THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of North Texas in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

by

Nicholas A. Lawrence, B.M.

Denton, Texas

August, 1997
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INTRODUCTION

Overview

The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Christians at Ephesus, devotes a section to the concept of spiritual warfare. Paul makes the connection that certain principles and virtues function in spiritual battles similarly to armor and weapons in physical combat. At the time he wrote the letter, Paul was in a Roman prison. Prison guards were usually members of the Roman legionary, the infantryman of the Roman military. The uniforms consisted of a belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, and sword to which Paul associates truth, righteousness, readiness, faith, salvation, and the word of God, respectively. Knowledge of the construction and function of the different armor components along with an interpretation of the principles from their biblical context renders greater understanding of Paul's analogy. The focus of this piece is to present this analogy in a musical context.

Elements from both the physical and spiritual aspects of the armor inspired the musical materials and their construction. One example of the relationship between the overall physical aspects of the armor and the musical setting comes from the physical and temporal proportions. There are six armor components, each represented by a separate movement. The piece of armor's size in relation to the other pieces corresponds to the duration of the representative movement. A direct relationship is not used, nor is the perception of time in music considered, but the proportions are as
follows: shoes, 2 minutes; helmet, 2 minutes; sword, 3 minutes; belt, 3 minutes; breastplate, 4 minutes; and shield, 5 minutes. The total duration of the work is 19 minutes.

Another example of the physical correlation deals with the unification of the six components. Not only do the pieces of armor share in protecting the bearer, but elements of iron, bronze, leather, and wood are present in almost all of them. A similar relationship is found in the instrumentation, which consists of oboe / English horn, bassoon, two violins, viola, cello, and bass (solo strings). Each movement contains all of these instruments, with the color variation of the English horn in movements one and four. There are several reasons for the selection of these specific instruments, but perhaps the most tangible one deals with historical associations. Brass and percussion tend to be most commonly associated with conventional warfare in a musical setting, but the abstract nature of spiritual warfare calls for a subtler approach. Thus the double-reed and string instruments not only avoid the conventional warfare cliché, but also allow for a wide range of contrast and intricacies necessary to depict the elusiveness of spiritual warfare.

Commentaries and sermons on the scriptures (Ephesians 6:10-20) were referenced for insight into the spiritual ramifications of Paul’s analogy. Writings of historical figures such as St. Thomas Aquinas and Jean Calvin, as well as the sermons of present day pastor Tom Nelson, were consulted for scriptural interpretation. Nelson offered the most detailed information on the relationship between the physical
and spiritual aspects of the armor, and thus is cited the most. An example of how the
spiritual facets play a role in the piece as a whole comes from the idea of the integrity
of armor provided by God. Each movement contains a pitch or key region that acts as
the focus and/or goal. In each instance, that pitch is a perfect fifth down from the
previous movement’s focal pitch. This pitch may be emphasized modally, tonally,
rhythmically, dynamically, or just by its presence; therefore it will be referred to as the
focal pitch rather than the tonic of a mode or key (specific examples of this will be
covered in the discussion of the individual movements). The piece begins with E
natural and ends with F natural, six movements later. When dealing with pitches and
harmonic associations, movement down by fifth is the strongest tendency. Thus the
piece is held together by the strongest principle of function, that may not always be
perceptible; quite fitting for an all powerful God that is unseen.

The musical depiction of the relationship between the physical and spiritual
elements changes with each movement. In some of the movements musical techniques
represent physical aspects more than spiritual ones, and in other movements the
spiritual ramifications dominate the musical setting. A balance between the two
however, is found in the piece as a whole. The following discussion presents each
piece of armor separately, providing a physical description and spiritual ramifications.
An explanation of the approach to the musical setting and its construction is supplied
for each movement.
Movement I. Belt of Truth

The legionary wore a wide belt around the waist, just below the breastplate. Ornamented metal plates were attached to the front of the belt. The belt connected the breastplate to the apron of segmented mail that protected the body below the waist. Also, attached were the sword and various tools.\(^1\) Tom Nelson, pastor at Denton Bible Church, makes the observation that the body armor depends on the belt for structural integrity in the same way that righteousness, peace and faith depend upon truth.\(^2\) Without truth there is no foundation for holiness.

