

# CHAPTER 6

## INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 6

In this chapter the apostle goes on with his exhortations to relative and domestic duties, and considers those of children and parents, and of servants and masters; and next he exhorts the saints in general to constancy and perseverance in the exercise of grace, and the performance of duty in the strength of Christ, and with the use of the armour of God described by him; entreats them to pray for him; gives the reasons of sending Tychicus, who brought them this epistle, and closes it with his apostolical salutation. He begins with the duties of children to their parents, which are submission and obedience to them, honour, fear, and reverence of them; the arguments engaging thereunto are taken from the light of nature and reason, from the command of God, and the promise annexed to it, (~~☞~~ Ephesians 6:1-3). Then follow the duties of fathers to their children, who are exhorted not to use them with too much rigour, and so provoke them to wrath, but to bring them up in a religious manner, that they may serve the Lord, (~~☞~~ Ephesians 6:4). Next he observes the duties of servants to their masters, which are subjection and obedience, which should be done with reverence of them, with simplicity of heart, as unto Christ, not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but with the heart, and with good will, as doing the will of God, and as if it was to the Lord, and not men; to which they are encouraged by a promise of reward which is given without respect to bond or free, (~~☞~~ Ephesians 6:5-8). And masters, they are exhorted to do what is right and just to their servants, and not terrify them with menaces; to which they are moved by the consideration of their having a master in heaven, who is no respecter of persons, (~~☞~~ Ephesians 6:9). From hence the apostle passes to a general exhortation to the saints to behave with firmness and constancy of mind, though they had many enemies, and these mighty and powerful, and more than a match for them; relying on the power and strength of Christ, and making use of the whole armour of God, which he advises them to take, that they might stand and withstand in the worst of times, (~~☞~~ Ephesians 6:10-13), the several parts of which he enumerates, as the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, whereby the fiery darts of Satan are quenched,

the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit the word of God, and spiritual prayer of every sort for all saints, attended with watching and perseverance, (<sup>4064</sup>Ephesians 6:14-18), which last part of the spiritual armour being mentioned, leads on the apostle to entreat the Ephesians to pray for him, that he might freely and boldly preach the Gospel; which he commends from the mysterious nature and subject of it, from his character as an ambassador for it, or for Christ, the sum and substance of it, and from his being in bonds for it; which showed how great an esteem he had of it, and how heartily concerned he was to preach it without fear, (<sup>4069</sup>Ephesians 6:19,20). And then adds, that the reasons of his sending Tychicus, whom he describes by his relation to him as a brother, and his affection for him, and by his office as a minister, and his faithfulness in it, were, that they might be acquainted with his circumstances, in what state and condition he was, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual, and that their hearts might be comforted by him, (<sup>4072</sup>Ephesians 6:21,22). And the epistle is concluded with the apostle's salutation; and the persons saluted are the brethren of this church, and all that love Christ Jesus sincerely; and the blessings wished for are peace, love, with faith and grace; the persons from whom they are desired are God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, (<sup>4073</sup>Ephesians 6:23,24).

**Ver. 1.** *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, &c.*] The persons whose duty this is, “children”, are such of every sex, male and female, and of every age, and of every state and condition; and though the true, legitimate, and immediate offspring of men may be chiefly respected, yet not exclusive of spurious children, and adopted ones, and of children-in-law; and the persons to whom obedience from them is due, are not only real and immediate parents, both father and mother, but such who are in the room of parents, as step-fathers, step-mothers, guardians, nurses, &c. and all who are in the ascending line, as grandfathers, grandmothers, &c. to these, children should be subject and obedient in all things lawful, just, and good; in everything that is not sinful and unlawful, by the word of God; and in things indifferent, as much as in them lies, and even in things which are difficult to perform: and this obedience should be hearty and sincere, and not merely verbal, and in show and appearance, nor mercenary; and should be joined with gratitude and thankfulness for past favours: and it should be “in the Lord”; which may be considered either as a limitation of the obedience, that it should be in things that are agreeable to the mind and will of the Lord; or as an argument to it, because it is the command of the

Lord, and is wellpleasing in his sight, and makes for his glory, and therefore should be done for his sake:

*for this is right*; it appears to be right by the light of nature, by which the very Heathens have taught it; and it is equitable from reason that so it should be; and it is just by the law of God, which commands nothing but what is holy, just, and good.

**Ver. 2.** *Honour thy father and mother*, &c.] This explains who parents are, and points at some branches of obedience due unto them; for they are not only to be loved, and to be feared, and revered, their corrections to be submitted to, offences against them to be acknowledged, their tempers to be bore with, and their infirmities covered; but they are to be honoured in thought, word, and gesture; they are to be highly thought of and esteemed; they are to be spoken to, and of, very honourably, and with great veneration and to be behaved to in a very respectful manner; and they are to be relieved, assisted, and maintained in comfortable way when aged, and in necessitous circumstances; and which may be chiefly designed. So the Jews explain *dwk*, “the honour” due to parents, by, &c. *lykam*, “giving them food, drink”, and “clothing”, unloosing their shoes, and leading them out and in <sup>f69</sup>. Compare with this (~~4806~~ 1 Timothy 5:4,17); (see Gill on “~~4804~~ Matthew 15:4”);

*which is the first commandment with promise*: it is the fifth commandment in the decalogue, but the first that has a promise annexed to it: it is reckoned by the Jews <sup>f70</sup> the weightiest of the weightiest commands of the law; and the reward bestowed on it, is length of days, as follows.

