

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” (Eph. 6:10,11.)

Beloved, war is grim business. Paul’s choice of this figure of speech was the deadliest of metaphors, because the Roman soldier of Paul’s day took no prisoner, as they say. Add to this, that Paul knew that he was wrestling NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD ALONE, BUT ALSO WITH HIS MAJESTY THE DEVIL. He thus had real, and potent, and supernatural enemies; and he must have the Lord Jesus Christ to his aid, in whom is strength, power and might — even everlasting strength to enable His saints to perform their duty, and to fight against every enemy, sin, Satan, and the world; for though they are weak, and without strength in themselves, and can do nothing of themselves, and without Christ; yet since there is strength in Him, which is communicable to them, they may expect it from Him, and depend upon it; and they may come at, or strengthen themselves in it, and by it, by meditation on it, by prayer for it, by waiting on Christ in His own ways, by exercising faith upon Him, and through the Spirit, who strengthens them from him with might in the inward man.

In this context, what does it mean, *“Put on the whole armor of God?”* It does not mean the armor which God Himself is said to put on when He leads His people to battle with His and their enemies. But what He has provided for His people to wear, and is bestowed upon them by Him. Called the armor of God because it is by its own nature divine and holy and spiritual, not carnal; designed for fighting the Lord’s battles; and because the efficacy of it is from Him; and the execution of it is owing to Him, and it is whole, complete, and perfect; and all of it is useful, and no part to be neglected, but all to be taken and put on; as being ready made and provided, and to expect and prepare for battle, and make use of it. AND THIS SUPPOSES THE SAINTS TO BE ALWAYS IN A WARFARE STATE; and that they are always and ever in the character of soldiers, and have enemies to fight with, and therefore should always be thus armed and accoutered and prepared for battle and even for all out war. Look again at the verse; to wit: Put on the whole armor 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.” (Eph. 6:12)

This wrestling is not of the body but of the soul, and the meaning is, not with men only, for otherwise the saints have a conflict with men; with profane men, and wrestle against them, by bearing a testimony against their enormities, and by patiently enduring their reproaches, and conquer them by a constant adhering to Christ, and an exercise of faith upon Him, and gets the victory over the world, and with heretical men, and maintain a conflict with them, by watching and observing the first appearance of their errors, and heresies, and declaring against them, and by using Scripture arguments to confute them, and by rejecting the stubborn and incorrigible from church communion; yet they wrestle not against these only, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked and ultra malicious spirits against the people of Christ; yet these cannot be opposed to flesh and blood, or to men; the enemy being the devil, the armor being spiritual; wherefore the devils are here designed, who are described from their power, rule, and government — and against the rulers of

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the darkness of this world; that is, over wicked men in it, who are in a state of darkness itself; and so Satan is called the prince, and god of the world, (**John 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4.**) [To wit: "*Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.*" (**Jn. 12:30-33.**) And, "*Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" (**2 Cor. 4:1-6.**)]

Beloved, here is a remarkable thing, and persuasive; the Jews use this very word the apostle uses here, of the angel of death, and mention is made by them of the darkness of the world; and from whom the apostle seems to have taken these phrases, as being in common use among the Jews of his day. The Jews also use them of evil civil authorities, and say it signifies monarchs, such as rule from one end of the world to the other; it follows, against spiritual wickedness in high places; or wicked spirits, as the devils are.

Beloved, get this description of our enemy; to wit: unclean, proud, lying, deceitful, malicious — who may be said to be in high or heavenly places; — note, not in places super-celestial, or in the highest heavens, the third heaven, where God, angels, and saints are; but in the aerial heavens, where the power, or posse of devils reside, and where they are above us, over our heads, overlooking us, and watching every advantage against us; and therefore we should have on our armor, and be in a readiness to engage them "*in the air.*"

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."(**Eph. 6:13**)

This repetition seems to be necessary, by reason of the many powerful enemies brought forth "*in the evil day,*" and warring in the second heavens against Satan, to face him, and give him battle, being accoutered with the whole armor of God; "*in the evil day;*" in the which sin and iniquity abound, error and heresy prevail, Satan is very busy, trials and afflictions come on, persecution arises because of the word, and God's judgments are in the earth; "*and having done all to stand;*" or, having overcome, having routed the enemy, stand as conquerors; having taken and put on the whole armor of God, in order to stand, and withstand, the enemy. "*Stand therefore.*" Keep your ground. Don't desert the army of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, nor His cause. Continue in the station in which you are placed. Keep your post. Be upon your watch. Stand upon your guard. Having your loins girt about with truth, by which is meant the Gospel, the 5-points of Calvinism, etc.; and having the loins girt with it shows that it should be always kept near and dear and close to the heart of the saints, and never departed from them; and as a means of keeping them close to God and Christ; and of strengthening them against the assaults and attacks of Satan; and is of great use in the Christians' spiritual conflict with their enemies.

