

## Stand

*"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. Wherefore, take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:10-13).*

The apostle in this section returns to general admonitions for all Christians. He had left such instructions in 5:22 when he began giving advise to specific classes of people: wives (5:22, 24), husbands (5:23, 24, 28-31), children (6:1-3), parents (6:4), servants (6:5-7), and masters (Eph. 6:7). His letter is almost complete but one final exhortation remains: an exhortation to stand whatever the circumstances or whoever the enemy.

His appeal that they be "*strong in the Lord*" and in the strength of his might is his appeal that we lean upon the Lord for our strength. The song, "I am weak but thou art strong," might very well have been inspired from the apostle's appeal here. How weak we are -- how mighty our adversary! We can overcome, we can be victorious, but it will be through the strength which the Lord supplies.

To stand in the strength of His might means necessarily that we arm ourselves with the armor of God. He knows -- we are naive and unsuspecting -- what a cunning, crafty opponent we have. and, while we will reserve specific attention to the armor of God has provided for a later article, suffice it to say that we must put on the WHOLE armor of God, leaving off just one simple piece makes us vulnerable to Satan's darts.

We must stand against the "*wiles*" of the devil. This word suggests trickery and deceit. Many similar expressions are expressed elsewhere which emphasize these attributes of Satan. Peter warned, "*Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Pet. 5:8). John wrote, "*The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire*" (Rev. 20:10). Paul wrote, "*I fear, lest by any means that as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ*" (2 Cor. 11:3). Other passages might also be added but these are sufficient to show Satan's crafty nature.

*"For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities."* Paul wrote Corinthians, *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh ..."* (2 Cor. 10:3). These passages are not precisely the same but both involve the war we are engaged in. We do not war with carnal weapons, and although we are sometimes in conflict with those who are in the flesh, the real struggle is not with man but with those forces which incite man to set himself in league with the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.

Satan's weapons are mighty, but different in many ways from God's. Many a courageous man would stand steadfastly against Satan were he to face him with a literal sword, but such are not his tactics. He entices, but with the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and vain glory of life. He moves us to act through jealousy, malice and hate. And many noble become victims of his, falling in the greatest conflict we will ever face. We must stand, stand therefore, having done all to stand. But to stand it must be with the strength supplied by God, not our own. We must be protected by the armor which God provides!

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