

**"The Practice of the Believer"**

**Ephesians 4-6**

**Part 32**

**Introduction:** Today as we return to our study of Ephesians, we are again going to look at Ephesians 6 and the Armour of God. Now, so far, we have looked at three pieces of the Armour of God and those three pieces were fundamental.

**1. The Girdle of Truth**

**Notice Ephesians 6:14a**

**2. The Breast Plate of Righteousness**

**Notice Ephesians 6:14b**

**3. The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace**

**Notice Ephesians 6:15**

These three pieces of the Armour are mentioned first because they are foundational.

Before we get into the next piece of the Armour of God, I want to again remind you as to what this battle is all about.

When God created the earth and man, He placed man over the earth and gave him dominion. This was a theocratic kingdom in which God would rule over man as man served God as the King. But shortly after the creation Satan deceived Eve and she ate of the forbidden fruit and gave to Adam, and he ate the fruit also. In this fall man lost his dominion over the earth and Satan became the god of this world.

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*

<sup>4</sup> *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

God promised to ADAM AND Eve that there would come a Redeemer who would destroy Satan and thus God would set up His Kingdom on this earth. In Noah's day mankind had become very corrupt so God destroyed all but the eight souls on the ark and after the flood man rebelled again. This we have seen at the Tower of Babel. It was there that the human race was polluted with a false worship system that was packaged up in a mother/son

religion. Even after God stopped the building of the tower and man spread out, he still carried with him the worship that was instituted at Babel.

Then in chapter Genesis 12 God called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees to make of him a new nation. All other nations were corrupt. He then in Genesis 15 gave him the Abrahamic Covenant and the rest of the Bible is about fulfilling that Covenant to bring about the Kingdom. Today we are part of the New Covenant, and it is our responsibility to rescue people from Satan's kingdom and point them to God's Universal Kingdom so that they can one day enjoy God's Earthly Kingdom in which Jesus will rule and reign.

#### **Colossians 1:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

<sup>13</sup> *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

<sup>14</sup> *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

So Satan is trying to defeat the believers so that we will not be effective in reaching people and pulling them from Satan's kingdom into God's Kingdom. This is why we need the Armour of God. This now brings us to where we are today.

#### **4. The Shield of Faith**

##### **Notice Ephesians 6:16**

First of all we need to understand why with the next two pieces of Armour we are told to TAKE them. The idea is that these are addition pieces to help us in the battle. We are in a sense to wear the first three at all times and then we are to be sure to TAKE the shield of faith with us into the battle. The first three become a part of us and the next two we are to be alert to be sure we take them as additional protection.

The words "above all" does not mean that the shield of faith is the most important. He means "in addition to all" or "covering all" with the shield of faith. If we understand how the shield was shaped it will help here. The soldiers carried a large shield into battle. It went from the feet up to the chin. It was an oblong shield used to protect the body from the arrows shot by the enemy.

**Notice Ephesians 6:16 again.**

In Paul's day there were arrows that were shot that were set on fire. So they would not only penetrate the skin, but they would also set the garments on fire as well as cause severe burns. If the shield was used correctly and efficiently the breastplate was never touched by the arrows.

**Application:**

Because the shield of faith is covering all that means that if I learn to handle this shield of faith properly then I do not have to continue to secure the three previous pieces. In other words I am to get to know the doctrines of the Word of God so that they are always at the front of my mind. I am to walk in such a way that I never have to question my salvation. I walk with God, and I see the evidence of my salvation as He works through me. Then I keep always in mind that I am at peace with God because I am on His side. There is nothing that can separate me from the love of God. The idea is that these things are settled, and I do not need to revisit them every time I come under attack.

Let me show you a glimpse of what our lives should and should not look like.

