

The Good Fight of Faith (2)

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Last night we began by talking about the star of the morning. The great incredible creature that God formed called Lucifer. This great Cherub, war-faring spirit that God raised up and ordained with powerful wings to be a covering for His Throne. Imagine, a creature to having such a mandate?! For a creature to have the mandate of covering the Majesty of God, protecting and defending the holiness, the righteousness and the purity, the Royalty, the awesomeness of the Almighty. What a mandate!, and he was just a creature like you are and like I are. Hallelujah. He wasn't any greater; as a matter of fact, the Word of God says, that God made man just a little lower than the angels, not a whole lot, just a little. So he's just a little bit above you, and yet he had this call and this mandate to cover the presence, and defend the presence of God. The very thing that God called Lucifer to defend, is the very thing that he turned on and started to scorn.

He became a warrior against the very thing that he was called to defend. Now, that's not all that happened. Let me tell you the next thing that happened in heaven when the great war began; this war that has continued to date. The war that is intensifying and will intensify even more so tomorrow and the next day and the next day, before Jesus comes again. Don't think for a moment, 'well praise God, it's just all finally going to be all well and it's all going to be hicky dori in the End Times, we're just going to be so blessed'. Oh yeah, I believe in that great blessing, I believe in the Great Revival coming, I believe in a Great Restoration and Refreshing, and moreover a Reformation of the Church. There's got to be a Reformation, a change of the way that we think. Praise God!

People tell me all the time, "oh Pastor, should we be praying more for revival?" I say, "don't pray for Revival, revival is reviving something that used to be". I say, "I'm praying to God for a reformation, because we need to change in the process of our thinking". We need to change in our thinking of Who God is, change in our thinking of who we are. I love where I came from, I love the experiences that I had, I love what God taught me and gave me, Praise God, but I know, for this next phase and for the new wine that God is going to send, I have got to be reformed in my thinking, Halleluja!!!

The reason churches, ministers, whole organizations, have died over the centuries, is because they get stuck in what they once experienced, and so they believe, 'that's it'. This is how I felt then, this is the only way I can feel now. Nothing wrong with that, take it with you, hold on to your past experiences,

absolutely! Praise God! But when the Lord wants to send the new wine, when He wants to bring the new with the old out of the storehouse, we have got to have a reformation in the way we think, so we can receive the new along with the old. He wants to do a new thing, yes He does, which is joined to where I came from, but does not bind me from going where I am going.

Not only did Lucifer want to exalt his throne above the stars of God; not only did he want to be the governor of all the hosts of God; not only did he want to be the Son of God and want to sit on the Throne as God, there is something else he wanted.

I want you to go with me to Isaiah Chapter 14. Because understanding this, you will understand your fight today. Turn with me to Isaiah 14:12 to 14

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Back in Eternity Past, God already had a mountain. That mountain on the sides of the North is called Tsee-yone, it is the Mountain of Zion. On this mountain called Zion resided a purposed, prepared, and called congregation. There was a gathering of the Seeds from the loins of God, that God had breathed His Name over and said, "I choose you, my Name is on you". This mountain, Zion, was called the "Mount of the Congregation". It was a gathering of Bridal Seed, of that Seed that would come and be born into this world through all generations, from beginning until the end. It was a collection of every one of those called and chosen that God proclaimed over, "you are mine, my Name is upon you". I have called you for My Mountain; this is My habitation. This is where I dwell. This is where My Name lives. Lucifer looked at that and said, "I not only want the Throne, I want that Mountain, and I want every seed on that mountain".

And this is why it says in your Bible that Lucifer wanted to sit on the Mount of the congregation. That word "sit" in Hebrew means, "to marry". In other words, Lucifer said, "I want a Bride and Bridegroom relationship with that Mountain. I know it's meant for the Son of God, but I don't want the Son of God to have it. I want to have it. I want that seed, I want a union of my will with their will. I want that Mountain of the congregation to be my bride, I want her to be my own".

The battle in the world today is not about Lucifer trying to get the world; he's already got it. He's not fighting to gain territory out there, he's got the territory, he's the prince of the power of the air. He's the power of darkness. He moves out there freely. He does his thing and he's getting better and better at it, and he's getting bolder and bolder and showing his face.