**Ver. 3.** *That it may be well with thee*, &c.] In this world, and that which is to come; (see ~~4806~~ Deuteronomy 5:16). The Jews <sup>f71</sup> say,

“there are four things, which if a man does, he eats the fruit of them in this world, and the capital part remains for him in the world to come; and they are these, *μaw ba dwbyk*; “honouring father and mother”, doing acts of beneficence, making peace between a man and his neighbour, and learning of the law, which answers to them all.”

*And thou mayest live long on the earth*: length of days is in itself a blessing; and though men's days cannot be lengthened beyond God's purpose and decree; and though obedient children do not always live long;

yet disobedience to parents often brings the judgments of God on children, so that they die not a common death, (<sup><1084></sup>2 Samuel 18:14 <sup><1017></sup>Proverbs 30:17). On those words in (<sup><6347></sup>Deuteronomy 32:47), the Jews <sup>f72</sup> have this paraphrase;

“because it is your life, *μaw ba dwbyk hz*, “this is honouring father and mother; and through this thing ye shall prolong your days”, this is beneficence.”

It may be observed, that the words in this promissory part are not the same as in the decalogue, where they stand thus, “that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee”, (<sup><0212></sup>Exodus 20:12), referring to the land of Canaan; for the law in the form of it, in which it was delivered by Moses, only concerned the people of the Jews; wherefore to suit this law, and the promise of it, to others, the apostle alters the language of it.

**Ver. 4.** *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath,* &c.] Neither by words; by unjust and, unreasonable commands; by contumelious and reproachful language; by frequent and public chidings, and by indiscreet and passionate expressions: nor by deeds; preferring one to another; by denying them the necessaries of life; by not allowing them proper recreation; by severe and cruel blows, and inhuman usage; by not giving them suitable education; by an improper disposal of them in marriage; and by profusely spending their estates, and leaving nothing to them: not but that parents may, and ought to correct and rebuke their children; nor are they accountable to them for their conduct; yet they should take care not to provoke them to wrath, because this alienates their minds from them, and renders their instructions and corrections useless, and puts them upon sinful practices; wrath lets in Satan, and leads to sin against God; and indeed it is difficult in the best of men to be angry and not sin; (see <sup><1021></sup>Colossians 3:21). Fathers are particularly mentioned, they being the heads of families, and are apt to be too severe, as mothers too indulgent.

*But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;* instructing them in the knowledge of divine things, setting them good examples, taking care to prevent their falling into bad company, praying with them, and for them, bringing them into the house of God, under the means of grace, to attend public worship; all which, under a divine blessing, may be very useful to them; the example of Abraham is worthy of imitation,

(<sup><0189></sup>Genesis 18:19), and the advice of the wise man deserves attention, (<sup><0226></sup>Proverbs 22:6).

**Ver. 5.** *Servants, be obedient to them that are [your] masters, &c.*] The apostle enlarges on the duty of servants, as well as frequently inculcates it in his epistles; because, generally speaking, they were more rude and ignorant, and less pains were taken with them to instruct them; they were apt to be impatient and weary of the yoke; and scandal was like to arise from servants in the first ages of Christianity through some libertines, and the licentiousness of the false teachers, who insinuated, that servitude was inconsistent with Christian freedom: the persons exhorted are “servants”, bond servants, and hired servants; who are to be subject to, and obey their “masters”, of each sex, whether male or female, of every condition, whether poor or rich, believers or unbelievers, good or bad humoured, gentle or froward: such as are their masters

*according to the flesh*; or “carnal masters”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; even though they are unregenerate men, and are in a state of nature, and only mind the things of the flesh, yet they are to be obeyed in their lawful commands; or “in things pertaining to the flesh”, as the Arabic version renders it; in things temporal, which concern the body, and this temporal life; not in things spiritual and religious, or that belong to conscience, and which are contrary to them: or “according to your flesh”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; signifying that they are only masters over their bodies, not their consciences; and that their power only extends to corporeal things, and can last no longer than while they are in the flesh; (see <sup><0389></sup>Job 3:19); and obedience is to be yielded to them

*with fear and trembling*; with great humility and respect, with reverence of them, and giving honour to them, with carefulness not to offend them, with submission to their reproofs and corrections, and with fear of punishment; but more especially with the fear of God, being by that influenced and constrained to obedience;

*in singleness of heart*; with readiness and cheerfulness, without hypocrisy and dissimulation, and with all integrity and faithfulness:

*as unto Christ*; it being agreeable to his will, and what makes for his glory, and serves to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

**Ver. 6.** *Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, &c.*] Doing nothing but when under the master's eye, and then pretending a great deal of diligence and

industry, in order to ingratiate themselves into his affections, and neglecting his business when he is absent; whereas they ought to attend his service in his absence, as well as in his presence, and so seek to please him, which is commendable.

*But as the servants of Christ*; acting in like manner as the servants of Christ, who are not menpleasers; or as if they themselves were serving Christ, as indeed they are, when they are doing that which is the will of Christ:

*doing the will of God from the heart*; meaning not the will of God in a religious, but in a civil sense, yielding a cheerful and hearty obedience to their own masters.