**2 Peter 1:4-9**

<sup>4</sup> *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

<sup>5</sup> *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;*

<sup>6</sup> *And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;*

<sup>7</sup> *And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*

<sup>8</sup> *For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

<sup>9</sup> **But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.**

The believer that is not growing is always struggling and must revisit the fundamentals therefore he is very easily defeated.

Now let us get to the Shield of Faith to see how it is to function for the believer.

Let us begin with the **FIERY DARTS** of the Devil. What are these? These are often darts that are shot in random times. They can be darts of lustful thoughts, darts of evil

thoughts, darts of jealous thoughts, darts of immoral thoughts, darts of greedy thoughts, darts of doubtful thoughts, darts of fearful thoughts, and so on. They can also be darts of desires. These darts are often shot when you are least expecting them. You can be reading your Bible. They can come while you are serving the Lord. They may come as soon as you wake up in the morning. They can come while you are doing something that is productive.

Maybe you are sitting and reading a book and all at once some evil thought jumps into your mind. Where did it come from? It was one of these fiery darts of Satan. This is when we just hold up the shield of faith and the arrows strike the shield, and they are extinguished. How is this applied in actual life? It is knowing the Bible and having faith in the Truth of those promises that apply to your situation at hand. In other words we take the Truth that applies, and we hold it up in that particular situation.

If we stop and think about the shield in a physical battle, we can then understand that it was needed when the battle was intense and hot.

This is also true in the spiritual battle. This shield is needed when we are moving forward for the Lord. The darts are meant to defeat us and the more we press forward the more the darts will fly. Let me take you to the Old Testament and we can understand this even better.

➤ **Moses**

**Hebrews 11:23-27**

<sup>23</sup> *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*

<sup>24</sup> *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

<sup>25</sup> **Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;**

<sup>26</sup> *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.*

<sup>27</sup> *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

We can only imagine the darts that were shot at Moses. We know he used the shield of faith because this is the faith chapter. When Moses made the choice to give up the

pleasures of sin for a life of affliction serving God, we can only imagine the darts that were shot at him. Thoughts like, "Are you sure you are making the right choice?" "If you stay here, you can have the pleasures of Egypt at your fingertips." "You can live a life of ease because you can be the next Pharaoh if you remain in Egypt."

It was only the shield of faith that stopped the Devil's darts.

➤ **Nehemiah**

**Nehemiah 4:1-8, 16-17**

*But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.*

*<sup>2</sup> And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?*

*<sup>3</sup> Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.*

*<sup>4</sup> Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:*

*<sup>5</sup> And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.*

*<sup>6</sup> So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.*

*<sup>7</sup> But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,*

*<sup>8</sup> And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.*

*<sup>16</sup> And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.*

*<sup>17</sup> They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.*

**Nehemiah 6:10-13**

<sup>10</sup> *Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.*

<sup>11</sup> ***And I said, Should such a man as I flee?** and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.*

<sup>12</sup> *And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.*

<sup>13</sup> *Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.*

How did Nehemiah continue the work on the wall with all of these fiery darts that were fired? He knew that God had called him to do what he was doing and so he held up the shield of faith and the darts were extinguished.

➤ **Noah**

**Hebrews 11:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

<sup>7</sup> *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, **prepared an ark to the saving of his house;** by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

We can only imagine how many darts were fired at Noah. He was building a boat and it had never rained. There were people that would have heckled and belittled him day after day.

➤ **Abraham**

**Genesis 22:1-6**

*And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.*

<sup>2</sup> And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

<sup>3</sup> And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

<sup>4</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

<sup>5</sup> And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and **I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.**

<sup>6</sup> And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

**Conclusion:**

If we do not take the shield of faith and learn to handle it, we will certainly be defeated in the battle. We must know the Scriptures and we must be quick to apply them when the darts are shot at us. Many believers have made a choice to quit because they did not know how to use the shield of faith and the enemy shot darts to discourage them or make them afraid. He was successful in keeping them from being effective.

**Hebrews 13:6**

<sup>6</sup> So that we may boldly say, **The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.**