

Read before Saturday – do not read as part of proclamation.

## C. H. Spurgeon, The Sword of the Spirit sermon, 1891

(partial sermon on Eph. 6:17-18)

Use all proper defensive weapons for repelling temptation that we be not exposed (naked). Use the one offensive weapon to break strongholds and defeat the enemy's schemes. (Read Ephesians 6:10-20). A soldier is not left to choose his own equipment; he must carry such arms as his sovereign appoints. Note that we are not told that we may lay it down; the demand to take the word is continuous. The deeper you go under the Spirit's guidance the larger is the reward for your toil. Take the sword with the grip of sincere faith; hold it fast by a fuller knowledge, and then exercise yourself daily in its use. You will have to parry with it, to pierce with it, to cut with it, and to kill with it. "Where shall I begin?" says one.

We are to pray always, and watch constantly. The one note that rings out from the text is this: **TAKE THE SWORD! TAKE THE SWORD!** No longer is it, talk and debate! No longer is it, parley and compromise! The word of thunder is-*Take the sword*. The Captain's voice is clear as a trumpet-*Take the sword and PRAY always!*

Begin at home, and, for many a day, you will have your hands full. When you have slain all the rebels at home, and long before that, you may take a turn at those around you in the world, and in the professing church. Inside your own heart you will find a band of bandits which should be exterminated. There will always be need to keep the sword going within your own territory. End this civil war before you go into foreign parts.

You are to put on the heavenly armor in order that you may stand; and you will need it to maintain the position in which your Captain has placed you. We are to take this sword with a purpose. We are to use it that we may be able to stand and to withstand. If you want to stand, draw the sword, and smite your doubts. Pierce it through with the Word.

No sinner around you will be saved except by the knowledge of the great truths contained in the Word of God. No man will ever be brought to repentance, to faith, and to life in Christ, apart from the constant application of the truth through the Spirit. I hear great shouting, great noises everywhere, about great things that are going to be done: let us see them. The whole world is going to be embraced within the church; so they say. I fear the world will not be much the better for inclusion in such a church. Big boasters should heed the word of the wise man, "*Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off*" (1 Kings 20:11). If the champion goeth forth with any other sword than the Word of God, he had better not boast at all; for he will come back with his sword broken, his shield cast away, and himself grimy with dishonor. **Defeat awaits that man who forsakes the written Word of the Lord.**

Our divine Lord in the wilderness was tempted of the devil. He might have fought the satan with a thousand weapons; but He chose to defeat him with this ONE ONLY. He said, "It is written; it is written; it is written." but I give you this direction for all holy warfare- "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." You must overcome every enemy; and this weapon is all you need.

## WE ARE BATTLE READY

Abba Father, we stand here today to proclaim that we will be battle ready at all times according to Ephesian 6 (vs. 10-18). WE WILL follow Your Word to prepare ourselves to STAND against the enemy's schemes.

WE WILL submit to You, resist the enemy and watch him flee. We will draw near to You, Lord, and You will draw near to us. We will humble ourselves in Your sight O Lord and will cleanse our hands, and purify our hearts before you (James 4:7-10).

### Defensive Armor of God

We acknowledge that we must "*be strong in You, Lord and in the might of Your strength*" (Eph. 6:10, Legacy Standard Bible). We will begin each day by putting on the "*full armor of God, so that we will be able to STAND FIRM against the schemes*" of the enemy (Eph. 6:11 LSB).

For it is written, "*...our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places*" (Eph. 6:12 LSB).

We understand that when we see political deception, problems in our families, or wars in the world, the battle is spiritual at its core, and therefore we will love the people who seem to be in opposition to us and will fight the real enemy, the father of lies, who is behind the scenes.

**Therefore, WE WILL** "*take up the full armor of God, so that we will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to STAND FIRM*" (Eph. 6:13 LSB). Lord, remind us that we are simply to STAND FIRM and not to chase after the enemy.