The girdle is a part of the armor, and so huge a part as sometimes to be put for the whole; to wit — e.g. (Isa. 5:27 — “None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:”). And having on the breastplate of righteousness, in plain allusion to Isa. 59:12-21 and its context; to wit:

“For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord from henceforth and for ever.” (Isa. 59:12-21)

This breast-plate of righteousness is glorious, because it is nothing less than the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ — imputed to each of His loved ones. Beloved, Satan’s fiery darts, or spears, cannot pierce that glorious breastplate; to understand which, requires an accurate exposition of such passages as Rom. 5:1-8; to wit:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; BECAUSE THE LOVE OF GOD IS SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS BY THE HOLY GHOST WHICH IS GIVEN UNTO US. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” (Rom. 5:1-9)

I think, Beloved of God, that I shall never forget when God first spoke with force and understanding to my heart from this passage — especially elucidating verse Rom. 5:5; to wit: *“because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”* [To elucidate means to make a thing or word or concept easier to understand.]

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The love of God in this context means to grasp clearly the concept that God loves unconditionally a relatively few of Adam's race, and the rest He hates and has predestinated them to spend eternity in Hell. My heart was warm to the notion that I was included in the blessed group that had been predestinated from the foundation of the world to be loved of God and to spend eternity in heaven. THAT was the love of God that was shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. And no other. And every other notion of the love of God — in THAT context, in THAT VERSE — is false and fraudulent. The expression of "*shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost,*" carries the proposition that the mind and/or heart — the internal thought processes — is filled to the brim, chuck full — with accurate notions of the love of God. No room whatsoever for sloppy-agape lies about loving everybody — even those in Hell as we speak (!)

Now that the world's sodomite dogs (**Psa. 22:16,20**) have seized control of societies' moral machines — from God loves everybody churches (KC-Star, Fri., Aug. 3, front page, Rev. Shawn Ratigan, Five Guilty Pleas, Roman Catholic Pedophile Machine) To, God loves everybody Boy Scout Child Abuse Worldwide Mores Machine, Capital-Journal, Aug. 6, 5A, Boy Scout files reveal repeat child Abuse. Beloved, I have been an Eagle Scout since c. 1946, and beginning c. three years earlier as a Cub Scout in Meridian, Mississippi. Those were happy years, with never a thought of Methodist religious apostasy or Boy Scout sodomy — in fact, did not know the meaning of the operative words: APOSTASY and SODOMY. Now — evil days — predicted by the prophets as the last days and — perilous times — have fallen upon us. Hardly does a news cycle go by without the moral filth of this nation — and the filth of the world — parade before our sanctified eyes. And there is no hope for any but God's Elect; to wit:

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity (love) among yourselves: for charity (love) shall cover the multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:7,8)

Today's Capital-Journal has this heart-breaking story; to wit: "BOY SCOUT FILES REVEAL REPEAT CHILD ABUSE: Internal documents from the Boy Scouts of America reveal more than 125 cases in which men suspected of child molestation allegedly continued to abuse Scouts, despite a blacklist meant to protect boys from sexual predators. A Los Angeles Times review of more than 1,200 files from 1970 to 1991 found suspected abusers regularly remained in the organization after officials were first presented with sexual misconduct allegations. Predators moved from troop to troop because of clerical errors, computer glitches, or the Scouts' failure to check the blacklist, known as the 'perversion files,' the newspaper said." Because of its worldwide position of exalted morality and universal acceptance, the Boy Scouts of America functions as a sort of moral weathervane throughout the world. More, our Savior requires us to closely discern the "*signs of the times,*" with a view toward His imminent return. Beloved, let us keep one eye upon the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) ! Are they totally corrupt yet? The Alan Craig Dunlap Story: Thirteen years after being convicted of abusing children in Fresno and being blacklisted by the Scouts, Dunlap became a Scout volunteer in Texas. He was later convicted of molesting a Cub Scout. The Floyd David Slusher Story: Caught molesting a boy at a Scout camp in Germany, Slusher, a Scout Staff member, was sent back to the U.S. but was allowed to continue working with Scouts. He was later twice convicted of sex crimes and remains in prison.

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity (love) among yourselves..." (1 Pet. 4:7,8.)

I love you. Amen.