

## EPHESIANS: PRECISION THINKING FOR ACCURATE THEOLOGY

### SESSION 24 | EPHESIANS 6:8-18

#### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BELIEVING SERVANTS AND MASTERS | EPHESIANS 6:5-9

- Verses 5-7 contained in Session 23
- Verse 8 –
  - This verse contains an amazing promise, that all good work will be rewarded **of the Lord** both for **bond or free** (the word **bond** is also *doulos*, slave).
  - No further teaching is given as to how the Lord will repay **whatever good thing any man doeth**, but the promise remains nonetheless.
- Verse 9 –
  - As with wives and husbands (5:22-33), children and fathers (6:1-4), now Paul moves from servant to master, requiring of them laudable leadership, namely the releasing (literal translation) of **threatening**.
  - The **masters** were to know that they have a **Master** who is **in heaven** and that this Master has no **respect of persons with him** (i.e.: He is not impressed by rank).

#### THE ARMOR OF GOD | EPHESIANS 6:10-18

- Verse 10 –
  - Paul comes to his closing thoughts with the imperative to **be strong** with a strength that comes from being **in the Lord** as well as **the power of his might**.
  - The word **strong** is from δυναμαι [dynamai] and a reference to strength of all kinds.
  - The word **power** is κρατος [kratos], the source of many "power" words in the English language *-cracy* and *-crat* words come from *kratos* (such as democracy, Theocracy, autocrat, etc.).
- Verse 11 –
  - In order to **be strong in the Lord** (v. 10) we must put on God's armor.
    - Jesus warned the Jewish nation that **a strong man armed keepeth his palace** (Lk 11:21) but there was the danger of **a stronger than he** that would come and **taketh from him all his armour** (Lk 11:22). This illustrates the reason we need **the whole armor of God** rather than some of other form of protection.
  - The purpose of the armor of God is to **stand against the wiles of the devil**.
    - The Greek word for **wiles** is μεθοδεία [methodeia] from *meta* (to change) and *hodos* (the *way* or *path*). The devil has *changing paths*, but by the **whole armour of God** we are able to **stand against** his *methods*.
- Verse 12 –
  - Our struggle is **not against flesh and blood**. This theme is given several times in the New Testament.
    - Flesh and Blood is not the source of revelation of Jesus as the Messiah (Mt. 16:17).
    - Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom (1 Cor. 15:50).
    - Paul did not consult with flesh and blood (Gal 1:16)

- Christ took the form of flesh and blood so that **he might destroy him that had the power of death** (which is the consummate "flesh and blood" problem) (Heb. 2:14).
    - Our struggle is against:
      - **Principalities** - from ἀρχή [arche], the "things at the beginning." That is, against things which pre-date **flesh and blood**.
      - **Rulers of the darkness** - from κοσμοκράτωρ [kosmokrator], including *cosmos* and *krator* (see note on v. 10). Since this is plural, it is likely a reference to those whom the Devil uses in his work in this world.
      - **Spiritual wickedness in high places** - There is a wickedness that goes beyond **flesh and blood**, and goes beyond **this world**. The **spiritual wickedness** from *the heavens* is of greater concern.
    - Note: some use this passage to claim that "our enemy is not really our enemy." This deflects arguments for "go along and get along" kind of people, but is unrelated to this verse. There are *flesh and blood* enemies. For those enemies, other passages of Scripture would be needed as the insight.
- Verse 13 –
  - The English word **armor** implies defense. However, the Greek word implies any kind of weapon, defense or offense.
  - The goal is to be able to **withstand** (literally, *stand against*, an offensive term) **in the evil day**. What day is this?
    - The "day of the Lord" is "great and terrible" but not **evil**. Furthermore, the believer does not **withstand** that day because of his efforts.
    - Rather, this must be a reference to "the day" in which we live, one which is characterized by **evil**. We must "do all" in order **to stand**.
- Verses 14-17 –
  - It is possible that more has been made of these words than the words actually say.
  - Rather than myopic focus on the details of armory, it would be better to see this as an illustration that focuses the reader's attention on **truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, and the word of God**.
- Verse 18 –
  - **Praying** is as much a part of taking God's armor as girding loins, shodding feet, and the taking of shields and helmets and swords.
  - The prayer here is focused on **watching...the saints**, and doing so **with all perseverance** as well as **supplication**.
  - (If, as I have proposed, the **saints** are the Jewish believers, then we are given encouragement to *watch and pray* for them because in this **evil day** the devil's *method* has always concerned removing the Jew and the Jewish nation from this earth. To do so is the only real evil that would thwart the coming plan of God.)