DON’T FORGET TO ANOINT THE SHIELD!

While reading a military history book a number of years ago, I happened upon a fact that never left me. The author maintained that an ancient warrior's shield could be used as an offensive weapon.

I have always believed, "My faith fights for me." That the shield of faith is more than a defensive weapon. Through faith, kingdoms are subdued, promises are obtained. A shield is normally a defensive weapon. Yet, if the shield is anointed, it is transformed. Let me share this with you today.

Two passages of Scripture. First, the New Testament:

Eph 6:11-17
11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Now, the Old Testament.

Isa 21:5 Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.

Intro For the soldier to really experience the victory that has been provided for him, he must appropriate the whole armor of God. The armor has to be used in every battle, every day. The belt (truthfulness, commitment, readiness, preparation) has
to be worn (Eph. 6:14). The breastplate (righteousness, holiness, correctness) has to shield the heart (Eph. 6:14). The shoes (gospel of peace, confidence in God) must be worn also (Eph. 6:15). Yet there is another valuable piece of armor that also must be worn. The shield of faith is a very important aspect of the battle gear. The shield of faith is sufficient because the Bible states that it has the ability to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Faith serves as a double protection to the soldier. He already has the belt, the breastplate, and the shoes. All in all, those items could be enough but the shield has been provided as additional depth. The shield of faith hides the soldier and serves as his “door.” In John 10, the soldier is reminded that his life is hid in Christ.

The shield of faith is the steadfast application of what we believe about God in relation to the things that we face in life. Abraham believed God. He stood because of his faith.

**Genesis 15:1 --** After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

**2 Corinthians 1:24 --** Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

**Proverbs 30:5 --** Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

**Psalm 12:6 --** The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

**Psalm 18:30 --** As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

**I John 5:4 --** For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
Psalm 47:9 -- The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.

Psalm 84:9 -- Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.
Psalm 84:11 -- For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

When our shield of faith is functioning appropriately then we are made “more than conquerors” (Romans 8:37).

The shields of the Bible
A. There were 300 gold shields in the Temple (1 Kings 10:17).
B. These were replaced by 300 shields of brass (1 Kings 14:27).
C. The shields in the Roman times were wood covered in animal skins.

There were two shields used in the Roman times:

One was a shield for beauty
1. It was round and hooked to the belt of the soldier. It was a small, rounded shield that was tapered at the edges and strapped to the forearm. It was a very mobile piece of equipment yet it was not the choice shield for soldiers to use. It was constructed of wicker that had been covered with hide. This shield was useless against the fire arrows because the beauty shield could be burned with fire (Eze. 39:9). Unless special measures were taken, these shields could greatly endanger the life of the soldier when he embarked in battle. So it was mainly used in parades and after war victories.

One was a shield for warfare
This second type of shield that was very prevalent was one that was mentioned by Paul in the in Ephesians 6. This shield was designed to be linked with other soldiers. It measured fifty two inches (4 ½ feet) by thirty inches (2 ½ feet). It was door shaped and made of wood, & leather. In later times the shield was framed and contained bosses which were raised parts or protruding ornaments on the surface. The Greek word to name this shield is THYREON. It originates from the root
word, THURA, which is “door.” This is the particular shield that Paul was alluding to when he was writing to the church at Ephesus.

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It was not round, but large and rectangular with a semi-circle shape.
1. Built from flat strips of wood (like plywood) -heated to form shape.
2. The shape helped to deflect oncoming missiles - less effort to defend himself.

How the shield was used in a battle.
In the days of the Romans, the soldiers were smaller than what people are today, this was an advantage. The soldier could obviously get down behind the shield and his entire body would be totally protected.

The Romans incorporated the shield into their battle plans and strategy. A line of men would advance with shields in front of the troops. Behind the shield bearers would come the archers, the spear men, and other members of the infantry. When the shield bearers had gotten to the point of the battle, they would embed the shields into the ground which would provide a “wall” to face the incoming enemy. These shields would be advanced as the enemy gave up ground. The advancing of the shields would culminate when the battle ended in the final efforts of hand-to-hand combat.

1. 500 soldiers were deployed in a line shoulder-to-shoulder facing the enemy.
2. When the enemy came close, the shield was thrust at the enemy to lose balance.
3. After the shield is withdrawn, the sword is used to thrust through the body.
4. The thrust of the shield and sword (many times) would disorient the enemy.
5. It was both defensive and offensive. The umbo was a point in the front.

Example’. Jesus used this during his temptation (Matthew 4:4-10).

