

'Spiritual warfare'
The shield of faith

Eph. 6:16- 'Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.'

God's word translation:

'In addition to all these, take the Christian faith as your shield. With it you can put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one.'

The shield of faith & the loin belt are inseparable of each other.

Without the loin belt (Word of God) the shield of faith has nothing to attach to.

This massive shield rested on a small clip on the loin belt when not in use.

Point: Your faith is attached to the Word of God.

Rom. 10:17- So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by (of) the word of God.'

If we fail to give the Word of God the proper place of authority (attention), it will only be a matter of time before our faith begins to dwindle, get weak.

This effects every area of our Christian walk:

1. The ability to walk in our righteousness hinges on the centrality of the word. If we get out of the Word, it is only a matter of time before we begin to lose our sense of right standing with God.
2. Our ability to walk in peace is effected & decided upon whether we are giving God's Word its proper place. Peace is released in our lives to be in charge (umpire), without the Word, peace is replaced by the anxieties of life.
3. Our ability to walk in strong faith is effected by the presence of God's Word. It is impossible to grow in faith, be strong in faith, without the Word.
4. Our mind is renewed with the Word of God.
We will never enjoy the full benefits of heaven unless we permit the transforming power of the Word of God to work in us.
You will stunt your spiritual growth, just as if you didn't eat right in the natural, you will have a nutrition deficiency.

The shield of faith

Two types of shields the Roman soldiers used.

1. Aspis- a small round shield used primarily for decorative purposes, as in parades, ceremonies.
2. Thureos- = 'door' in that it was as wide & long as a door. Even door shaped. The aspis would never have covered the Roman soldier in battles. The thureos covered the entire man.

This is telling us that the faith God has given to each of us is enough to completely cover us for protection.

Rom. 12:3- '...God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.'

You can't look at another person's faith, rest assured God has given you enough to take care of your situations, covering you from head to toe.

- Shield was made from several layers of thick animal hide tightly woven together into a steel like consistency.
- Extremely tough & durable.
- Our faith is tough & durable, more than we realize. The enemy beats, beats, again & again [diablos] but our faith is designed to outlast his attacks.

Caring for your shield of faith

- Being made of leather it required daily maintenance, or neglected, it would become brittle & breakable, cracking under pressure.
- Each morning, the soldier would reach for his oil vial, & rub a heavy ointment of oil into the leather portion of the shield to keep it soft, pliable.
- If the soldier was to succeed in battle & stay alive, he had to give care & maintenance to his shield every single day of his military life.
- The shield represents our faith, it too requires several frequent anointing's of the Holy Spirit.
- Without the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we too become brittle, hard, and stiff.
- If you ignore your faith, and never seek to develop it, seek fresh anointing's, when a challenge comes your way, you won't be fresh, supple, pliable enough to stand against the attack.

- This is the worst assumption many Christians make, to not keep their faith freshly anointed, and growing, then try to go out into battle.
- There is no power.
- Another reason it was made of animal hide, is that before they would go out into battle, the soldier would soak his shield in a vat of water until the shield was completely saturated.
- Why? – The enemy used arrows that carried fire. By saturating the shield with water, when the dangerous flaming arrows hit the shield, they were extinguished.
- To keep their shields in top-notch shape, they had to apply water & oil.
- To keep your ‘shield of faith’ in top condition, we must give serious attention & make sure the Holy Spirit is anointing (oil) our lives in a fresh way, and we must be sure to saturate our faith with the Water of the Word.

What does ‘above all mean?’

Mistakenly translated this to mean ‘the most important of the armor was the shield of faith.’

The loin belt of truth (Word of God) was the most important part of armor.

Faith comes from the Word of God.

How then could the shield of faith be more important than the Word of God?

‘Above all’ epi pasin = this describes position over the other pieces of armor.

Better translated- ‘Out in front of all’ or ‘Covering all.’

This tells us that faith should be ‘Out in front of’ where it can ‘Cover all.’

Faith was never meant to be held at our sides or behind our back.

Faith is designed to be ‘Out in front of us, where it can completely Cover us.’

Purpose of the shield of faith

‘...so you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.’

'Wherewith' - 'By which' 'shall be able' is taken from the word 'dunamis= explosive power or dynamic power.'

'By use of this shield, you will have explosive and dynamic power.'

