or closing devotional

The group leader may wish to close the event with a devotional or discussion groups. Sample discussion questions and devotional format are included in this packet.

Armor of God scoring

The following cards are worth 15 points each as they are genuine pieces of the Armor of God:

Sword of the Spirit Helmet of Salvation Shield of Faith Shoes of the Gospel of Peace Belt of Truth Breastplate of Righteousness

Deduct 10 points if the group has a "Liar, Liar, your pants are on fire" card. (Make it only 5 if a group member agrees to sit in a pan of water for 2 seconds)

Deduct 10 points for a heart attack card (unless a group member is willing to dramatically do a 15 second enactment of a heart attack. In that case, depending on the level of the performance, only 3-5 points would be deducted)

Deduct 20 points for a plague card. For every one of the 10 commandments they can remember you can deduct one less point. (See Exodus 20) If one of the team members is willing to "walk through the Red Sea" (get drenched - you can opt to remove only 3 points)

Deduct 10 points if the group brings back a signed will from Rebekah. For every 2 grandchildren of Rebekah's they can name reduce the penalty by one point. (See I Chron. 2: 1-2 for a list of the grandsons and count Dinah too)

Assign a 5 point bonus for accurate completion (avoiding all the liars)

Assign a 5 point bonus if all 6 tokens were obtained (regardless of any penalties)

When groups turn in their tokens and cards determine the number of points each group earned. You can use these scores for various purposes as described in Suggestions.

Sample invitation

You are invited to attend a mystery party being hosted by [fill in your name] at [fill in party location, time, date and phone number].

An important scroll from Paul to the church at Ephesus is missing. You have to find it and the information it contains. You'll meet many people who may help you or who may not be so helpful. All the guests will try to solve the mystery. You do not need to be an actor or have knowledge of investigations to have a great time. Use your mind and the clues to get to the bottom of this dastardly problem.

Please come dressed as a Bible character.

When your host gives you your character sheet, please do not show it to anyone, before or during the party. The sheet will explain who you are, who and what you know and give you suggestions for props and costumes. It is for your eyes only. If you have questions prior to the party contact [fill in host name and phone number]

Sample flyer

Don't Miss Out!

Mission Impossible - The Armor of God

When: Saturday, October 28, 6 pm

Where:

Who: Middle and High Schoolers

Can your group put together the armor without being tricked? Treats will be served. Sign up by

October 22. For questions call

Certified Armor Bearer



Let it be known that

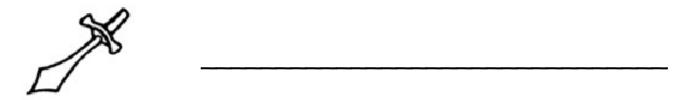
having displayed courage, sound judgment and knowledge of the Bible is considered now and henceforth an

Ephesians Six Armor Bearer of God.

Ranking Soldier of Christ Date

Certified Sword Wielder

Let it be known that



In accordance with Hebrews 4:12 has demonstrated the ability to properly handle the Sword of the Spirit, otherwise known as the Word of God. .

Ranking Soldier of Christ Date

Academy Award

Presented to

f	or a smashin	g portrayal	of the character	
Thanks for	bringing our	event to li never forg	ife a vivid character get.	we wil
	Academy Director	Da	ute.	

Investigator(s) nam	ne(s):		
Who is telling the	truth?		
Who is lying?			
What are the real 1	pieces of the arm	or of God?	
The character I no My Armor o	minate to get the		rd is
The Character I talked to	The armor talked about	Things they said L	ies or truth?
1. Tychius	None	How the scroll is missing	
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

The Armor of God Mystery Party Clues

- 1. More than one character is a liar.
- 2. There are six pieces of the Armor of God
- 3. Some pieces of the Armor protect you from harm
- 4. Some pieces of the Armor are weapons.

The Armor of God Mystery Party Rules

- 1. No one may look at another person's character sheet.
- 2. Characters should not read straight off their character descriptions but instead tell others the information in their own words. Truth tellers should be sure what they say is true.
- 3. Investigators can ask characters other questions but they might not know the answer. They might even lie about it.
- 4. Only characters who are liars can lie.
- 5. If a truth telling character is asked a question and they don't know the answer they should simply say they don't know.
- 5. If a liar is asked a question they can tell the truth, they can change the subject, tell half the truth, tell a flat out lie or refuse to answer. They can also say "I don't know"
- 6. At the end of the party you will be asked who you think is lying, who is telling the truth, and what items are actually the armor of God.
- 7. Guests may look at the Bible but only those scriptures listed on their character sheets.
- 8. The most important of all rules: Have fun while learning more about God

CHARACTER DOSSIERS

WHO YOU ARE: EVE

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: LIAR

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Apples of Knowledge

PROPS NEEDED: sliced apples (one slice per guest)

Could possibly have a fake or real snake wrapped around her neck.

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

I'm Eve, from the Garden of Eden. My husband Adam and I lived there until (pause) an unfortunate incident occurred. I am the mother of Cain, Abel and Seth. But that is a sad story for another time. In the Garden of Eden were two amazing trees. One was the tree of Life. The other was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. One made you live as long as God; the other made you as wise as God. Maybe not wise but you could tell the difference between good and evil.