Considering that the belt is so important to the other parts, the focal pitches from each of the subsequent movements are present within the first movement. There are seven total sections in the first movement, each containing a focal pitch a perfect fifth below the previous section’s focal pitch. Thus the first movement is somewhat of a microcosm of the work as a whole, starting with E natural and then moving down by fifths to F natural. However, since the focal pitch of the first movement is E natural, there is a seventh section that allows for a return to the focal pitch. This motion around the cycle of fifths also represents the physical aspect of a belt wrapping around one’s waist. The establishment of the focal pitches is primarily accomplished melodically and harmonically (as in the four-four sections) and / or simply by

\(^1\) Graham Webster, The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D. (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1985), 125.

saturation of the pitch and its closely related overtones within the texture (as in the
opening and closing sections).

The symmetry of the belt is represented through the use of palindromes.

Fig. 1 shows that the time signature scheme (the time signature changes at the
beginning of each section), as well as the duration of each section are palindromes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seconds:</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Meter:</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1. Palindromic time signature scheme.

With only a few exceptions, the second half of the movement is a note for note
retrograde of the first half. If one were to perform the movement “backwards” the
only significant differences would be movement by ascending fifth instead of by
descending fifth, and occasional leading tones actually following the focal tones.

Passages that avoid the leading tone tend to retrograde more effectively, such as in the
English horn part of measures 19-20 (fig. 2). Easily distinguishable repetitive patterns
such as in measures 11-14 work well also (fig. 3).

The precise middle of the movement occurs in the eighth measure of the nine-
eight section (m. 41). The remaining seven measures in this section serve as a
transition to the retrograde, thus being one of the exceptions to the strict palindrome.
Fig. 2. Avoidance of leading tone.

Fig. 3. Repetitive patterns.
The sustained line found in the first violin from measures 41 to 47 is not only the retrograde but also a transposition (down a perfect fifth) of the same line found in the previous seven measures. The second violin and viola switch parts and reverse the corresponding patterns, remaining in the same focal pitch area (G natural). The bass line continues to alternate between G and F# on the downbeats, but beats 4 and 7 are reversed.

The decorated metal plates in the front of the belt are represented musically by the dynamic shape and density of the movement. As a result of the arch structure, the movement climaxes in the middle. From the beginning, the volume, rhythmic density, and duration of sections gradually increase until this point, and then gradually decrease to the end. The use of musical palindromes and arch form was primarily inspired by Béla Bartók, specifically his *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*. The idea that symmetry constitutes a form of perfection substantiates the use of palindromes as a representation of God’s truth.

**Movement II. Breastplate of Righteousness**

The legionary breastplate consisted of six or seven iron segments that were overlapped horizontally and held together with leather straps. These segments wrapped around the torso and were hinged in back. Attached to the top of the segmented section was a solid upper chest plate that tapered out over the shoulders with more overlapping segments.³ From the spiritual perspective, Pastor Nelson refers

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³ Webster, 122.
to righteousness as “a Christian’s commitment to a lifestyle that concurs with the nature of God, the word of God, the will of God, and the pleasure of God.” The Christian’s model for this kind of lifestyle is Jesus Christ. Thus the Christian strives to be an imitator of Christ, and by doing so is capable of resisting Satan’s schemes.

The physical overlapping segments and the spiritual concurrence and imitation are represented musically with three-part imitative counterpoint. Overlapping is also prominent in the orchestration of three lines among seven instruments, allowing each line to be doubled with one instrument remaining. Rather than assigning each instrument to a single line throughout, each line is juggled among the instruments, limited only by register. Continuity is maintained by allowing only one of the two instruments on a particular line to switch at any one time. Another instrument picks up where the previous instrument left off so that the line continues to be doubled. If there were only six instruments, all of them would be playing all of the time in order to maintain three-doubled lines; a problematic situation for the performers who have to breathe. The seventh, or remaining, instrument allows for one of the other instruments to rest, without interrupting the process. For example, the first line of the opening theme is scored in the oboe and first violin. In the second half of measure 2, the oboe rests for two beats and then re-enters doubling the second entrance of the theme with the viola, while the second violin enters doubling the first violin where the oboe left.

