

may be his strength, his distance from us, or his particular designs ; but we would learn that the defenders of our land were bound to be on the alert, and not to be caught napping. In our text we have intimation of an enemy stronger and more malignant than any that ever besieged an earthly fortress, an enemy with numerous and powerful allies, wicked, wily, and full of strategy, ever watchful to make the best of every advantage, and to inflict a sore and fatal injury. His designs are not limited to things of this world, which perish with the world. He assails our spiritual fortress, our souls, that part of our nature that lives forever, and by cunning and artful machinations strives to gain possession. As Christians it becomes us to be on our guard, to hear the call to arms, to look well to our approaches, and get in readiness our weapons of defence. That the conflict with this enemy will be a stern one is implied from the many intense figures and strong language employed by the Scriptures in describing it. Let us look at the vivid picture of the contest suggested by the words—"Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We have here mention made of an enemy, an armor, and the inducement to put that armor on. We shall consider these things in the order mentioned.

I. *The enemy with whom we have to*

*contend.* In whatever sphere of life we may live we will have contention ; for human life is a warfare. We war against its provocations, its trials ; its struggles, its calamities. The religion of Christ does not grant us exemption from this war. On the contrary, the moment we submit ourselves to Christ, that moment, we become, in the true sense of the term, soldiers, and array ourselves against the opposing powers of darkness, and all the enemies that would keep us from God and from heaven. We engage solemnly to contend till death for the faith once delivered to the Saints. We vow to oppose all the forces of sin, and the devices of Satan suggested in our hearts, or manifested in the world. All this means a warfare of no mean order.

The enemy particularly spoken of in our text is called the Devil, and well is he called by that name. The term is taken from a Greek word which signifies to strike through, to stab, and true to his title he strikes poison into the soul, and malice into the heart of those he overcomes. Thus, the word Devil came to mean, a traducer, an accuser, a slanderer. In the New Testament his character is painted in very strong colors, and rightly so, for he is the adversary of that kingdom of grace which Christ came to establish ; and, he rules over the kingdom of darkness which is directly hostile to it, and with which there will continually be a life and death