Satan would attack.. Jesus would raise his faith.. Then use the sword of the spirit against him…
The way the Roman soldier battled will show you how that Satan attacks and how you can fight HIM!

These shields could be linked together in a battle.

"One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you." - Joshua 23:10

In Ephesians Paul spoke of working "together." We are to be united in our spiritual war.

2. How the Roman soldiers "worked together."
   a. The Romans had an armored division. Shields were arranged in a box covering,
   b. The covering (over the heads) formed a "shell." It was called the testudo.
   c. This was used when approaching the walls of a city.

There are five levels of faith spoken of in the scriptures

a. There is no faith (Mark 4:40)
b. There is little faith (Matthew 8:26)
c. There is weak faith (Romans 4:19)
d. There is strong faith (Romans 4:20)
e. There is great faith (Matthew 8:10)

An anointed faith can "quench the fiery darts of the wicked one."

The Deadly Darts of the Devil

The deadly darts of the devil have the ability to punish the soldier cruelly. He must be on constant guard, always standing. These fiery darts are nothing more than seducing temptations. Once these seducing temptations lodge in the flesh then the results can only lead to one thing, sin. Sin damages the soldier’s relationship with his Commander, it endangers his rank, and it endangers the lives of the soldiers with whom he serves.

In many New Testament passages, the saints are warned that fire can belong to Hell and can be a manifestation of the devil. In other extra biblical writings that phrases, “arrows of the Pit,” “flames of the spear that consumes the trees,” the
“torrents of Belial,” and “fire missiles of the evil one” are demonstrated. Reiterating what was earlier stated, the fiery darts are seducing temptations.

**Sixteen Deadly “Darts” of the Devil**

1. Disappointment -- Forgetting Romans 8:28-29  
2. Discouragement -- 1 Sam. 30:6  
3. Doubt -- 2 Corinthians 4:8  
4. Disbelief -- Gen. 3:1; 1 Tim. 2:8  
5. Distraction -- Gen. 3:4-5  
6. Despair -- Matt. 14:30  
7. Double-mindedness -- Matt. 6:24; Eph. 4:14; 1 John 2:15-17; James 1:8  
8. Dishonesty -- 2 Cor. 4:2  
9. Deceit -- 2 Thess. 2:8-12; 2 Cor. 2:17; 4:1-2  
10. Dullness -- Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Cor. 3:1-3  
11. Deadness -- Eph. 2:1-5; Romans 6:1-2; 6:11; James 2:17  
12. Decay -- Heb. 4:7-8; James 4:13-15  
13. Discord -- Prov. 6:16-19  
14. Defilement -- 1 Cor. 3:16-17  
15. Defame -- Heb. 6:10; Matt. 10:41-42  
16. Disobedience -- 1 Sam. 15:22-23; Acts 26:12-19; Romans 6:14

The types of arrows used in the battle

A. The normal arrow designed to maim or kill  
B. The arrow dipped in substance and it flew in fire  
C. The arrow that had a combustible material on it

The arrows were hollow reeds filled with naphtha or some other combustible material. After being set on fire they were shot from slack bows. Whatever the arrow struck, the flames consumed. Water increased their violence and only earth could douse the flame. Larger shields were used for protection.

*Soruce: Manners and Customs of the Bible*

1. The purpose of the fire was to ignite the shield.  
a. The arrow would stick into the shield.  
b. The arrow would burn as the battle was on  
c. The arrow would distract the soldier.
2. The spiritual meaning of the arrows:
   a. Plain arrows (tests that are common to all men) - 1 Corinthians 10:13
   b. Tar dipped arrows (unclean thoughts) - 2 Corinthians 6:17

   Tar is a nasty, unclean, filthy, sticky substance.. hard to wash off tar.

   c. Fire tipped arrows (thoughts that set your emotions on fire) - 1 Corinthians 7:9

3. The fiery darts of the enemy are the mental attacks

   a. These attacks cause the mind to burn like a fire:
      * The mental attack of fear (2 Timothy 1:7)
      * The mental attack of lust of the flesh (1 John 2:16)
      * The mental attack of anger (Matt 5:22)
      * The mental attack of oppression (Acts 10:38)
      * The mental attack of condemnation (1 John 3:20-22)

   Note: It is a dart when you can't get it out of your head!
   How do you know you have a dart that you can’t get out of your head.

   2 Cor 10:4(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)
   5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

   The root word for “imagination” is image. The devil will place an image in your mind and if you don’t guard yourself and pull out that dart it becomes an imagination! It gets stuck in your head!

   The shield had to be prepared to "quench " the fiery darts.