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Figure 4 shows the first four measures of the original three-lined texture and the scoring of it for seven instruments.

Fig. 4. Scoring of three-lined texture.
Like the impenetrable overlapping armor and the irrefutable integrity of a righteous man, this texture results in an intricate but solid barrier of sound.

Although this “instrumental dovetailing” dominates most of the movement, there are a few exceptions for the purpose of contrast. The first example of this is found in measures 11-18 where the three-part counterpoint becomes more of a melody-with-accompaniment texture. Another example of this is in measures 34-40 where the parts repeat a given pitch in a kind of rhythmic counterpoint. Both of these contrasting sections occur just prior to the closing material in each of the major sections. There are three major sections, and the third section is a return of the first (A-B-A). However, the first contrasting section does not reappear in the return of the first major section.

This movement contains characteristics found often in Baroque contrapuntal works. Specifically, the third movement of J. S. Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 served as a model for certain aspects of this movement. For example, the form is basically A-B-A with the B section’s tonal area a fifth above the A section’s tonal area. Imitation and line independence dominate the texture, and there are three distinct lines scored for more than three instruments. The movement is to be performed with little dynamic contrast and with each note being re-articulated when possible. However, the harmonic language and time signature do not follow the model. The focal pitch is A natural and the A section emphasizes the dorian mode, while the B section emphasizes
E dorian. The time signature is five-four and in most cases the phrasing is reflected by the meter.

The basic construction of this movement consists of displaced imitations of a line (stretti). The length of the line being imitated, as well as the amount of time between entrances (displacement) differs throughout the movement. For example, the imitating lines in the beginning of the movement repeat twelve beats of the original line verbatim before breaking off into new material, but in measures 22-34 the original line is four measures long (20 beats) and the imitating lines continue strict imitation until the original line's four measures is complete. For reference, the original line in the beginning can be found in the first violin, the first imitation in the viola, and the second imitation in the cello. The cello plays twelve beats of the original line before altering its course (see fig. 4). The original line in measure 22 is found in the cello and bass, the first imitation in the viola and second violin, and the second imitation in the first violin and oboe.\(^5\) The process starts over in measure 26, this time with the "new" original line in the bassoon and cello. Actually, the "new" original line is not new at all, but the retrograde of the previous original line. Thus in the A section the entrances tend to be two beats apart and strict imitation is not carried out to the end of the phrase, but in the B section the entrances tend to be five beats apart and strict imitation continues to the end of the phrase. Keep in mind, these are not necessarily

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\(^5\) The term "original line" simply refers to the line that is being imitated or that starts the process. Even though these lines are related, I would not go so far as to say that each is a variation of a single all-encompassing subject or theme.
traditional phrases that conclude in a cadence. The appearance of a "new" original line marks the beginning of a new phrase.

The last aspect to be mentioned is the presence of focal pitch movement by fifth in the B section (mm. 22-43). A sixteenth-note ostinato is used to emphasize a specific pitch within each phrase. Figure 5 shows the pitch and corresponding measure numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pitch</th>
<th>measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>26-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F#</td>
<td>30-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C#</td>
<td>34-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F#</td>
<td>38-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>39-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>40-43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 5. Focal pitch movement of B section.

Thus, after progressing and retrogressing, the focal pitch returns to A in measure 44 at the return of the A section. In the return of the A section, the fourth and fifth measures of the original A section are omitted, as well as the previously mentioned contrasting section. These omissions allow for a smoother transition to closing material in the original focal pitch area. The movement ends with material similar to the material ending the first A section, only this time in the original focal pitch area.
Movement III. Shoes of Stability

Thick leather sandals with hob-nail studded soles served as the military shoe for the legionary. Leather thongs supported the feet and ankles and then were tied off halfway up the shin. The scripture concerning the shoes reads as follows: “Stand firm then... with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.” Considering the context is spiritual warfare, the shoes represent the readiness to withstand evil. This readiness comes from a security in the knowledge that victory over Satan has already been obtained through Jesus Christ. This knowledge offers the stability to withstand Satan’s schemes.

