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The Shield of Faith
6: 16

The shield of faith DIG: What is the shield of faith? What is the basis of our salvation? What are the many flaming arrows that believers need to be protected from?

REFLECT: What evidence is there of the spiritual battle in your life? If there is no evidence, why is that a bad thing; if there is evidence, why is that a good thing?

The only way to extinguish Satan's flaming arrows of temptation to doubt God,
is to believe in Him, and take up your shield of faith.



Roman soldiers used several kinds of **shields**, but two were the most common. The first was a rather small round **shield**, perhaps two feet in diameter, that was secured to the arm by two leather straps. It was relatively lightweight and was used to deflect the sword blows of the enemy in hand-to-hand combat. The second kind

was the *thureos*, to which **Paul** refers here. This **shield** was about three feet long, designed to protect the entire body of the soldier – who was considerably smaller than the average man today. **The shield** was made of a solid piece of wood and was covered with metal or heavy oiled leather. The soldiers who carried these shields were in the front lines of battle, and normally stood side by side with their **shields** touching each other, forming a huge phalanx extending as long as a mile or more. The archers stood behind this protective wall of **shields** and shot their **arrows** as they advanced toward the enemy. Anyone who stood or crouched behind such **shields** was protected from the barrage of the enemy **arrows** and spears.

Paul instructs us to **take up the shield of faith (6:16a).** This **faith** to which **the apostle** refers is not the whole body of biblical doctrines and beliefs as seen in **4:13a**, but basic **faith/trust/belief** in **ADONAI**. The basic **faith** in **Messiah** that results in salvation and continues to bring blessing and strength as it trusts **Him** for daily provision and help. The basis of our salvation is believing that **God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6)**; putting total trust in **His Son** and the crucified, buried, risen, and ascended **Savior**; obeying Scripture as **His** infallible and authoritative **Word**; and looking forward to **the Lord's** coming again. **Habakkuk's** great declaration that **the righteous will live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4)** is quoted and reaffirmed twice by **Sha'ul (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11)** and once by the writer to the **Hebrews (Hebrews 10:38).**

With which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the Evil One (6:16b). The spiritual **flaming arrows** against which believers need protection would seem primarily to be temptations. **The Tempter** continually bombards **God's** children with temptations to immorality, hatred, envy, anger, covetousness, pride, doubt, fear, despair, distrust, and every other sin. **The Father of Lies initial** temptation to Adam and Eve was to entice them to doubt **God** and instead put their trust in **his lies**. That was the first **flaming arrow** from which all others have lighted **their flames**. Every temptation, directly or indirectly, is the temptation to doubt and distrust **God**, to drive a wedge between **the Savior** and the saved. **He** even tempted **God's** own **Son** in the wilderness – first to distrust **His Father's** provision, then to distrust **His** protection, and finally to distrust **His** plan (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Bj – Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness**).

The only way to **extinguish the Dragon's flaming arrows** of temptation to doubt **God** is to believe **ADONAI**, by taking up **the shield of faith**. **Every word of God is flawless,** the writer of **Proverbs** tells us: **He is a shield to those who take**

refuge in Him. Do not add to His words, or He will rebuke you and prove you a liar (Proverbs 30:5-6). David also reminds us that **the word of the Lord is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him (Psalm 18:30). This is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith (First John 5:4).**[262]



A military **shield** was an important part of a soldier's weaponry. It was a great defense of incoming **arrows**. **The High Priest** did not have any such **shield**. However, it was known that **YHVH** is **the shield** of defense for all who walk with **Him**. **But You, ADONAI, are a shield around me; You are my glory, the One who lifts my head high (Psalm 3:3).** The six-pointed star was used in the Jewish community as early as the first century AD, but it was not a universal symbol until much later. What is commonly referred to as the "star of David" is in Hebrew called *magen* David, or, **the shield of David**. This was an appropriate choice for the flag of the modern State of **Isra'el**. **David** treasured the fact that **God Himself** was **his shield**. **Rabbi Sha'ul** reminded **the Ephesians** that **they** needed to carry **the shield of faith** into **their** spiritual battles. Likewise, our **faith** in **Yeshua** guarantees our protection from **the flaming arrows of the Evil One**.[263]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that **You** are so worthy of all our **trust/faith**. Even when the obstacles in our way look huge and the night looks dark, **You** are greater than any conflict and **Your Almighty** power always wins. **You** are trustworthy, even when our lives are on the line. **Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego** were exiles living in a foreign country, yet they never wavered in their commitment to their **God**. They held up their **shield of faith** even though **ADONAI** had never rescued anyone from a fiery furnace before. They knew that **the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** was the only **True** and living **God (Jeremiah 10:10)***

*and **He** was **Almighty – El Shaddai.***

*Their **shield of Faith** held even in the most trying of times for they committed deep in their hearts to obey and honor the only true **God**, even if it meant death**.** Living for all eternity in joy and peace meant more to them than a few short years of painful life on earth. **Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king** saying: **O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to answer you concerning this matter. If it is so, our God whom we serve is able to save us from the furnace of blazing fire and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. Yet even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image that you set up (Dani'el 3:16-18).***

*Even when everyone else sees the problem as so very big **(Joshua 13:28-29),** help me be like **Joshua** and **Caleb** who took up **their shields of faith** and spoke to encourage the people to fight for **God** is **Almighty** and can help us be victorious no matter hard big or strong the enemy is. **God** did not like to hear the people grumble for they should have used **shields of faith** like **Joshua** and **Caleb**. **ADONAI then said to Moses and Aaron** saying: **How long will this wicked community be grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of Bnei-Yisrael grumbling against Me. . . Not one of you will enter the land about which I lifted My hand to make home for you – except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun." (Joshua 14:26, 27, and 30),***

*Using my **shield of faith** will always result in victory, even if the victory comes in heaven. **Then I saw thrones, and people sat upon them – those to whom authority to judge was given. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Yeshua and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image, nor had they received his mark on their forehead or on their hand. And they came to life and reigned with the Messiah for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4).***

ADONAI**, I long to live praising **You** in heaven for all eternity and so I will take up my **shield of faith**. I will not be like the Israelites who came out of Egypt and did not take up **the shield of faith** when things got rough. **Now which ones heard and rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt with Moses? And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest? Was it not to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter in because of lack

of faith (Hebrews 3:16-19). *No matter what anyone else says, or even if my life is on the line – I will choose to love, follow* ***You*** *and always hold up my* ***shield of faith****! In* ***Messiah Yeshua's*** *holy name and power of* ***His*** *resurrection. Amen*