**Ver. 7.** *With good will doing service*, &c.] To their masters; not grudgingly, with an ill will; no otherwise, nor longer than when they are forced to it; but of a ready mind, and with a cheerful spirit, taking delight in their work, and reckoning it a pleasure to serve their masters; as an Israelite that is not sold, who does his work *wnwxrb*, “with his good will”, and according to his own mind<sup>f73</sup>; doing what they do

*as to the Lord, and not to men*; not merely because it is the will of men, and they are commanded by them, and in order to please them, but because it is the will of the Lord, and is wellpleasing in his sight.

**Ver. 8.** *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth*, &c.] According to the will of God, from right principles in his heart, and with a view to God's glory:

*the same shall he receive of the Lord*; that is, he shall receive the fruit and advantage of it, in a way of grace,

*whether [he be] bond or free*; a bondman or a free man, a master or a servant.

**Ver. 9.** *And ye masters do the same things unto them*, &c.] This does not refer to service and obedience, but to singleness of heart, benevolence, humanity, and a regard to Christ, and the will of God, and to the doing of good things, and to the performance of their duty, as they would have their servants do theirs; whose duty, if religious masters, is, with respect to their souls, to instruct them in, and use them to religious exercises, to pray with them, and for them, to set them good examples, to prevent them falling

into, bad company, and to allow them proper time for religious duties; and with respect to their bodies, and outward concerns, to provide sufficient food and proper raiment for them, or to give them their due wages, to take care of them when sick or lame, and show compassion and humanity to them, to encourage those that are prudent, faithful, and laborious, and to correct the disobedient, and expel the incorrigible:

*forbearing threatening*; not that they may not in any sense threaten, but not always, nor too often, nor too much, and with great things on light occasions; nor should they be too forward to execute their threatenings, especially when their servants repent and amend; they should then forbear them and forgive; and so the Syriac version renders it, “forgive their offences”: this is opposed to all hard rigour, and ill usage, either by words or blows. And this is a rule given by the Jews<sup>f74</sup>, that a master should not multiply clamour and anger, but should speak him (his servant) quietly, and in a still manner, and he will hear his objections, or arguments and reasons:

*knowing that your master also is in heaven*; meaning Christ, who employs, provides for, and uses well all his servants, and to whom masters must be accountable for their usage of servants; for he is the common master of masters and servants; and so the Alexandrian copy, and Vulgate Latin version, read, “their and your master”: and the place of his habitation is mentioned, to distinguish him from earthly masters; and the more to move and excite masters to their duty, since he being in heaven overlooks and takes notice of all their actions, as the omniscient God; and being omnipotent, has it in his power to plead and avenge the cause of the injured:

*neither is there respect of persons with him*; as whether they are of this, or the other nation, Jew or Gentile; whether in this, or that state and condition, or in such and such circumstances of life; whether masters or servants, bond or free, or whether Canaanitish or Hebrew servants; between which the Jews<sup>f75</sup> made a difference, and allowed of rigour to be used to the one, but required mercy and kindness to be showed to the other; and so were respecters of persons.

**Ver. 10.** *Finally, my brethren*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the apostle's exhortations, in which he addresses the saints as his brethren; which appellation he uses, not merely as a familiar way of speaking among the Jews, but in regard to them as regenerate persons, and of the same family and household of God with himself; and he calls them so, to show his

humility, and as a proof of his affection to them, and with a design to encourage them to their duty, as follows:

*be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; which is directed to, partly on account of the things before exhorted to, which could not be performed in their own strength; and partly with respect to their many and potent enemies hereafter mentioned, against whom they had no might nor power of their own; and therefore the apostle points out the Lord Jesus Christ unto them, in whom are strength, power, and might, even everlasting strength, to enable them to perform their duty, and to fight against every enemy, sin, Satan, and the world; for though they are weak, and 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.

**Ver. 11.** *Put on the whole armour of God, &c.*] Not that which God himself is sometimes clothed with, and uses against his enemies; but what he has provided for his people, and furnishes them with; the particulars of which are after mentioned: and it is called “the armour of God”, because it is prepared by him for his people, and is bestowed on them by him; and because it is in its own nature divine and spiritual, and not carnal; and because it is provided for fighting the Lord's battles, and is used in them; and because the efficacy of it is from him, and the execution it does 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”; which is not to make and provide this armour, but to take it, as in (~~4063~~ Ephesians 6:13); as being ready made and provided, and to expect and prepare for battle, and make use of it; and this supposes saints to be in a warfare state, and that they are in the character of soldiers, and have enemies to fight with, and therefore should be accoutred with proper and suitable armour, to meet them:

*that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*; who is the grand enemy of Christ and his people, and a very powerful and cunning one he is; so that the whole armour of God should be put on, which is proof against all his might and craft, in order to stand against him, oppose



him, and fight, and get the victory over him, which in the issue is always obtained by believers; for they not only stand their ground in the strength of Christ, and by the use of their armour confound his schemes, and baffle all his arts and stratagems, but are more than conquerors through him that has loved them.