Musically, this movement concentrates on different types of stability, as well as representing the confidence of victory amidst struggle. Three motifs are developed through the course of the movement. The most prominent of these is found divided between the bassoon and cello in measures 1-5. The downbeat element usually ascends in a stepwise motion and then descends in the same fashion back to the starting pitch. The upbeat element remains on the same pitch, a perfect fifth above the starting downbeat pitch. The second motif first appears in the second violin in measure 5, but can be seen in a simpler form in the oboe part in measures 25-29. The third motif is a quotation of the first two phrases of Martin Luther’s “Ein’ Feste Burg ist unser Gott” (A Mighty Fortress is Our God). The idea of a mighty fortress

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6 Webster, 121.
coincides with the image of standing firm. Also, the text makes several references to spiritual warfare (see appendix). Figure 6 shows the three motifs.

Fig. 6. Three motifs.
One of the representations of stability is metrical resolution. Notice that this movement is primarily in three-four, with an elongation to four-four in measure 7. This sets the movement metrically off balance by one beat. To resolve the irregularity, either a beat must be subtracted, or two beats must be added. The resolution occurs close to the end where two four-four measures are added (mm. 59-60), resulting in twelve beats which are divisible as four groups of three. A regular phrase structure might be necessary for this metric resolution to be perceptible, but now the total number of beats is divisible by the primary meter (216 beats / 3 = 72 measures of 3). Also, notice that the number of measures is divisible by the primary meter (72 measures / 3 = 24 groups of 3). If one beat were subtracted instead of two beats being added, there would be 71 measures, and 23.667 groups of 3.

The focal pitch of this movement is D natural, and the major and minor modes are used to establish this pitch. The beginning up to measure 13 is in D minor.

Measures 13-16 act as a transition to the bitonal section (mm. 17-24). The two tonal areas in this section are F major in the two violin parts, and Bb minor in the bassoon, viola and cello. The movement returns to D minor in measure 25, combining motif one in the bassoon and cello with motif two in the oboe. The next section, measures 30-45, provides contrast and prepares the climactic entrance of “Ein’ Feste Burg.”

The *sfordzando diminuendo* figures portray the image of heavy feet driving into the ground for stability. The feet continue to pound in search for solid ground.
The solid ground is represented musically by the “Ein’ Feste Burg” theme in D major. This is foreshadowed in measure 34, the first occurrence of D major in the movement thus far. As the struggle continues, the harmony becomes more dissonant until finally resolving to D major in measure 46. The theme is in the oboe and is imitated in the viola, while the dissonant conflict in the bass voices gradually resolves by means of an ascending line over a tonic pedal. The first motif combines with the theme in measure 53, this time in the major mode with the bassoon on the upbeats. The metric resolution mentioned earlier then occurs in measures 59-60. Additionally, the cello and bass bring back the *sfordzando diminuendo* figures, reminiscent of the struggle. The second motif is then treated canonically in measures 61-67, followed by a similar treatment of the first motif, which ends the movement. Having the movement end in this fashion contributes to the idea of victory amidst struggle: stability is affirmed, but the fight continues.

Movement IV. Shield of Faith

The legionary shield was large, slightly curved to fit the body, and of elaborate construction. Several layers of thin wood were glued together so that the grain of one was at a ninety degree angle to the grain of the adjacent piece. The center was hollowed out for the hand grip and protected by a metal boss, while the outer edges were circumscribed with bronze or wrought iron. Jupiter’s thunderbolts decorated the leather covered exterior of the shield. Paul writes that faith can act as a shield, “In

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9 Webster, 126-127
addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one."\textsuperscript{10} Pastor Nelson defines these flaming arrows as “Satan’s solicitations to sin.”\textsuperscript{11} Faith is believing in God’s truth and trusting in his word and guidance, even when understanding is not revealed. Satan’s flaming arrows entice one to stray from God’s truth, and he uses this lack of understanding as justification for doing so. For example, in the book of Genesis, God tells Adam and Eve that they will die if they eat from the tree in the middle of the garden, but Satan informs Eve that God does not want her to eat from the tree because she will become like Him, knowing good and evil. Satan often takes advantage of an impatient desire to know the answer to the question “why.”