### I proclaim I WILL STAND FIRM and . . .

- I WILL gird [secure] my waist with the belt of TRUTH, sincerity, and a good conscience (Eph. 6:14).
- I WILL "put on the breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS" which includes integrity, virtue, purity of life, and correctness of thinking, feeling and acting (Eph. 6:14 NKJ).
- I WILL "shod my feet with the preparation of the GOSPEL of PEACE" by putting on my military boots, standing ready and in peace no matter what rages around me (Eph. 6:15 NKJ).
- I WILL, "above all, take the shield of FAITH with which" will enable me "*to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one*" (Eph. 6:16 NKJ). "*You, O Yahweh, are a shield about me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head*" (Ps. 3:3 LSB). Thank you that I am

*"justified by faith ... an introduction by faith into this grace in which I STAND"*  
(Romans 5:1 KJV).

- I WILL receive the "helmet, the hope of SALVATION" (1 Thess. 5:8, Eph. 6:17). "*Hope does not put to shame, because Your love has been poured in my heart through the Holy Spirit who was given to us*" (Rom. 5:5 LSB). This hope of salvation protects my head, which commands my entire body.

## Offensive Armor of God: The Word of God and Prayer

- I WILL receive "the SWORD of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17), not made by the will of man or of one's own interpretation, but by the Holy Spirit, spoken from God (2 Peter 1:20-21). We thank You, Father, that we have The Prophetic Word [scripture] more fully confirmed" than the apostles or disciples had, to which we would "*do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Morning Star rises in our hearts*" (1 Peter 1:19).

This SWORD is the ONE defensive weapon we carry and WE WILL study to show ourselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15). With this SWORD, when wielded correctly, we can take down the enemy. "*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*" (Hebrews 4:12).

WE WILL use it that we may be able to STAND and to WITHSTAND. As we STAND, we will draw the SWORD and smite the enemy; piercing him through with the Word just as Jesus did in the wilderness. Jesus spoke, "*As it is written*" three times and the SWORD [The Word of God] defeated the enemy.

I WILL take up the SWORD of the Spirit, the Word, that You, Father, hasten to perform (Jer. 1:12) and it is Your Word, not my words, that do not return void (Isaiah 55:11).

I proclaim that I WILL give honor to Your Word as You do, esteeming Your Word above Your name (Psalm 138:2). I WILL set aside time each day to sharpen my SWORD with the knowledge of the Word.

- WE WILL take the SWORD of the Spirit [the word of God] and pray, "*always with all prayer and supplication [imploring request] in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints*" (Eph. 6:18 LSB). I will be in a state of perpetual watch and will persevere in prayer, seeking and imploring You on behalf of other believers, according to Your Word.

WE WILL "*be sober and vigilant; because our adversary walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Peter 5:8). "*The end of all things is at hand; therefore, we will be serious and watchful in our prayers*" (1 Peter 4:7).

WE WILL “*Let the exaltations of God be in our throats, and the two-edged SWORD of the Word of God, in our hand .... to execute on them the judgment written in Your Word* (Psalm 149:6, 9 KJV). We will proclaim Your will through Your Word in our prayers.

## Take Your Position

Father, we need to constantly be reminded that the Battle is not ours! It belongs to You! As it is written, “*For Yahweh, your God, is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you*” (Deut. 20:4 LSB).

### I proclaim . . . .

- I WILL “*not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not mine, but God’s. I will not need to fight in this battle.*” I WILL position myself, “*STAND STILL and see the salvation of the Lord*” (2 Chron. 20:15, 17). Yahweh will fight for me and I have only STAND FIRM and to be silent” (Exodus 14:13-14 ESV).
- I WILL not rely on myself as it is “*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts*” (Zech. 4:6 KJV). For “*The Lord is a man of war; Yahweh is His name*” (Exodus 15:3).

“*Yahweh is the one who goes ahead of me; He will be with me. He will not fail me or forsake me. I will not fear or be dismayed*” (Deut. 31:8). I “*will not go out in haste, nor by flight; for Yahweh will go before me, and the God of Israel will be my rear guard*” (Isaiah 52:12).