**Ver. 12.** *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, &c.*] The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read “you”, instead of “we”. This is a reason why saints should be strong in the Lord, and why they should put on the whole armour of God, and prepare for battle, since their enemies are such as here described: not “flesh and blood”; frail mortal men, such as were wrestled against in the Olympic games, to which the apostle alludes. For this wrestling, as Philo the Jew says <sup>f76</sup>, concerning Jacob's wrestling, is not of the body, but of the soul; (see <sup><4067></sup>Matthew 16:17 <sup><8016></sup>Galatians 1:16); 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 adherence to Christ, and an exercise of faith upon him, which 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;* by whom are meant not civil magistrates, or the Roman governors, though these are sometimes so called, (<sup><501></sup>Titus 3:1), and may be said to be the rulers of the darkness of this world, or of the dark Heathen world, and were in high places, and were of wicked and malicious spirits, against the people of Christ; yet these cannot be opposed to flesh and blood, or to men, since they were such themselves; and though they were in high, yet not in heavenly places; and the connection with the preceding verse shows the contrary, the enemy being the devil, and the armour spiritual; wherefore the devils are here designed, who are described from their power, rule, and government, (see Gill on <sup><4012></sup>Ephesians 1:21”), both in this clause, and in the next:

*and against the rulers of 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, (<sup><4121></sup>John 12:31 <sup><5002></sup>2 Corinthians 4:4). The

Jews use this very word, the apostle does here, of the angel of death; who is called darkness<sup>f77</sup>; and the devil is called by them,  $\text{Æ}\text{Ç}\text{W}\text{J} \text{ I } \text{Ç} \text{ r } \text{Ç}$ , “the prince of darkness”<sup>f78</sup>; and mention is made by them of  $\text{amI} [ \text{y}\text{k}\text{w}\text{Ç}\text{j} ]$ , “the darkness of the world”<sup>f79</sup>; from whom the apostle seems to have taken these phrases, as being in common use among the Jews; who also use it of civil governors<sup>f80</sup>, and render it, as here, “the rulers of the world”, and say it signifies monarchs, such as rule from one end of the world to the other<sup>f81</sup>: some copies, and the Ethiopic version, leave out the phrase, of this world. It follows,

*against spiritual wickedness in high places*; or wicked spirits, as the devils are, unclean, proud, lying, deceitful, and malicious; who may be said to be in “high” or “heavenly places”; not in places super celestial, or in the highest heavens, in 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 armour, and be in a readiness to engage them; and so the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, “under”, or “beneath heaven”; and the Arabic version, “in the air”.

**Ver. 13.** *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, &c.*] This is a repetition of the exhortation in (<sup>491</sup>Ephesians 6:11); which repetition seems necessary by reason of the many powerful enemies mentioned in the preceding verse, and serves to explain what is meant by putting it on: and leads on the apostle to give an account of the several parts of this armour: the end of taking it is much the same as before,

*that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day*; that is, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles and stratagems of Satan, against his power and might, to oppose his schemes, and resist his temptations: and so the Syriac version renders it, “that ye may be able to meet the evil one”; to face him, and give him battle, being accoutred with the whole armour of God; though the Greek copies, and other versions, read, “in the evil day”; in 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; or rather, having took and put on the whole armour of God, in order to stand, and withstand the enemy.

**Ver. 14.** *Stand therefore*, &c.] Keep your ground, do not desert the army, the church of 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, and the several doctrines of it; (see <sup><401B></sup>Ephesians 1:13 4:15); and to have the loins girt with it, shows, that it should be near and close to the saints, and never departed from; and that it is 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 armour, and so considerable as sometimes to be put for the whole, (<sup><21E7></sup>Isaiah 5:27); and here it is mentioned in the first place:

*and having on the breastplate of righteousness*; in allusion to (<sup><2597></sup>Isaiah 59:17), meaning not works of righteousness done by men, though these are a fence when rightly used against the reproaches and charges of the enemy, as they were by Samuel, (<sup><492B></sup>1 Samuel 12:3), but rather the graces of faith and love, (<sup><518B></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:8), though faith has another place in the Christian armour, afterwards mentioned; wherefore it seems best to understand this of the righteousness of Christ, which being imputed by God, and received by faith, is a guard against, and repels the accusations and charges of Satan, and is a security from all wrath and condemnation.

**Ver. 15.** *And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.*]

The Gospel is so called, because it makes men to be of peaceable tempers and behaviour, and gives peace to distressed minds: it directs the way to eternal peace, and publishes peace made by the blood of Christ; and has a much better claim to this name, and epithet, than the law has, which is often called “peace” by the Jews <sup>f82</sup>: the “preparation” of it does not design a promptitude or readiness to preach the Gospel, or to receive it, or profess it, or to give a reason of faith in it, or to endure reproach and persecution for it; nor that readiness which the Gospel is a means of, as for every good work, for the spiritual warfare, for the Christian's journey heavenward, or for heaven itself: but the word **ετοιμασία** signifies a “base”, or foundation; and so it is used by the Septuagint interpreters on (<sup><3511></sup>Zechariah 5:11); and here it designs a firm and solid knowledge of the

Gospel, as it publishes peace by Jesus Christ, which yields a sure foundation for the Christian soldier to set his foot upon, and stand fast on; it being that to him, as the shoe is to the foot, its base or foundation: and for the feet to be “shod with” it, does not mean the outward conversation being agreeably to the Gospel, though such a walk and conversation is very beautiful and safe, and such may walk and war with intrepidity: but it designs the constant and firm standing of believers in the faith of the Gospel, and so striving and contending for it, without being moved from it, that it may continue with them. Shoes or boots, which were sometimes of iron, and sometimes of brass, are reckoned among the armour of soldiers