Having just a taste of one of my apples will help you have the wisdom to choose the right pieces of the armor of God. Go ahead - have a bite. Even if you're not all that hungry - have a slice of apple. They're highly recommended by serpents.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Genesis 3





WHO YOU ARE: SAPPHIRA

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: TRUTH TELLER (although you were a liar before you have reformed your ways)

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Belt of Truth

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Sapphira tells about how she and her husband planned to lie to the church about the price of the field. They were going to say it sold for less than it did and keep some of the money for themselves. When they lied, they died.

I'm Sapphira. My husband's name was Ananias. We did a rather dishonest thing which caused us to lose our lives. We sold a piece of land and gave part of the money to the church but we lied and said we gave it all to the church. Peter told us we had not lied to men but to the Holy Spirit and we were struck dead.

Belts may not seem like an important part of the armor but they are. Soldiers wore long robes that could tangle them up or cause them to stumble when they ran. They needed belts to tie them up around their knees so they could move better on the battlefield

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Acts 5: 1-11



WHO YOU ARE: ELYMUS

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: LIAR

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Book of Magic

Props you need: One or more of the following - cards, magic wand, crystal ball

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Elymus tries to convince guests to choose the book of magic.

Sample Elymus dialogue:

I'm Elymus from the city of Salamus on the island of Cyprus. I am a magician by trade (holds out a deck of cards) Pick a card, any card. (Puts cards away) Just kidding. We don't have time for that. Paul and Barnabas came and preached on my island. A lot of bad things happened to poor Paul on his journeys. If he only had my magic book he could have avoided some of those disasters like being shipwrecked or stoned. Paul should have equipped himself with the Book of Magic, a very important piece of the armor of God.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Acts 13:4-12



WHO YOU ARE: KING DAVID

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: TRUTH TELLER (although you did lie before)

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Breastplate of Righteousness

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Sample David Dialogue:

I'm King David, a mighty warrior by the power and grace of God. A breastplate is very important armor. Without it your heart and other vital organs would be vulnerable to attack. And the devil likes to attack people in their hearts. That's where he often attacked me.

Once when I was out fighting for the Lord, raiders came and stole our wives and children away. Because of God's help we were able to get them all back. Another time my heart was attacked when my own son rebelled against me and tried to take my kingdom away from me. That nearly broke my heart but not as much as when that son died. One of the Psalms I wrote said for God to create a clean heart within me.

But I did not always protect my heart. Once I lied to a priest so he would help me. When Saul found out he killed that priest and 69 more. I also placed a good soldier of mine in battle so he would get killed so I could marry his wife. Keep your heart safe with the breastplate of righteousness.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Psalm 51:10, I Samuel 16 -2 Samuel



WHO YOU ARE: ABRAHAM

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: TRUTH TELLER

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Shield of Faith

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Abraham tells of the tests of his faith - moving, waiting for an heir and being asked to offer up his son as a sacrifice.

Sample Abraham Dialogue:

I'm Abraham, also known as Abram. God promised to show me to a new land if I would leave my father's house and journey where he would lead me. I believed God and went to Canaan. God promised me I would be the father of a great nation but I had no children. I didn't see how his promise could come true because my wife Sarah couldn't have children. Still I put my faith in God and when I was 100 years old Isaac was born to me. I was very happy. But then God tested my faith again thirteen years late and told me to offer my son Isaac up as a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah. I did as he asked and just as I was about to slay my son, God stopped me. He knew I was willing to sacrifice the dearest thing I had and that I had great faith.

A shield is important in battle because it can protect your whole body from swords, arrows and spears. Faith too is very important and can protect you from the devil's weapons. Choose the Shield of Faith as one of the pieces of the armor of God.

Now you might not choose to believe me because I did lie twice about my wife. I said she was my sister and I told her to lie about it too. But this time I am telling the truth. I hope you believe me.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Gen. 12-25, Hebrews 11: 1-6.



WHO YOU ARE: AARON

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: LIAR

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Golden Arrows of Prayer

Aaron tells them the importance of arrows as a missile weapon - no need to come into close contact with the enemy. David and Jonathon shot arrows in the Bible.

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Sample Aaron dialogue:

I'm Aaron - the brother and spokesperson for Moses. Moses and I led the children of Israel through the desert to the Promised Land. It was a rough journey - the people complained a lot. We had to pray for them many, many times.

Arrows are an important weapon to have because you don't have to get in close for combat. You can shoot the enemy while they are still far away. Prayer is like that too, you can reach God when he is far away. David and Jonathon practiced shooting arrows together and you know what great soldiers they were.

Gold is the most precious thing, you know. When I made that calf, I made it out of gold. Give your best to the one you worship. I hope you'll be wise and chose the Golden Arrows of Prayer

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Exodus 32:1-8



WHO YOU ARE: PAUL

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: TRUTH TELLER

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Sample Paul Dialogue:

I know some of you may doubt what I have to say. I didn't always believe Jesus was the son of God. I did go around locking Christians up and I was there when Stephen was stoned. He was a righteous servant of God and I am so sorry I watched the coats of the people stoning him. But I have changed. I am now a Christian and what I tell you now is the truth.