Considering that faith is believing and trusting in the unseen, this movement, in comparison to the other movements, is the most abstract. There are three main elements in the construction of this movement. First of all, there is an intricate texture throughout the piece, resulting from various overlapping rhythms in a uniform pitch palette. Secondly, there is the “faith note,” which is present at all times, and thirdly, an occasional entrance of a “flaming arrow” that contrasts the texture in which it enters.

The textural element’s pitch material is derived from a nine-note row containing the diatonic pitches of the G major and G harmonic minor scales. The pitches were converted to numbers (pitch-class sets C natural=0) and then ordered in a

\textsuperscript{10} Ephesians 6:16.
manner related to the wood assembly of the shield. Each pitch is ninety degrees from at least one of its two adjacent pitches; as ninety degrees is one fourth of three hundred sixty degrees, in a modulus twelve system, three units is one fourth of twelve units. Therefore, ninety degrees would be the equivalent of three halfsteps. Figure 7 shows the scale, corresponding numbers, and the final row resulting from the ninety degree procedure.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{G scale:} & & \text{G} & \text{A} & \text{Bb} & \text{B} & \text{C} & \text{D} & \text{Eb} & \text{E} & \text{F#} \\
\text{pitch-class:} & & 7 & 9 & 10 & 11 & 0 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 6 \\
\text{ninetny degree sets:} & & 0 & 3 & 6 & 9 & 4 & 7 & 10 & 11 & 2 \\
\text{resulting row:} & & \text{C} & \text{Eb} & \text{F#} & \text{A} & \text{E} & \text{G} & \text{Bb} & \text{B} & \text{D} & 0 & 3 & 6 & 9 & 4 & 7 & 10 & 11 & 2
\end{align*}
\]

Fig. 7. Nine note row for texture element.

A matrix was then made out of the row (fig. 8).

The "faith note" is G natural, the focal pitch of this movement. The note is maintained by two instruments at a time for twenty second intervals and remains a subtle presence until a "flaming arrow" enters, at which point the "faith note" matches the intensity of the arrow. The scoring of the faith note is related to a physical aspect of the shield. Notice in fig. 9 that the faith note zigzags resulting in the image of two thunderbolts, similar to the ones decorating the legionary shield. These notes were
scored on the graph first, and then four, flaming arrows, each of twenty seconds
duration, were entered. The permutations of the row were then filled in. Each
instrument goes through twelve permutations of the row, each permutation being three
permutations away from the previous one (ninety degrees); i.e. P1 would be followed
by P4, which is actually nine halfsteps away.

The flaming arrows attempt to penetrate the texture. In order to establish the
arrows as foreign objects, the pitch material for them consists of the three-note
complementation of the row. Combined, these pitches make up a C# major triad.
Each box = 10 sec.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 min.</th>
<th>2 min.</th>
<th>3 min.</th>
<th>4 min.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Horn</td>
<td>G G</td>
<td>G G</td>
<td>=&gt; =&gt;</td>
<td>G G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>G G P1</td>
<td>G G P7</td>
<td>R1 R4</td>
<td>R7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violin 1</td>
<td>G G P4</td>
<td>G G P7</td>
<td>R1 R4</td>
<td>R7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violin 2</td>
<td>G G P4</td>
<td>G G P7</td>
<td>R1 R4</td>
<td>R7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viola</td>
<td>R8 R5</td>
<td>R2 P8</td>
<td>G G P5</td>
<td>P2 R7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>G G</td>
<td>=&gt; =&gt;</td>
<td>R8 R5</td>
<td>G G R2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>G G R8</td>
<td>R5 R2</td>
<td>P8 P5</td>
<td>P2 G G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 9. Shield pitch graph.
Once again the devil is represented with the tritone. The arrows stand out dynamically and rhythmically, but are in each case matched by the “faith note.” Not only does the “faith note” mirror the arrow but it also reinforces the tonic from which the textural pitches are derived. Thus, the arrow is unable to penetrate the texture because faith becomes the focus.