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**Ver. 16.** *Above all, taking the shield of faith, &c.*] Which may be understood either of the grace of faith, which is like a golden shield, precious, solid, and substantial; and like a shield of mighty men, by which mighty things are done, and by which the believer not only repels, but conquers the enemy. The Jews say <sup>f84</sup>, that repentance and good works are as a shield against divine vengeance: or rather of the object of faith, that which faith makes use of as a shield; so God himself is a shield, (<sup><0150></sup>Genesis 15:1); his divine perfections, as his power, faithfulness, truth, and immutability, which encompass the saints as a shield, and are opposed by faith to the temptations of Satan; also the love and favour of God, (<sup><0152></sup>Psalms 5:12); and particularly God in his word, (<sup><0115></sup>Proverbs 30:5), which is a shield against false doctrines, and the wiles of Satan. Moreover, Christ is a shield, (<sup><0841></sup>Psalms 84:11); and faith makes rise of him as a shield, his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; which it holds up and opposes to all the charges and objections of Satan; and who is the saints' protection, and security from the wrath of God, divine justice, and eternal death. The disciples of the wise men are said to be <sup>f85</sup> *ʿwsyr t*, “shielded men”, who, as the gloss says fight in the war of the law; but they are not like Christ's disciples, who have on the shield, and fight the fight of faith: and this is “above all” to be taken, as being the most useful part of the Christian armour; or “with all”, with the rest, this is to be taken, and by no means to be neglected; and it is to be used “in all”; in every temptation of Satan, in every conflict with that enemy, or any other.

*Wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;* of the wicked one, Satan; who was the first wicked one, and the tempter of others to wickedness; and is emphatically the wicked one, being wickedness itself; and his temptations are “fiery darts”: they may be

compared to “darts”, because they sometimes come suddenly and swiftly and thick and fast, are very numerous, and where they stick are very troublesome and grieving; (see <sup><0423></sup>Genesis 49:23,24). And they may be said to be “fiery”, because they serve to inflame the mind, and excite to sin, as lust, anger, revenge, and the like; and were they not repelled, would be the occasion of bringing into everlasting burnings. The allusion is to **βελεσι πεπυρωμενοις**, “the fiery darts”, cast by enemies into towns, and upon houses, in order to burn them <sup>f86</sup>. Mention is also made of **açad yryg**, “fiery darts”, with the Jews <sup>f87</sup>, and of Satan's casting a dart at David <sup>f88</sup>: from these customs, and ways of speaking, the apostle borrows his phrases; and suggests, that the shield of faith is of use to quench the fiery darts of Satan's temptations; so that they may not have the malignant influence they are designed for; which is chiefly done by faith's dealing with the blood of Christ. And there were ways of quenching the fiery darts alluded to; which was done by skins and hides of beasts made wet, or anointed with alum <sup>f89</sup>.

**Ver. 17.** *And take the helmet of salvation, &c.*] Meaning either Christ himself, the Saviour; and so the Arabic version renders it, “the helmet of the Saviour”: or the salvation itself, which he is the author of, and a well grounded hope of it; (see <sup><5188></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:8); the allusion is to (<sup><2597></sup>Isaiah 59:17); and such an hope of salvation by Christ is a defence of the head against false doctrines; for the helmet is a piece of armour for the head; and it is an erector of the head in times of difficulty, affliction, and distress; and it covers the head in the day of battle, when engaged with Satan, the enemy of souls:

*and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;* the word of God is compared to a “sword”, for its two edges, the law and Gospel; the one convicts of sin, and cuts to the heart for it, and the other cuts down all the goodness of man; and the Scriptures in general are a sharp sword, in convincing of sin, reproof for it, and threatening with wrath and ruin, in refuting error and heresy, and repelling Satan's temptations, and will be used in the destruction of antichrist: and this word may be called “the sword of the Spirit”, because it is not carnal, but of a spiritual nature; and is used by the spiritual man; and because the Holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version here expresses it, is the author of it; and which he furnishes the saints with, and teaches them how to make use of, and makes it powerful

and effectual. So the Jews say<sup>f90</sup>, the words of the law are like to a sword, and speak of *hrwt brj* “the sword of the law”<sup>f91</sup>

**Ver. 18.** *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit,* &c.] The last weapon is prayer, and takes in all sorts of prayer, mental and vocal, public and private; and every branch of it, as deprecation of evils, petitions for good things, and thanksgiving for mercies: and which should be used always: this stands opposed to such who pray not at all, or who have prayed, but have left it off; or who pray only in distress, and it suggests, that a man should pray as often as he has an opportunity; and particularly, that he should make use of it in times of darkness, desertion, and temptation: and this, when performed aright, is performed “in the Spirit”; with the heart, soul, and spirit engaged in it; it is put up with a true heart, and a right spirit, and without hypocrisy; in a spiritual way, and with fervency, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God.

*And watching thereunto;* either to the word, as a direction for prayer, or to prayer itself; for opportunities to pray for the assistance of the Spirit in prayer, for an answer of it, and to return thanks for blessings when bestowed; and against all dependence on it, and against Satan's temptations, and our own corruptions with respect to it:

*with all perseverance;* in it, notwithstanding what Satan and an unbelieving heart may suggest to the contrary:

*and supplication for all saints;* of every nation, age, sex, and condition, in all places, and of every denomination. So Christ taught his disciples to pray, saying, our Father, suggesting, that they were not only to pray for themselves, but for all the children of God.