I traveled all over spreading the goodness of the gospel. Shoes were very important in my travels. Without shoes to protect my feet I probably would not have gotten very far on rocky terrain. Shoes are an important part of the armor of God. Soldiers must protect their feet when they fight. Can you imagine trying to fight on rocky ground without shoes?

I had many hard times on my travels - I was shipwrecked three times. I was stoned and left for dead. The Jewish leaders beat me and many times I was hungry and thirsty and went without sleep. It isn't easy being a soldier of Christ. But I kept on because I knew I had to share the gospel - the gospel that brings peace. Please believe me and choose the Shoes of the Gospel of Peace.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Acts 7: 13 - 28



WHO YOU ARE: DELILAH

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: LIAR

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: SPEAR OF GOODNESS

PROPS: A pair of scissors, maybe other hair care products and accessories. If possible Delilah should have a fancy, flashy or unusual hair style.

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Delilah tells how she befriended Samson and tried to discover the secret of his strength.

Sample dialogue:

I'm Delilah from the book of Judges. I was a friend of Samson's. He used to come over to my place and take naps. Now Samson was amazingly strong. He killed a lion with his bare hands and defeated many Philistines with only the jawbone of a donkey.

Now I have here a much better weapon than a jawbone of a donkey. I have the Spear of Goodness. It can be used as a hand held weapon or thrown. Very handy for all types of combat.

Offer to cut or do other character's hair. You'll be glad to do it for free. Come on - take a little gel or maybe this tie back.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Judges 16 - 22



WHO YOU ARE: JOHN

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: TRUTH TELLER

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Sword of the Spirit

PROPS: John should have a scroll and pen

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Sample John Dialogue:

My name is John. I'm a disciple of Jesus who wrote a biography of His life. You know it as the book of John. I also wrote 1, 2 & 3 John and Revelation. Several writers contributed to the books of the New Testament. Why did we do that? Because it is important that those who were born after Jesus died know him.

Swords were important weapons in the past. Any soldier who didn't have one was very limited in what he could do. So it is with the Bible, for without one you can do little to battle Satan. Hebrews 4:12 tells us "The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart"

Be wise and choose the Sword of the Spirit as one of the pieces of the Armor of God.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Hebrews 4:12, John, 1, 2, & 3 John



WHO YOU ARE: Tychicus

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: Truth Teller (although your story is fictitious)

WHAT YOU TALK ABOUT:

How Paul sent you with a letter to the Ephesians and the missing scroll must be found.

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Paul sent me with a letter to the Ephesians. It was on six scrolls. Somehow one of the scrolls got lost. It was the last one. All I know is it talked about spiritual warfare and the armor of God. By the time we recovered it from Demetrius the Silversmith and his idol worshiping friends part of the last scroll was destroyed. We have to figure out what was there. It was about the armor of God.

You will have the opportunity, just like me, to talk to different characters in the Bible. They will tell you about a piece of armor. You'll have to decide if what they are talking about was something Paul wrote about. After you have talked to everyone you will have to write down who you think the liars are, who the truth tellers are and which items talked about are really parts of the armor of God. You can ask the characters questions too. If they don't know the answer, the truth tellers will tell you that. Liars might tell you that too or they might lie to fool you.

Only those who are able to divide truth from lies will solve the mystery. God bless us all as we solve this mystery

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Acts 19, Ephesians 1: 1-2



WHO YOU ARE: ESTHER

LIAR OR TRUTH TELLER: TRUTH TELLER

WHAT PIECE OF ARMOR YOU TALK ABOUT: Helmet of Salvation

PROPS: A crown

WHAT YOU TELL THE INVESTIGATORS:

Esther tells of her rise to the Queen's position and the rule of the Golden Scepter. How salvation for the Jews came about by her bravery.

Sample Dialogue:

I'm Queen Esther although I wasn't always a Queen. I started out as a just a simple Jewish girl when the Persian army took over our land. Through the help of my cousin Mordecai I was selected to be King Xerxes' wife. I didn't tell him I was Jewish though. You'll have to decide if that makes me a liar or not later on in my story.

King Xerxes had a rule that only if he held out his golden scepter to someone who wanted to talk to him would that person be able to come before him. If he didn't hold out the scepter, the person was put to death.

It happened that a wicked man named Haman wanted to put all the Jews to death. Mordecai wanted me to go to the king to plead for our lives. I was afraid he would not hold out the scepter to me and I would be put to death. You see, it had been quite awhile since we last spoke. I thought maybe since the King didn't know I was Jewish Haman wouldn't kill me. That was a selfish thought. Mordecai warned me God would be displeased if I were selfish instead of saving my people.

But finally I said I would do it anyway and if I died, I died. Mordecai was convinced I would bring salvation to the Jews and he was right. The King held out his scepter and agreed to help me and my people. Helmets are important pieces of armor because they protect the head. Without your head it is really difficult to serve as a soldier for Christ. I could have lost my head but didn't.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES/BACKGROUND: Esther 4: 12-14