

In Addition to All, Take up The Shield of Faith

(Ephesians 6: 10-19)

The writer of the book of Hebrews gives the most definite and solid meanings of faith: the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). Who can understand faith, when never gone through difficulties? The measure of faith in one's life is seen through hard times. Everyone has certain applied degree of faith outside the spiritual. It is an important ingredient essential to life. Faith removes the doom and gloom of today's when one has faith for a better tomorrow. Faith is a lifter upper brightening hope in whatever we hope for. But faith is much more than that when its shield is taken up in the spiritual battle field. The Bible says that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. That is, not against humans. It is against the devil and his forces. Paul uses the Roman armor example to symbolize the armor of God's proficiency in its use in every spiritual battle.

The Roman shield was a very important piece of the armor used for the purpose of protection and to push the enemy away. It was made of wood-covered in hide and when wet it served to extinguish flaming arrows. It had an impressive size: almost three and a half feet tall and three and a half feet wide; its curve provided means of deflection against the enemy's attacks. Paul associated a shield with faith because of its profound ways of protecting, defending, and guarding the soldier against the attacks of the enemy. The shield of faith functions also to guard our spiritual life when we are in the midst of our warfare. Daniel's three friends are an example of this when they chose not to worship Nebuchadnezzar's god. The king said to them, If you do not worship, you shall be cast at once into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and who is that god who can deliver you out of my hands? They answered king, O Nebuchadnezzar, it is not necessary for us to answer you on this point. If our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your god or worship the golden image which you have set up! The king commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was usually heated (Daniel 3: 15b- 19b) and he had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego thrown into it.

These young men, under the wrath of king Nebuchadnezzar, overcame the fiery furnace of his wrath by the protection of the shield of their faith. Their faith was rooted in the love they had for their God. Their faithfulness served as a testimony that changed the king's life, who after seeing how God delivered them, praised God saying: Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Who has sent His angel and delivered his servants who believed in Him! And they set aside the king's command and yielded their bodies rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore, I make a decree that any people, nation, and language that speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces and their houses be made a dunghill, for there is no other God who can deliver in this way! Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon (Dan. 3: 28-30). The scenario here carries a prophetic meaning which will happen at the time of the tribulation when peoples of all nations will fall down in adoration to the antichrist, however, God's saints will be persecuted and be overcome by the antichrist for not worshiping his statue. (Rev. 13:7).

For the shield of faith to provide a wall of protection against the enemy's attacks we must lift it up. That is faith in action. Only this way will it extinguish all the darts that come from the evil one. As the shield was useful to protect a Roman soldier, so the shield of faith will be for us, when we take it up for our spiritual protection. In the natural, the shield is also a deflector. These are the functions of the shield: (1) to guard (2) to deflect (3) to defend. It must be used when necessary. The countless times we find ourselves in defeat, it is because this important part of the armor of God has not been applied. Prayers go up to heaven pleading for protection from the enemy's attacks when God has already given us the means of protection. It is easier to go to the battle field dressed in jeans and tennis shoes, than dressed in God's armor. Many don't even believe that Satan's power is at work against us, because, they say "We are covered with the blood of YAHSHUA." However, if we do not remain in Him, and His word is not affecting our daily living, we are unprotected and vulnerable to the darts of Satan. The power of the word of God will be manifested in and through us only when we are in His Word.

Strong faith cripples and thwarts Satan's attacks. It shortens its aims, causing them to fall short of accomplishing his purposes. They cannot break through the strength of the shield of faith. It is not in what we see that we experience faith; it

is not in good times that we experience or exercise faith. But it is in the unseen, which we hope for. Faith must be tested through adversities. Peter said that we are guarded by God's power through faith; the genuineness of our faith has to be tested; the proving of our faith is intended to redound to our praise and glory and honor when YAHSHUA the Messiah is revealed (I Peter 1: 5-7). Yes, we believe that it is by faith that we acquire salvation. It is a fact registered in our heart and mind. We must believe also that it is by lifting of its shield that the power of protection, defense and garrison will thwart and extinguish the power of Satan's arrow coming against us.

We must be clothed with the full armor of God continually ... and in all circumstances we must take up the shield of faith with which we can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one (Ephesians 6: 11,16). The word faithfulness and faithful come from the word faith. One cannot be faithful without faith, faith in God. Life is a spiritual battle field of the mind, but with the shield of faith we can be more than conqueror because of Him Who saved us and empowered us for battle.

The shield of faith... don't get in the battle field without it!

THINK ABOUT IT!