**Ver. 19.** *And for me,* &c.] This shows the great humility of the apostle, and the sense he had of the greatness of the work of the ministry; and that it is the duty of people to pray for their ministers; and that no man is perfect in this life; and that the more superior members need the assistance of the inferior ones; for this request is made by the apostle not in dissimulation, or as feigning humility and modesty; but in the sincerity of his heart, and from a real sense of his need of fresh supplies of gifts and grace, to fit him for the work and service of Christ:

*that utterance may be given unto me*, or “that the word”; meaning not the subject matter of the ministry, the word of the Gospel, the word of faith, truth, and reconciliation, for that was committed to him; unless he should mean an increase of light and knowledge in it; but rather a faculty of speaking it freely and aptly, and what is commonly called elocution; not speaking with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but with the words of the Holy Ghost: or else an opportunity of preaching the word, and liberty to do it, as follows;

*that I may open my mouth boldly*; or “in the opening of my mouth”; the phrase is Rabbinical. The Jews<sup>192</sup> say, that when Moses came to write that passage, “let us make man in our image”, &c. (Gen 1:26), he said before the Lord of the world, why dost thou give **hp ʾwj tp**, “opening of the mouth”, to heretics? i.e. an occasion to them of speaking, objecting to us, and of reproving and convincing us with respect to a plurality of persons in the Deity: and a little after they say,

“wherever you **hp ʾwj tp**, “an opening of the mouth to heretics”, you will find an answer by its side, or along with it.”

Now the apostle desired he might have something to say, to object to, and to reprove and convince the unbelieving Jews; that he might do this with boldness, with all faithfulness with Courage, and intrepidity, and with freedom of speech; or “openly” and “publicly”, as the Syriac version renders it:

*to make known, the mystery of the Gospel*; or the mysterious doctrines of it, such as the doctrines of a trinity of persons, of the union of the two natures in Christ, justification by his righteousness, regeneration by his Spirit and grace, the saints' union to Christ, and communion with him, the resurrection of the dead, &c. which are called mysteries, because they were hid until revealed; and though revealed, the “modus” and “ratio” of them are not to be accounted for. Now the apostle's work was to make known these mysteries, to prove the truth of them from the word of God, and to defend them against the opposers of them; and that he might be able to do this he entreats the prayers of the saints.

**Ver. 20.** *For which I am an ambassador in bonds*, &c.] The character the apostle bore was that of an ambassador; and he was an ambassador from and for Christ, in his room and stead; he represented him, he was sent by him, and entrusted by him with the Gospel; he gave him it, and a

commission to preach it, and furnished him with qualifications for it; such as knowledge and faithfulness wisdom and prudence, courage and greatness of mind; and made his embassy successful: and he was chiefly an ambassador to the Gentiles, which showed great condescension in Christ to send him to them, and base ingratitude in the despisers and rejecters of the Gospel, for which he was an ambassador; for the embassy Christ's ministers are sent on, is the embassy of the Gospel of peace: their business is to declare that men by nature are enemies to God; that peace is made by the blood of Christ for such; by which means they are made useful to conciliate the minds of men to God's way of salvation and to bring them to submit to his government and laws: and when he adds, "in bonds", or "in a chain", he means, that he was in such circumstances, not for any crime, but for the Gospel, for which he was an ambassador; and therefore was not ashamed of his bonds, or chain, but rather gloried in them; and he makes mention of them to engage persons to a regard to him as an ambassador, and to his embassy; for an ambassador, especially an ambassador of Christ, that comes with his Gospel, and more especially that is suffering for it, ought to be received, heard, and honoured.

*That therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak;* that is, the apostle beseeches the saints to pray for him, that since he was an ambassador for the Gospel, and in bonds, that he might speak in it, or rather of it boldly and freely; that he might have both liberty from his bonds, and liberty in his soul, and freedom of speech; and that he might use boldness in delivering his message, as became an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

**Ver. 21.** *But that ye also may know my affairs, [and] how I do, &c.]* Both his temporal and spiritual affairs; as that he was in bonds, and how he was supported under them, and of what use they were to others; how that he preached in his own hired house, and with what success; and what ministering brethren he had with him to assist him; and in what condition was the church at Rome where he now was: the apostle's life and actions would bear the light, and what he did was worthy of imitation, and must be both delightful and useful to know; and the account he sends, by a messenger hereafter named, of whom he gives the following character, that credit might be the more readily given to his relation:

*Tychicus, a beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things.* This Tychicus was of Asia, who accompanied the apostle in his travels, and went with him to Rome, from whence he sent



him to several places to relate his case, and to know the state of the churches, (<sup><S407></sup>Colossians 4:7,8 <sup><S412></sup>2 Timothy 4:12 <sup><S412></sup>Titus 3:12). He calls him “a beloved brother”: he was a “brother”, because he was a partaker of the same grace, was of the same family and household of God, and was of the same function, being a minister of the Gospel, and was a “beloved” one: he was beloved of God and Christ, and of all the saints that knew him, and especially a brother beloved of the Apostle Paul; and where there is brotherhood, there should be love: he also styles him a “faithful minister in the Lord”; he was a “minister” in the work and service of the Lord, in things pertaining to him; he was one of his appointing, qualifying, and sending; and he preached Christ, and him crucified; and was a “faithful” one, to his Lord or master, in whose name he ministered, to the Gospel which he ministered, and to the souls of men to whom he ministered; and a greater character he could not well have; and therefore it need not be doubted but that he would faithfully relate all things concerning the apostle, and what he said might be depended on as truth.

