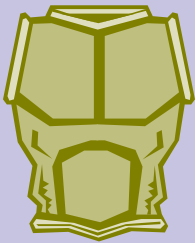


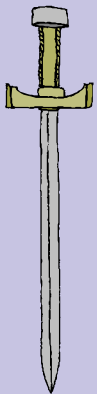
Jonathan's Gifts Prepare David for Battle



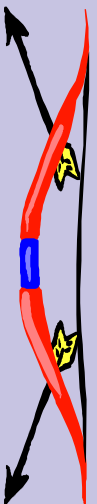
The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David.... And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt. So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war; and he was accepted in the sight of all the people... (1 Samuel 18:1,4-5).



Although Jonathan and David had only just met, they felt immediate friendship for one another. As a sign of friendship, Jonathan gave David several things he was wearing at the time. Jonathan was a king's son, so he would probably have had fine clothes and weapons, while David had been a poor shepherd with only a simple slingshot. But David's life was about to change dramatically. King Saul, Jonathan's father, was about to put David in charge of an army—his men of war—and David needed to be able to lead them successfully. The gifts that Jonathan gave David helped prepare him for this new use, arming him for battles to come.



Jonathan's gifts helped to arm David for his physical battles—the Lord also teaches that this armor represents things that arm us all for spiritual battles against evil and falsity. The Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church tells us that a **robe** represents spiritual truth. **Armor**, especially breastplates, means using good and true thoughts to fight against false ideas that come from our self-centeredness. A **sword** represents the truths we take into battle. A bow stands for doctrinal teachings which fight evil and falsity. And, finally, a **belt** brings truths together and puts them in order in our minds.



Pick one of the gifts Jonathan gave to David and think about how its physical characteristics and uses reflects its spiritual meaning. For example, a robe protects a person from cold just as spiritual truths protect us from harmful false ideas and lies.

We all need spiritual armor to do battle against evil spirits who encourage us to be self-centered. What spiritual armor do you have now and what more do you need?

Think of an example of a time that a friend might need you to give him some spiritual weapons. Are there ways in which good friends can help each other in this struggle?