In several instances, a form of isorhythm is used for the scoring of the pitches within the textural element. The most prominent example of this occurs in the four measures following a flaming arrow.\(^{12}\) In each case, the first violin along with either the bass or cello, play a rhythm consisting of quarter notes and half notes. The rhythm is the same in each instance, but the permutation of the row is different. This form of isorhythm occurs in measures 13-16, 25-28, and 49-52. Figure 10 shows the rhythm and the different pitch permutations. A slightly different version of this technique is seen in measures 37-40. The first violin, cello, and bass all use one row which is repeated over an ostinato rhythm, resulting in a rhythmic displacement of the row. For example, in the cello part there are nine notes in the row, but only five notes per beat, resulting in five rhythmic permutations of the row. Another method of setting the pitches consists of distributing all nine notes throughout one measure and then simply repeating that measure. This occurs in the viola part in measures 17-20. Each instrument changes row permutations every ten seconds (two measures). Depending on the rhythm, one row could be interrupted by the next, making possible the

\(^{12}\) This does not occur following the last flaming arrow because only the faith note remains.
Fig. 10. Isorhythmic technique.
repetition of a pitch. For example, between measures 30 and 31 in the English horn part, the row is interrupted at the fourth note (E natural), which happens to be the first note of the next row (P5 in this case). Overall, the rhythmic activity increases to a climax at the three minute mark (measure 37), then decreases at a faster rate to the end of the movement.

For reference, the flaming arrows occur at the following points: measures 9-12 in the cello, measures 21-24 in the English horn, measures 45-48 in the second violin, and measures 53-56 in the viola. In each instance notice the dynamic, rhythmic and color contrasts of the arrow in relation to the textural element, as well as the behavior of the faith note. Throughout the movement, several methods are used to vary the color. Various articulations, vibrato, harmonics, and performance techniques such as sul tasto, sul ponticello, and col legno, all add to the intricacies of this movement. The subtle changes in the individual instruments vary the sound color of the whole, while maintaining a solid texture. This technique was inspired by the large orchestral works of György Ligeti, such as Atmospheres. It is somewhat ironic that simple faith is represented in such a complicated way; however, it is complexity beyond understanding that demands faith.

Movement V. Helmet of Salvation

Usually made of bronze, the helmet protected the head, back of the neck, and areas of the face. Inside the helmet an iron skull-plate strengthened the top.\footnote{Webster, 125.}
helmet is perhaps the most directly related in the physical and the spiritual realms because its purpose is to protect the mind. Pastor Nelson suggests that someone without the helmet is easily overwhelmed by the evils in the world, while someone with the helmet has, “tenacity in life and cannot be discouraged by life’s woes.” The brain is secure in the helmet as the mind is secure in the hope of salvation. The reformer Jean Calvin, in his sermons on the subject, stated it in this way,

God’s Word cannot fail you. Since then you have the promise of salvation, and God speaks to you, so that you know that he has you in his keeping, and that you cannot be confounded if you hope in him.\(^\text{15}\)

Analogous to the confidence of victory during struggle, the promise of eternity in heaven provides peace amidst war.

The musical representation of the helmet of salvation primarily concentrates on this premise of peace amidst adversity. The idea that these two can coexist is represented by the development of the oboe and bassoon parts, which begin the movement in a solo call and response. The strings enter in measure 5 and become the background for this call and response. Notice that the strings function as a homogeneous entity of basically slow-moving half notes. The oboe and bassoon agree harmonically with the strings, but remain distinctly separate: through measure 12, the oboe and bassoon are more motivic, rhythmically denser, and louder. As the

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\(^{14}\) Nelson, “The Shield of Faith and the Helmet of Salvation.”

\(^{15}\) Jean Calvin, 1509-1564, Sermons on the Epistle to the Ephesians (London: Banner of Trust, 1973).
movement continues, the oboe and bassoon become less of a focus and more at parity with the strings. In measures 12-13 the strings match the oboe and bassoon dynamically and then the oboe and bassoon color the harmonic movement in measures 14-17. From measure 18 to the end, the oboe decorates the first violin line and the bassoon simply outlines the harmony along with the strings. This last section was influenced by the third movement of Mozart’s *Serenade No. 10 in Bb Major*, which consists of a slow flowing texture with the bassoons outlining the harmony and the oboe decorating melodically above the texture.