**Ver. 22.** *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, &c.*] Which shows the great concern the apostle had for the churches, being willing to inform them of everything that might be for their use and service:

*that ye might know our affairs;* temporal and spiritual, and not only the apostle's affairs, but the affairs of those that were with him, who were concerned in the same common cause:

*and [that] he might comfort your hearts;* both by such a relation, and by the ministry of the Gospel to them: believers in Christ are sometimes disconsolate, by reason of indwelling sin, Satan's temptations, the hidings of God's face, afflictions and persecutions, their own sufferings, and those of others; and it is the business of the ministers of Christ to comfort them; their commission is to speak comfortably to them; and they are qualified for it, by inward comforts in their own souls; the Gospel they preach, and the message they bring, is of a comfortable nature; the Spirit of God acts by them, and with them as a comforter; and sad indeed is the state of Zion, or the church of Christ, when it has no comforters.

**Ver. 23.** *Peace [be] to the brethren, &c.*] The members of the church at Ephesus, who stood in a spiritual relation to each other; meaning all prosperity outward and inward, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; especially peace of conscience under the sprinklings of the blood of Christ, and a view of peace made with God by that blood:

*and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, an increase of these graces, and of the exercise of them, is wished for; for otherwise these brethren had both these graces, faith and love; (see ~~4015~~ Ephesians 1:15); which go together; faith works by love, and love discovers faith, and both are imperfect; faith has something lacking in it, and love is apt to grow cold, and need reviving and increasing; and these, and the increase of them, are from God the Father, who is the God of all grace, and from Jesus Christ, in whom all fulness of grace is; and these things are equally desired from the one as from the other, and shows a plurality of persons in the Godhead, and the equality of Christ with the Father; and such a wish expresses the apostle's great love and affection for the brethren, and points out the things they stand in need of; and which, being asked for such, might be expected to be enjoyed.

**Ver. 24.** *Grace [be] with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.]* Christ is the object of love, and a lovely object he is: he is to be loved because of the loveliness of his person, and the transcendent excellencies that are in him; because of his suitableness and fulness as a Saviour; and because of his great love shown to his church and people; and because of the relations he stands in to them, and the communion they have with him: love to Christ is a grace of the Spirit, and is in all believers; and though it is imperfect, and sometimes cold, it will abide for ever; it ought to be universal and superlative; all of Christ is to be loved, and he is to be loved above all: and it shows itself in a value for his Gospel, and the truths of it; in an esteem of his ordinances, and a regard to his commands; in parting with all for Christ, when called for; and in bearing all for his sake; in a well pleasedness in his company and presence, and in a concern for his absence, and in an uneasiness until he is enjoyed again: it should be fervent, and constant, and cordial, and, as here said,

*in sincerity*; from the heart, and with all the heart, and without hypocrisy; not in word only, but in deed and in truth; which appears when he is loved, as before observed: and the apostle wishes “grace” to all such sincere and hearty lovers of him; by which may be meant a fresh discovery of the free grace, love, and favour of God in Christ to them; and a fresh supply of grace from the fulness of it in Christ; and a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit to carry on the good work begun in them; as well as a continuation of the Gospel of the grace of God with them, and an increase of spiritual gifts. Grace may be connected with the word translated “sincerity”, and be rendered “grace with incorruption”: or incorruptible

grace, as true grace is an incorruptible seed; or “grace with immortality”: and so the apostle wishes not only for grace here, but for eternal happiness and glory hereafter; and then closes the epistle with an Amen, as a confirmation and asseveration of the truth of the doctrines contained in it, and as expressive of his earnest desire that the several petitions in it might be granted, and of his faith and confidence that they would be fulfilled.

The subscription,

*written from Rome to [the] Ephesians by Tychicus*, seems to be right; for that this epistle is written to the Ephesians, the inscription shows; and that it was written when the apostle was at Rome, appears from (~~the~~ Ephesians 3:1 4:1 6:20); and that it was sent by Tychicus, seems very likely from (~~the~~ Ephesians 6:21,22).

# FOOTNOTES

**Ft1** -- L. 5. c. 29.

**Ft2** -- Plin. ib. Justin ex Trogo, 50:2. c. 4.

**Ft3** -- Philostrat. Vita Apollon. 50:8. c. 3.

**Ft4** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 79. 2.

**Ft5** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 76. 3.

**Ft6** -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 119. 3. Jetzirah, p. 22. 78. Ed. Rittangel.  
R. Levi ben Gersom in Genesis fol. 14. 3. & Philo de opificio Dei, p.  
15.

