

# God Gave us Armor Part 4: Faith

## — God at War, Week 15 —

*Ephesians 6:10-18 (NIV)*

### I. God's \_\_\_\_\_ is for \_\_\_\_\_

- <sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.
- <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God,  
so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
- <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood,  
but against the rulers,  
against the authorities,  
against the powers of this dark world  
and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
- <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God,  
so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground,  
and after you have done everything,  
to stand.
- <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then,  
with the belt of truth buckled around your waist,  
with the breastplate of righteousness in place,
- <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.
- <sup>16</sup> **In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith,  
with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.**
- <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation  
and the sword of the Spirit,  
which is the word of God.
- <sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.  
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

### II. The \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Us from \_\_\_\_\_ Attacks

- This part of armor is critical for defense. The term refers to the large Roman shield, called the *scutum* in Latin. The ancient writer Polybius (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC) describes one for us: "the convex surface of which measures two and a half feet in width and four feet in length, the thickness at the rim being a palm's breadth. It is made of two planks glued together, the outer surface being then covered first with canvas and then with calf-skin. Its upper and lower rims are strengthened by an iron edging which protects it from descending blows and from injury when rested on the ground. It also has an iron shield boss fixed to it which turns aside the most formidable blows of stones, pikes, and heavy missiles in general" (*Histories* 6.23.2-6). For an example of shields in action, see Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 6.1.65-66.
- Flaming arrows (or spears) were commonly used in war, in part because even if blocked by a shield, the fire might make the soldier drop the shield (see Livy, *Histories* 21.8). The hide covering on the Roman shield could be soaked in water to prevent this (see, similarly, Thucydides 2.75.5).

### III. An \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_ is Our Defense

- So how does faith help us against Satanic attack, whether ordinary or extraordinary? First we need to consider the meaning of faith in general. In my opinion there are three aspects to faith as we see it in the New Testament:
  - Believing** that the gospel of King Jesus is true (1 Cor 15:1-11, 20-28; Rom 10:9-10; Acts 2:36-39; 3:19-21; 13:22-24, 32-39):
 

*Jesus the King...*

    - preexisted with the Father,*
    - took on human flesh, fulfilling promises to David,*
    - died for sins in accordance with the Scriptures,*
    - was buried,*
    - was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,*
    - appeared to many,*
    - is seated at the right hand of God as Lord, and*
    - will come again as judge.*<sup>1</sup>
  - Trusting** in King Jesus, depending upon him for our acceptance with God, our future, and everything we need (Mark 9:21-24; Matt 9:28-24; Rom 3:21-26; 4:16-21; 9:33; Phil 3:4-11).
  - Remaining loyal** to King Jesus, demonstrating faithfulness, allegiance, and obedience to him (Matt 7:21-23; 10:32-33; Rom 1:5; Gal 5:22; James 2:17).
- The kind of faith Paul envisions in the "shield of faith" is probably the second aspect of faith above, trust in Jesus and God and the promises to us. This trust is most critical when confronted with Satanic temptation or oppression.

### The Bottom Line

- \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_:
- "\_\_\_\_\_ your shield" by believing that the gospel of King Jesus is true and pledging your loyalty to him (This should be done before you fight!)
  - "\_\_\_\_\_ your shield" by choosing an active trust in Jesus to protect you in the moment. (It can be helpful to visualize the attack as an actual arrow and visualize yourself holding up faith as a shield to block it.)
  - "\_\_\_\_\_ your shield \_\_\_\_\_" by calling to mind and speaking out loud Scriptural promises that apply (Note: things work out better if you wet your shield *before* the arrows start flying! Spend time preparing by learning key scriptural promises in areas you expect attacks).

*Examples:* Temptation (1 Cor 10:13); Anxiety (Rom 8:28); Extraordinary Demonic Attack (Luke 10:19); Shame (Rom 8:1); Guilt (1 John 1:9); Fear (Ps 91); Discontentment (Phil 4:13); Distractions from God (Psalm 73:25)

<sup>1</sup>Taken from Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, 52.