

“THE ARMOR OF GOD” (Part 5)

“...shield of faith ...” Eph. 6:16

INTRO: We are at war, not with each other, but with Satan. He is wise and relentless. He knows our weaknesses and uses them against us. We must depend on His power (v. 10) and dress in His full armor (v. 11).

REVIEW: Belt-commitment to know and live God’s truth. Breastplate – live a righteous life. Shoes – be confident you are at peace with God.

TODAY: v. 16 “In all circumstances (above all) take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.”

I. The *DISTINCTION* in the Armor “above all.” “What is “above all?”

- A. *Not* importance — all essential and overlap
- B. *Means:* “besides all these, on top of everything else (belt, etc.)”
- C. *Distinction* between 1st three and last three: verbs
 - 1. “*HAVING*” — permanency, long-range protection, fixed.
 - 2. “*TAKE*” — immediate readiness for of battle – Take shield, helmet, sword
- D. *DOUBLE PROTECTION* here — belt of commitment, breastplate of holiness, shoes of confidence give sufficient protection and are on all the time, but in heat of battle take up ...shield, helmet, sword providing double protection). Ex: Jn 10:28-29; Col 3:3.

II. The *DESCRIPTION* of the SHIELD

Several kinds used by Roman army, but two stand out:

- 1. ASPIS — small light round shield (giant 2 strap frisbee) used hand-to-hand combat
- 2. THURĒON (Thyra-door) used here (PIC) —thick wooden plank 4 ½’ x 2 ½’ ; outside by metal and thick, moist leather. Provided total protection – much smaller people then covered whole person – marched and formed long “PHĀLYNX” lines for wall of protection - inching forward together.

III. The *DUTY* of Shield of Faith. “What is this for?” able to –

- A. “to extinguish” — quench, put out
- B. “all” — not some or most (it is sufficient!)
- C. “fiery darts” or flaming missiles
 - 1. *Historical* meaning – arrows dipped in pitch and lighted, shot, hit, then splatter starting many little fires
 - 2. *Symbolically* – *seducing, burning, pleasing temptations* Satan assaults us with world’s temptations: doubt, fear, greed, lust, etc. ... especially area of thoughts and desires. 1 Jn. 2:15-16 in essence. Remember: Flesh wants, World offers, Enemy suggests. Our only defense is shield of faith! 1 Jn. 5:4
- D. “*of the wicked one*” – Satan – no reference to philosophy, but a person

IV. The *DEFINITION* of this Shield – “What is this shield? Why is faith a shield against Satan’s seductive temptations? How does faith secure the victory?”

A. *What is “FAITH”?* Belief plus trust

- 1. *Wrong* – Everyone has faith in something (car, plane, food, water, ...)

Example: Kansas town changed water systems from storage tank...drained...dead animals (retroactive dysentery). This isn’t kind of faith he is speaking of. This kind is temporal or intellectual assent.

OBJECT of faith is crucial (Heb. 12:2). Faith has to be *in* something that is worth putting faith *in*. O.W. Holmes – “It is faith in something that makes life worth living.” I’d replace with “someone”.

ILLUS: John Paton translated Scriptures for the South Sea islanders... No word for believe...Native ran in, “It’s so good to rest whole in this chair.” Believing is putting whole weight on God. Complete trust.

- 2. *RIGHT* simply “believing God”. This is bottom-line, crux of Christian faith ...” to believe God is, and He is rewarded (Heb. 11:6) ...” It is *believing that*: God authored Bible, Christ is God, ... It is believing God’s good person, great power, promises, plan ... Bible says 4 times that “the just shall live by faith.” (Heb. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:39) Get the message! *Faith is believing God*. Shield is then *living* faith more than saving faith – total trust in Who He is and what He says. *We take up the shield of faith when we trust and believe God over Satan*.

- B. “*How Does Faith Shield Us Against Temptation?*” Every fiery dart of Satan is a lie – and if you bought it, then you’ve believed Satan instead of God.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Illustrated in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-6); Illustrated in the temptation of Christ (Matt. 4:1-11). Illustrated in the life of the believer

APPLICATION: The only way to quench the darts of Satan (temptation) is to believe God! Our faith in God and His Word serve as a shield to enable us to stand – But, whenever we believe Satan the shield comes down and get blasted! (2 Cor. 1:24; Pro. 30:5; Ps. 18:30; 1 Jn. 5:4; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9)

CONC: In summary, “the shield of faith is the consistent application of what we know about God and His Word to the issues of life.” If you have trouble in trusting Him, then it’s because you don’t *know* Him well enough. *ILL:* MY kids trust me... The better you know Him; the more you’ll trust Him! (Psa. 46:1; Psa. 84:9, 11) God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. God is on our side, ...believe Him, not Satan! Faith is our shield – one of the Christian’s greatest resources (2 Cor. 4:8, 9). We win when we trust God! Gen 15:1 God to Abraham, “Fear not, I am they shield” Shield says, “I believe God!”