- WE WILL take our positions and STAND FIRM.
- WE WILL be still, and know that You are God (Psalm 46:10a ) and that “*In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*” (Rom. 8:37).

So, Father as we move into this new year with battles ahead of us, WE WILL . . .

- Put on the whole Armor of God
- TAKE THE SWORD
- PRAY
- STAND FIRM
- and watch You fight the battle and bring the victory for YOUR GLORY!

## Commentary on Ephesians 6:10-18

### Jamieson, Fausset & Brown

**10. my brethren** -- Some of the oldest manuscripts omit these words. Some with *Vulgate* retain them. The phrase occurs nowhere else in the Epistle (see, however, [Eph 6:23](#)); if genuine, it is appropriate here in the close of the Epistle, where he is urging his fellow soldiers to the good fight in the Christian armor. Most of the oldest manuscripts for "finally," read, "from henceforth" ( [Gal 6:17](#) ).

**be strong** -- *Greek*, "be strengthened."

**in the power of his might** -- *Christ's* might: as in [Eph 1:19](#), it is *the Father's* might.

**11. the whole armour** -- the armor of light ( [Rom 13:12](#) ); on the right hand and left ( [2Cr 6:7](#) ). The panoply offensive and defensive. An image readily suggested by the Roman armory, Paul being now in Rome. Repeated emphatically, [Eph 6:13](#). In [Rom 13:14](#) it is, "Put ye on *the Lord Jesus Christ*"; in putting on Him, and the new man in Him, we put on "the whole armor of God." No opening at the head, the feet, the heart, the belly, the eye, the ear, or the tongue, is to be given to satan. Believers have once for all overcome him; but on the ground of this fundamental victory gained over him, they are ever again to fight against and overcome him, even as they who once die with Christ have continually to mortify their members upon earth ( [Rom 6:2-14](#) [Col 3:3, 5](#) ).

**of God** -- furnished by God; not our own, else it would not stand ( [Psa 35:1-3](#) ). Spiritual, therefore, and mighty through God, not carnal ( [2Cr 10:4](#) ).

**wiles**--literally, "*schemes sought out*" for deceiving (compare [2Cr 11:14](#) ).

**the devil**--the ruling chief of the foes ( [Eph 6:12](#) ) organized into a kingdom of darkness ( [Mat 12:26](#) ), opposed to the kingdom of light.

**12.** *Greek*, "For our wrestling ('the wrestling' in which we are engaged) is not against flesh." Flesh and blood foes are satan's mere tools, the real foe lurking behind them is satan himself, with whom our conflict is. "Wrestling" implies that it is a hand-to-hand and foot-to-foot struggle for the mastery: to wrestle successfully with satan, we must wrestle with GOD in irresistible prayer like Jacob ( [Gen 32:24-29](#) [Hsa 12:4](#) ).

Translate, "*The principalities. . . the powers*" ( [Eph 1:21](#) [Col 1:16](#); [Eph 3:10](#)). The same grades of powers are specified in the case of the demons here, as in that of angels there (compare [Rom 8:38](#) [1Cr 15:24](#) [Col 2:15](#) ). The Ephesians had practiced sorcery ( [Act 19:19](#) ), so that he appropriately treats of evil spirits in addressing them. The more clearly any book of Scripture, as this, treats of the

economy of the kingdom of light, the more clearly does it set forth the kingdom of darkness. Hence, nowhere does the satanic kingdom come more clearly into view than in the Gospels which treat of Christ, the true Light.

**rulers of the darkness of this world** -- Greek, "age" or "course of the world." But the oldest manuscripts omit "of world." Translate, "Against the world rulers of this (present) darkness" ( [Eph 2:2](#) [5:8](#) [Luk 22:53](#) [Col 1:13](#) ). On satan and his demons being "world rulers," compare [Jhn 12:31](#) [14:30](#) [16:11](#) [Luk 4:6](#) [2Cr 4:4](#) [1John 5:19](#) Greek, "lieth in the wicked one." Though they be "world rulers," they are not the ruler of the universe; and their usurped rule of the world is soon to cease, when He shall "come whose right it is" ( [Eze 21:27](#) ). Two cases prove Satan not to be a mere subjective fancy: (1) Christ's temptation; (2) the entrance of demons into the swine (for these are incapable of such fancies). satan tries to parody, or imitate in a perverted way, God's working ( [2Cr 11:13](#), [14](#) ). So, when God became incarnate, satan, by his demons, took forcible possession of human bodies. Thus, the demoniacally possessed were not peculiarly wicked, but miserable, and so fit subjects for Jesus' pity. Paul makes no mention of demoniacal possession, so that in the time he wrote, it seems to have ceased.