A more dramatic rendering of the oboe and bassoon becoming coexistent with the strings could be realized with a higher degree of contrast in the beginning section, but the most important aspect of the movement is to present an impression of peace. Thus the movement as a whole must give the impression of peace in the context of the other movements. The slow tempo and traditional harmony symbolize relaxation from the struggles found in the other movements. The focal pitch is C natural, established by the major mode. The half-note harmonic rhythm is often suspended and an occasional accented nonharmonic tone appears in order to give the piece a sense of motion and direction. Figure 11 shows the chord succession starting in measure 5. Notice that the harmony in the B section (mm. 10-17) appears to meander about the tonic and subdominant. Forward motion is created by the rising and falling bass line as well as the somewhat melodic first violin line. Combined with the dynamic swells,
these elements provide a sense of undergirded joy brought about by the hope of salvation.

Movement VI. Sword of the Spirit

Out of the six pieces of armor that Paul mentions, the only one with an offensive purpose is the sword, “Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” The legionary carried a double-edged sword that contained a corrugated bone grip and was approximately fifty centimeters in length. According to Webster the sword was used as a quick thrusting weapon, penetrating the lower trunk of the enemy during a forward assault. Paul defines the sword as the word of God, an analogy made often in the Bible.

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16 Ephesians 6:17.
17 Webster, 128-129.
For 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.\textsuperscript{18}

The word of God is an offensive weapon because it recognizes sin, reveals sin, and rebukes sin. The best example of the word of God being used as a sword occurs in the gospels when Jesus responds to three temptations from Satan with scripture from Deuteronomy. The form of this movement is based on the following dialogue from Matthew 4:1-11:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
Satan: If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.

Jesus: It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’

Satan: If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’

Jesus: It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’

Satan: All this I will give you, if you will bow down and worship me.

Jesus: Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

An oral reading of these six statements was timed, and a seventh section was added for concluding purposes. The resulting total duration was 46 seconds. This data was then

\textsuperscript{18} Hebrews 4:12.
rescaled to three minutes by multiplying each statement by the number four, thereby maintaining the same proportions.

original durations: 5 6 12 5 4 6 8 = 46 sec.
rescaled data: 20 24 48 20 16 24 32 = 184 sec.
# of beats: 40 48 96 40 32 48 64 = 368 beats

Fig. 12. Durations determining form.

Overall, this movement has an energetic character in light of the aggressive nature of the sword. Just like the dialogue, the sections alternate between Satan and Jesus. The sections representing Satan's remarks are inconsistent and capricious, while Jesus' responses are all based on the same harmonic succession. Each response becomes more aggressive until Satan flees at the end of the sixth section. The seventh section represents victory, not only in conclusion for the movement, but for the piece as a whole. The focal pitch of this movement, F natural, is not established until this moment. The entire movement tends to focus on C natural up to this point. Thus, the entire movement is a dominant prolongation, only to be resolved upon the removal of evil.

The rehearsal letters identify the beginnings of each section. The movement starts with Satan's first inquiry. A cluster chord from C to E is orchestrated in an open texture and then lowered and raised via glissandi, identifying Satan's crooked intentions. Jesus' first response demonstrates a drastic contrast consisting of bright
sonorities with a regular pulse. Figure 13 lists the basic chord succession present in all of Jesus' responses. In addition, each chord contains a C natural in the bass, as well as the pitch a perfect fourth above the root.

basic chord: C f eō⁷ f bō⁷ eō⁷
additional note: F Bb A Bb E A
bass note: C C C C C C

Fig. 13. Jesus chord succession.

Satan's second temptation, at letter B, starts in the same crooked manner (in this case up one whole step), but develops into an appealing chorale-like texture in measures 27-31. With octave leaps, sixteenth-note syncopations, and color changes, measures 32-35 become erratic, only to smooth out again in measures 36-38. Jesus' response this time takes on the image of several quick jabs with the sword, represented by accented phrases. The chord succession is twice cycled through a series of meter changes. According to fig. 11, this section contains forty beats, or eighty eighth-notes. The six phrasing permutations of the combined meters of five-eight and seven-eight provide seventy-two of the eighty eighth-notes. The other eight come from a pair of, two-four bars, one at the beginning of the section and the other at the end.