**Ft7** -- Bechinat Olam, p. 260.

**Ft8** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 50. 2. & in Exodus fol. 21. 2.

**Ft9** -- Zohar in Gen, fol. 41. 3.

**Ft10** -- Ib. in Numbers fol. 76. 1. Vid. ib.; in Exodus fol. 44. 2.

**Ft11** -- Caphtor, fol. 30. 2.

**Ft12** -- Shaare Ora, fol. 4. 1.

**Ft13** -- Laert. Procem. in Vit. Philos, p. 5.

**Ft14** -- lb. in Vit. Pythagor. p. 587.

**Ft15** -- Apuleius de Deo Socratis, p. 331.

**Ft16** -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 21. 2.

**Ft17** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 21. 2. & 22. 4. & 27. 4. & 28. 2. & 35. 2. &  
44. 1.

**Ft18** -- Kimchi in loc.

**Ft19** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 8. 4. & in Exodus fol. 102. 3. Lex. Cabal. p.  
44. 45.

**Ft20** -- Maimon. Hilchot Milah, c. 2. sect. 1.

- Ft21** -- Targum in <sup><2161></sup>Isaiah 16:1. 5.
- Ft22** -- Lex. Decem Orator. p. 246.
- Ft23** -- De Abrahamo, p. 350, 351.
- Ft24** -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 110. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 33. 1. Cosri, par. 2. sect. 22. fol. 85. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 129. 4. & 135. 2. & 153. 3. & 168. 3.
- Ft25** -- R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 7. 2.
- Ft26** -- Perek Shalom, fol. 20. 1. Baal Hatturim in <sup><0512></sup>Numbers 25:12.
- Ft27** -- Vid. Kimchi in loc.
- Ft28** -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 87. 1.
- Ft29** -- Caphtor, fol. 95. 1. & 101. 1.
- Ft30** -- Itinerar. p. 28.
- Ft31** -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 89. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 92. 4.
- Ft32** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 89. 3.
- Ft33** -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 28.
- Ft34** -- Euterpe, c. 155.
- Ft35** -- T. Hieros. Bava Kama, fol. 3, 4. Misna Sota, c. 9. sect. 15. Juchasin, fol. 79. 2.
- Ft36** -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 20. 4. & in Numbers fol. 66. 3. Targ. Jon. & Jeras. in <sup><0084></sup>Genesis 3:24.
- Ft37** -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 31. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 2.
- Ft38** -- Targ. in Cant. 1:15. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Zohar in Exodus fol. 105. 4. Raziel, fol. 42. 1. & 45. 2. Caphtor, fol. 58. 2. Shaare Orn, fol. 14. 3.
- Ft39** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 154. 2.
- Ft40** -- Targum & Jarchi in Psal. lxxviii 18.
- Ft41** -- Aben Ezra in loc.

- Ft42** -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:6. c. 6.
- Ft43** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 61. 4.
- Ft44** -- R. Isaac. Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 91.
- Ft45** -- Pocock. not. Misc. p. 24.
- Ft46** -- Alex. ab. Alex. ib. ut supra. (Genial. Dier. 50:6. c. 6.)
- Ft47** -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 10. 2.
- Ft48** -- Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1. Cosri, par. 4. sect. 3. p. 213. 2.
- Ft49** -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 82. 1. Misna Roshhashana, c. 1. sect. 8. & Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect 3.
- Ft50** -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 91. 2. & Jarchi & Tosephot in ib. & Juchasin, fol. 88. 1.
- Ft51** -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 105. 1.
- Ft52** -- Tzeror Hammor. fol. 156. 4.
- Ft53** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 104. 1.
- Ft54** -- T. Bab. Beracot fol. 80. 3.
- Ft55** -- Apud Capell. in <sup><1123></sup>Matthew 5:23.
- Ft56** -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 3. 1.
- Ft57** -- Jarchi in Psal. lxxv. 3. Vid. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 24. fol. 165. 3.
- Ft58** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 2.
- Ft59** -- Baal Hatturira in <sup><1521></sup>Deuteronomy 22:10.
- Ft60** -- Hilchot Heshuba, c. 3. sect 4.
- Ft61** -- De Mutat. Nomin. p. 1062. & alibi.
- Ft62** -- Antiqu. 50:7. c. 12. sect. 3.
- Ft63** -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1.
- Ft64** -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 7. sect. 7, 8. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

- Ft65** -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 24. 1. & Becorot, fol. 35. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Becorot, c. 2. sect. 17. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18. 2.
- Ft66** -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 62. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 76. 2. Derech Eretz, fol. 17. 4. Maimon Hilchot Ishot, c. 15. sect. 19.
- Ft67** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 3.
- Ft68** -- Jarchi in loc. & R. Sol. Urbin. in Ohel Moed, fol. 85. 1.
- Ft69** -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 2. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 31. 1, 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 7.
- Ft70** -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 241. 3.
- Ft71** -- Misna Peah, c. 1. sect. 1. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 127. 1, & Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.
- Ft72** -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 4.
- Ft73** -- Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 1. sect. 7.
- Ft74** -- Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 9. sect. 8.
- Ft75** -- Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 9. sect. 8.
- Ft76** -- Leg. Allegor. 50:2. p. 96,
- Ft77** -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 18. fol. 160. 1. & Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 25. 4.
- Ft78** -- Pesikta in Kettoreth Hassammim in Targum in Genesis fol. 9. 4. Razel, fol. 13. 1.
- Ft79** -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 19. 3.
- Ft80** -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 58. fol. 51. 2.
- Ft81** -- Tanchuma & Aruch in Guidon. Diet. Syr. Chal. p. 169.
- Ft82** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 73. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 9. 3.
- Ft83** -- Pausan. 50:6. p. 362, 378. Julian. Orat. 2. p. 105. Alex. ab Alexandro, 50:6. c. 22.
- Ft84** -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11.
- Ft85** -- T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 36. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

**Ft86** -- Apollodorus de Orig. Deorum, 50:2. p. 89.

**Ft87** -- Targum Jon. & Jerus. in ~~1093~~ Exodus 19:13.

**Ft88** -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 95. 1. & 107. 1.

**Ft89** -- Ammian. Marcellin. 50:20. c. 11.

**Ft90** -- Targum in Cant. 3. 8.

**Ft91** -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 19. 1.

**Ft92** -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 7. 1. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 163. 1. Megillat Esther, fol. 94. 1, 3.