**spiritual wickedness** – rather as Greek, "The spiritual hosts of wickedness." As three of the clauses describe the *power*, so this fourth, the *wickedness* of our spiritual foes ( [Mat 12:45](#) ).

**in high places** -- Greek, "heavenly places": in [Eph 2:2](#), "the air." The alteration of expression to "in heavenly places," is in order to mark the higher range of their powers than ours, they having been, up to the ascension ( [Rev 12:5](#), [9](#), [10](#) ), dwellers "in the heavenly places" ( [Job 1:7](#) ), and being now in the regions of the air which are called the heavens. Moreover, pride and presumption are the sins in heavenly places to which they tempt especially, being those by which they themselves fell from heavenly places ( [Isa 14:12-15](#) ). But believers have naught to fear, being "*blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places*" ( [Eph 1:3](#) ).

**13. take. . . of God** -- not "make," God has done that: you have only to "take up" and put it on. The Ephesians were familiar with the idea of the gods giving armor to mythical heroes: thus Paul's allusion would be appropriate.

**the evil day** -- the day of Satan's special assaults ( [Eph 6:12](#), [16](#) ) in life and at the dying hour (compare [Rev 3:10](#) ). We must have our armor always on, to be ready against the evil day which may come at any moment, the war being perpetual ( [Psa 41:1](#), *Margin* ).

**done all** -- rather, "accomplished all things," namely, necessary to the fight, and becoming a good soldier.

**14. Stand** --The repetition in [Eph 6:11, 14](#), shows that *standing*, that is, *maintaining our ground*, not yielding or fleeing, is the grand aim of the Christian soldier.

Translate as Greek, "Having girt about your loins with truth," that is, with truthfulness, sincerity, a good conscience ([2Cr 1:12](#) [1Ti 1:5, 18](#) [3:9](#)). Truth is the band that girds up and keeps together the flowing robes, so as that the Christian soldier may be unencumbered for action. So the Passover was eaten with the loins girt, and the shoes on the feet ([Exd 12:11](#); compare [Isa 5:27](#) [Luk 12:35](#)).

Faithfulness (Septuagint, "truth") is the girdle of Messiah ([Isa 11:5](#)): so *truth* of His followers.

**having on** --Greek, "having put on."

**breastplate of righteousness** -- ([Isa 59:17](#)), similarly of Messiah.

"Righteousness" is here joined with "truth," as in [Eph 5:9](#) : *righteousness* in works, *truth* in words [ESTIUS] ([1Jo 3:7](#)). Christ's righteousness is wrought in us by the Spirit. "Faith and love," that is, faith working righteousness by love, are "the breastplate" in [1Th 5:8](#).

**15.** Translate, "Having shod your feet" (referring to the sandals, or to the military shoes then used).

**the preparation** -- rather, "the preparedness," or "readiness of," that is, arising from the "Gospel" ([Psa 10:17](#)). Preparedness to do and suffer all that God wills; readiness for march, as a Christian soldier.

**gospel of peace** -- (compare [Luk 1:79](#) [Rom 10:15](#)). The "peace" within forms a beautiful contrast to the raging of the outward conflict ([Isa 26:3](#) [Phl 4:7](#)).

**16. Above all** -- rather, "Over all"; so as to cover all that has been put on before. Three integuments are specified, the breastplate, girdle, and shoes; two defenses, the helmet and shield; and two offensive weapons, the sword and the spear (prayer). ALFORD translates, "Besides all," as the Greek is translated, [Luk 3:20](#). But if it meant this, it would have come *last* in the list (compare [Col 3:14](#) ).