Figure 14 maps out the phrasing permutations.
m. n = beginning measure. (m. 39) 2+2

(m. 40) 2+3 / 2+2+3  (m. 42) 3+2 / 2+2+3
(m. 44) 2+3 / 2+3+2  (m. 46) 3+2 / 2+3+2
(m. 48) 2+3 / 3+2+2  (m. 50) 3+2 / 3+2+2
(m. 52) 2+2

Fig. 14. Meter phrasing scheme.

Satan attempts to be enticing one last time, but the splendor he tries to peddle is quickly dismissed when Jesus commands him to leave. This last response begins at rehearsal letter E. The harmony changes every two measures in this lively six-eight section. The transition to “victory” begins in measure 73 where a C dominant seventh chord is emphasized for four measures. Also notice the metrical transition from six-eight to three-four in the bass line.

Letter F marks the beginning of the victory section when the movement finally establishes the focal pitch. The C dominant seventh chord from the previous section resolves to a Db major chord and then moves iv – V7 – i in F minor, establishing the key at measure 82. It should be noted that the chords still contain the additional note of a perfect fourth above the root. To solidify F minor, and to reiterate the cycle of fifths principle from the first movement, the final harmonic sequence is a complete cycle in the key. The harmony changes every two measures, beginning in measure 82.
Notice that the accent patterns are reminiscent of the patterns found in Jesus’s second response, only adapted to a consistent meter. For example measure 83 corresponds to measure 40, except with an additional eighth-note, and measure 84 corresponds to measure 41, except with one less eighth-note.

![five-eight to three-four conversion](image1)

![seven-eight to three-four conversion](image2)

Fig. 15. Time signature conversions.

This pattern continues through measure 94, adding an eighth-note to the corresponding five-eight measures, and subtracting an eighth-note from the corresponding seven-eight measures. The movement ends strongly with a two measure extension of the tonic chord.

Overall, The Full Armor of God incorporates physical dimensions and the spiritual realm into a musical setting. Recurring methods and constructs in this
process include the use of dynamics and form to depict struggle, such as in the Shoes of Stability, and the use of textural contrast to portray elements of good and evil, such as in the Shield of Faith. Perhaps the most prevalent procedure is the use of the cycle of fifths as a representation of strength, as seen in the connection of the movements as a whole. Music turns out to be an ideal medium for demonstrating a connection between the physical and the metaphysical. The music performers, the instruments they play, and the sound waves produced, are all physical entities, but the compositional process and the perception of ordered sound belongs to a less tangible and somewhat unexplainable domain. The apostle Paul’s analogy depends on both the recognition of physical armor and its function as well as spiritual principles such as truth, righteousness and faith. Perhaps this ability to link the abstract to the concrete is what compels the discovery of an intangible yet evident meaning in music.
The Full Armor of God

1. Belt of Truth

$\text{\textcopyright Nicholas Lawrence}$
II. Breastplate of Righteousness

\[ j = 108 \]
III. Shoes of Stability

\[ j = 100 \]
cresc. poco a poco
IV. Shield of Faith

\[ j = 60 \]

Legato

Baritone

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass

\[ pp \]
V. Helmet of Salvation
VI. Sword of the Spirit

\( j = \text{see} \)

\[ \frac{1}{4} \]

\[ \frac{1}{2} \]

\[ \frac{3}{4} \]
APPENDIX A

DRAWINGS
BELT OF TRUTH
BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
SHOES OF STABILITY
HELMET OF SALVATION
SWORD OF THE SPIRIT
The Armor of God

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:10-20.
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
(Ein' Feste Burg ist unser Gott)

A mighty fortress is our God,
A sword and shield victorious;
He breaks the cruel oppressor’s rod
And wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
Has sworn to work us woe.
With craft and dreadful might
He arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

God’s Word forever shall abide,
No thanks to foes, who fear it;
For God himself fights by our side
With weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
Goods, honor, child, or spouse,
Though life be wrenched away,
They cannot win the day.
The Kingdom’s ours forever!

No strength of ours can match his might.
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
Whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he,
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God’s only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

Though hordes of devils fill the land
All threat’ning to devour us,
We tremble not, unmoved we stand;
They cannot overpow’r us.
Let this world’s tyrant rage;
In battle we’ll engage.
His might is doomed to fail;
God’s judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.

The Commission on Worship of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, Lutheran Worship (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982), #297.
REFERENCES