   The care for the shield
   One of the most important things to remember about the construction of the ancient shields that Paul was alluding to when connecting it to the shield of faith was that they were made of two layers of wood and covered with six layers of animal hide.
It was so vital to the soldier that the leather layers of his shield had to be kept supple. It could not be allowed to become dry. A dry shield produces cracks & Darts of fire can set dry shields on fire. So the way the solder kept his shield soft, slick, oily and supple was he would dip the shield in water before battle… and then he would spend much time rubbing his shield with oil. He would rub that oil into the shield, taking the time to make sure each layer was properly oiled and ready for battle.

Every soldier carried oil to keep the shield supple. They would rub the shield every morning. They had to keep the shield oiled. Oil came from the olive trees.

Ps 92:10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

Matt 25:3-8
3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

The oil is a type of the Holy Ghost! You cannot afford to go long seasons without an anointing of the Holy Ghost!

Your shield will become dry! You cannot fight the battle with a dry shield! You must not let your faith become dry! You must have an anointing of the Holy Ghost! Dry churches produce dry faith! Dry saints are unanointed!

Were talking about your shield of faith… The answer is found in Jude.

Jude 20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,
The secret to quenching the darts is to anoint the shield. Faith without an anointing is a killer! As oil is to a leather shield, so staying full of the Spirit is to our faith.

Anoint The Whole Shield
Ps 133:2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

This speaks of an anointing that went from top to bottom. The Roman soldier would make sure that every inch of his shield was covered in oil!

You have to have the Holy Ghost all over you!

An Anointed Faith Can Blind The Adversary.
In ancient times, anointed shields deflected the enemy in hand-to-hand combat. The anointed shields repelled flaming arrows. But, anointed shields also had a much more sublime purpose. They were used to blind the enemy.

An anointing transforms the defensive into the offensive. An anointing causes people to speak with courage and boldness. An anointing causes people to see beyond momentary difficulties.

An example of the use of anointed shields in blinding the enemy could be when Jehoshaphat's army fought against a confederation of his enemies. God's promise came to them:

2 Chronicles 20:17
Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.

God told Jehoshaphat, "You won't fight today." Everyone say this, "I won't fight." The army set themselves. They stood still and waited.

In the early morning hours they positioned themselves. Could it be that when the sun rose with healing in its wings for the righteous, it rose with blinding power on the unrighteous? As God's army lifted their shields, they caught the light of another world? And the glistening shields blinded the enemy?
Anointed faith mystifies the wicked. It always has; it always will.

Why are you holding on? I'm waiting for the sun to rise. 
Darius didn't understand that, but Daniel did. 
Nebuchadnezzar didn't understand it, but the three Hebrew children did. 
Herod didn't understand it, but Simon Peter did. 
When God's presence illuminates, those with anointed shields will shine like the noonday sun.

Keep anointing my faith! Keep praying in the Spirit! Keep lifting up my hands. Victory is certain...

Don’t Forget To Anoint The Shield
When shield was oiled up and slick in would quench the “firey” darts of the enemy. Not only would it do that but it would cause the arrow to slip from the shield. No soldier would expect another soldier to anoint his shield. Caring for his weapons is something highly personal.

Each of us must pick up our shields and anoint with prayer. Each prince, each princess, should arise and have their faith energized by the Spirit. A number of years ago, my wife and I traveled to Israel. Coming through the lush valley of Jezreel, the guide pointed out a particular mountain. Unlike the surrounding mountains, this one was bleak and barren. When he mentioned its name, we understood. Gilboa.

David, a man after God's own heart, had cursed the same mountain years before. When the first King of Israel had been slain on that mountain, David prayed:

2 Samuel 1:21,
O mountains of Gilboa, Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, Nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty is cast away there! The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. 
NKJV

Another translation writes it this way…
2 Samuel 1:21…For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul--no longer rubbed with oil.
NIV

You can read that Saul's body and armament were taken captive by the enemy. But, his shield was cast away. The implication being that the arrow that struck King Saul pierced his un-anointed shield.

Because the shield was not anointed, David cursed the whole mountain. The mountain too became as bare as Saul's shield. We have a responsibility.

Rather than seeking advice from a witch in Endor...
Rather than looking to the secular world for all of the answers...
We should be anointing our faith by praying in the Spirit.

Perhaps you came in here today and your faith is weak. Actually, it is dehydrated. It is dry and brittle. Be filled with the Spirit.
Pray until God's presence renews your heart.
If the face of Moses could shine by being in God's presence, then how much more should those filled with His Spirit reflect His presence?
These are pivotal days. There is simply no time for un-anointed shields.
Arise princes and anoint the shields.