Anointed by the Holy Spirit, saturated with the water of the Word, you are ready to move out in the power.

1Peter 1:4-5- '...are kept by the power of God through faith.'

There is an unseen connection between the power of God and the operation of faith in your life.

These two working hand in hand build a wall of defense against the attacks of the enemy that is impenetrable.

The shield of faith & the water of the Word of God, become a shield to the believer. You become fortified, invulnerable, armed to the limits.

'The fiery darts of the wicked'

What are they?

Greeks used to describe these weapons and history records this:

Thucydides, the Grk. writer, describes these 'fiery darts of the wicked' as arrows that were equipped to carry fire.

Two types of arrows-

1. Normal arrows used in warfare to shoot at the enemy.

2. Arrows that contained combustible fluids that burst into flames upon impact.

Eph. 6:16- *'fiery darts' was the description Paul uses and Thucydides used.*

Arrows that carry fire. Long slender pieces of cane.

- They looked like regular arrows, natural eye could not tell the difference.
- They were used when attacking a fortified place, where you could not get in easily.
- The arrows were shot over the walls, & looked like regular arrows, so the enemy would not pay much attention; until the arrows exploded behind them and caused great fire.
- The enemy was caught off guard when these were used.

This is the picture Paul has in mind as he calls them 'the fiery darts of the wicked.'

Fire that stirs the vilest passions

This is what the enemy wants to send your way. When he has no easy access to your life, he uses fiery darts, to shoot over the walls of your defense to explode when they strike.

They are aimed at your emotions, & if they hit, have the potential of arousing the worst and vilest human emotions and passions.

Has the potential of throwing you into rage, anger, hatred, jealousy, unbelief, worry, anxiety.

Many believers are hit by these ‘fiery darts’ every day and because they are not walking with their ‘shield of faith’ where it belongs; are thrown into turmoil, and the fire of emotions/passions are out of control.

‘The shield of faith must be **‘out front’** so it may completely **‘cover’** your life & protect you from these ‘fiery darts.’

Who is responsible for failure?

‘The devil & demons are never our real problem!!!
The lord Jesus Christ has already defeated them by His death & resurrection.

The reason we continue to be controlled by habitual hang-ups and hassling problems is because we have not made the decision to submit our flesh and mind to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

If our shield of faith is properly anointed by the Holy Spirit – the oil.
Our shield of faith is saturated in the Word of God – water; these arrows would be extinguished upon impact.

If the arrows are effective in throwing you into rage, anger, unbelief, anxiety, worry; it is evident, you have failed in taking care of our shield of faith

We have failed to deal with wrong thoughts, attitudes, in your mind; you allowed an open door through which the arrows could pass.

By dealing with the unseen areas of life and mind (which only you, God, & Satan know), you are ensuring that there are no open doors through which these arrows may pass to pierce through to your emotions.

1Cor. 10:13- ‘There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, so you may be able to bear it.’

The way of escape is through using the shield of faith He has given us. When your faith is ‘**out in front**’ of you ‘**covering all**’ it quenches the temptation & every fire arrow the enemy sends your way.

Corporate faith in the body of Christ

The soldier carried his own shield for his own protection; but also there were times when they linked their shields together to form a wall of protection; that protected not only the individual, but also the entire formation.

When being attacked or attacking a mass of opposition, they would walk side-by-side, very close; their shields even had small hinges so that they could attach shields [interlocked] to form a solid wall. Turtle formation.

They would begin marching in ‘short’ determined steps [Gospel shoes of peace with the spikes] toward their enemy in unison.

They could march right up to the enemy and not lose one of their own.

- When the church of Jesus Christ learns to march in unison and walk with each other, it will position us to make advances & inroads into the enemy’s territory that have never been made before.

Our faith will work for us personally; but we must also join our faith to the faith of others, it will corporately position the body of Christ to make some significant gains.

Does your shield have cracks?

If you ignore ‘your shield of faith’ & never refresh it with the oil of the Holy Spirit or saturate it with the Word of God, you are in no shape to go into battle.

Your faith will crack, splinter, and fail to provide the protection you need.

A faith that is ignored becomes brittle, stiff, and hard.

When you walk in the ‘shield of faith’, you are in a position to storm the enemy’s lies & accusations without fear of being hurt.