**shield** -- the large oblong oval door-like shield of the Romans, four feet long by two and a half feet broad; not the small round buckler.

**ye shall be able** -- not *merely*, "ye may." The shield of faith will *certainly* intercept, and so "quench, all the fiery darts" (an image from the ancient fire-darts, formed of cane, with tow and combustibles ignited on the head of the shaft, so as to set fire to woodwork, tents).

**of the wicked** -- rather "of the EVIL ONE." Faith conquers him ([1Pe 5:9](#)), and his darts of temptation to wrath, lust, revenge, despair, &c. It overcomes the world ([1John 5:4](#)), and so the prince of the world ([1John 5:18](#)).

**17. take** -- a different Greek word from that in [Eph 6:13, 16](#); translate, therefore, "receive," "accept," namely, the helmet offered by the Lord, namely, "salvation" appropriated, as [1Th 5:8](#), "Helmet, the hope of salvation"; not an uncertain hope, but one that brings with it no shame of disappointment ( [Rom 5:5](#) ). It is subjoined to the shield of faith, as being its inseparable accompaniment (compare [Rom 5:1, 5](#) ). The head of the soldier was among the principal parts to be defended, as on it the deadliest strokes might fall, and it is the head that commands the whole body. The head is the seat of the *mind*, which, when it has laid hold of the sure Gospel "hope" of eternal life, will not receive false doctrine, or give way to satan's temptations to *despair*. God, by this hope, "lifts up the head" ( [Psa 3:3 Luk 21:28](#) ).

**sword of the Spirit** -- that is, furnished by the Spirit, who inspired the writers of the word of God ( [2 Pet 1:21](#) ). Again the Trinity is implied: the Spirit here; and Christ in "salvation" and God the Father, [Eph 6:13](#) (compare [Hbr 4:12 Rev 1:16 2:12](#) ). The two-edged sword, cutting both ways ( [Psa 45:3, 5](#) ), striking some with conviction and conversion, and others with condemnation ( [Isa 11:4 Rev 19:15](#) ), is in the *mouth* of Christ ( [Isa 49:2](#) ), in the *hand* of His saints ( [Psa 149:6](#) ). Christ's use of this sword in the temptation is our pattern as to how we are to wield it against satan ( [Mat 4:4, 7, 10](#) ). There is no armor specified for the back, but only for the front of the body; implying that we must never turn our back to the foe ( [Luk 9:62](#) ); our only safety is in resisting ceaselessly ( [Mat 4:11 Jam 4:7](#) ).

**18. always** -- Greek, "in every season"; implying *opportunity* and *exigency* ( [Col 4:2](#) ). Paul uses the very words of Jesus in [Luk 21:36](#) (a Gospel which he quotes elsewhere, in undesigned consonance with the fact of Luke being his associate in travel, [1 Cor 11:23, 1Ti 5:18](#) ). Compare [Luk 18:1 Rom 12:12 1Th 5:17](#).

**with all** -- that is, every kind of.

**prayer** -- a sacred term for *prayer* in general.

**supplication** -- a common term for a special kind of prayer [HARLESS], *an imploring request*. "Prayer" for obtaining blessings, "supplication" for averting evils which we fear [GROTIUS].

**in the Spirit** -- to be joined with "praying." It is he *in us*, as the Spirit of adoption, who prays, and enables us to pray ( [Rom 8:15, 26 Gal 4:6 Jud 1:20](#) ).

**watching** -- not sleeping ( [Eph 5:14 Psa 88:13 Mat 26:41](#) ). So in the temple a perpetual watch was maintained (compare Anna, [Luk 2:37](#) ).

**thereunto**--"watching unto" (with a view to) prayer and supplication.

**with**--Greek, "in." *Persevering constancy* ("perseverance") *and* (that is, exhibited in) *supplication* are to be the element in which our watchfulness is to be exercised.

**for all saints**--as none is so perfect as not to need the intercessions of his fellow Christians.