Listen to me carefully, because you have to understand why the battle is so fierce in the days that we live in right now, why you feel strangled, why you feel like, when it's time to go to church and prayer meeting, you just don't feel like it. Come on, talk to me! When you are going to pray for a few moments, and you have no energy left. What happened?

I'm going to tell you what happened. We are getting closer and closer to Zion. We're getting closer and closer to our inheritance, and the closer you get to your inheritance, the wilder Lucifer gets, and he says all over again, "No!!!!, I want that mountain". He has not changed his wish, he has not changed his mandate, he has still got his eye on Zion. There is no piece of real estate on this globe called earth, that has been fought over so much as that piece of land, called Zion.

There's nothing there, on natural Zion in Jerusalem. We've been to Jerusalem. There's nothing there. There's no oil. There are no minerals, there are no riches, there's no wealth, there's nothing to claim on Zion. However, every grain of sand holds the Name of the Lord. God said, "this is where I've chosen to put My Name there". This is the place that I've said "I will dwell there". Well, that's over there in natural Zion, what about Spiritual Zion. The Zion in you. The Zion experience. The Bridegroom and Bride relationship. The same war rages, the same enemies fight, because they don't want the people of God to take and claim their eternal inheritance. So the closer we get to obtaining our inheritance, the closer we get to claiming our destiny, the closer we get to getting back to the place that we were in Eternity Past, on the Mountain of God, those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes; the closer we get to all that, Lucifer says, "come on army, fight against those ones, fight against those ones, I want those seeds, I want that Mountain, I want those people for myself." And every time we marry our will to his will, he wins the battle. How many times in the last week, have we married our will to his will? How many times did we not flee and pursue after God? How many times did we rather run towards the temptation, whatever it may be in your life. Everybody has different temptations.

God wants to shake us up, awaken us for the day and the hour in which we live, because we must rise up as an army of God. We have got to rise up and start to fight back. I'm not talking about fighting the church down the street, I'm not talking about fighting those out there, the flesh and blood of humanity. No, I'm talking about a spiritual warfare. I'm talking about facing Lucifer in his face and say, "you don't owe me, you didn't die for me, you did not purchase me, I'm owned by One, His Name is Jesus". Glory be to God! Unfortunately, these days the fight has gone out of our faith. I want my fight back in my faith.

I want you to turn with me in your Bibles tonight to Ephesians Chapter 6. That's where we ended last night, and we never really got to it. Ephesians, Chapter 6. Bless the Lord oh my soul. It's a powerful chapter. Let's start in verse 11.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God.

Saints, if there was no battle, we wouldn't be told to take on the armour. If the war was already over, there would be no need for all the armour. Why put on the armour if the war is won. I'm telling you right now, the war is not won. Yes, it's won prophetically, absolutely. It is done for, it is signed, sealed and delivered. I've already read the end of the book, and it is won. But until I personally get to the end of the book, there remains a war going on. We read last night to fight the good fight of faith to lay hold of Eternal life. To seize that Eternal life. Even though your Eternal life is a gift, you have got to war to maintain it, because it will be taken from you. Thank you Jesus, blessed be the Name of the Lord.

Ok, let me read on here, I'm going somewhere. Oh Hallelujah.

*Take on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, (that's today, hello, that's today) and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; **Above all**, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

You got your feet shod, you got the loins girded, you got the breastplate of righteousness, you got the helmet of salvation; you got the sword of the Spirit, but, *in front of it all*, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Verse 16: (But) **Above all** When you read that in our English, you would think that it means "*most importantly*". But you can't tell me that the shield of faith is more important than the sword of the Spirit, so something is wrong with that idea and interpretation. So I did my research because translations are not always right.

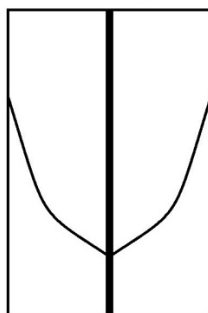
You take those two words together in the Greek, "above all", they actually mean, "in front of all." Now, can someone get my shield

Above all take the Shield of Faith! You got your feet shod, you got the loins girded, you got the breastplate of righteousness, you got the helmet of salvation; you got the sword of the Spirit, but...

IN FRONT OF IT ALL!!!

You see, this shield was the very first part of the line of defence. The word shield, you know what it actually means, it means a *door*. That two kinds of

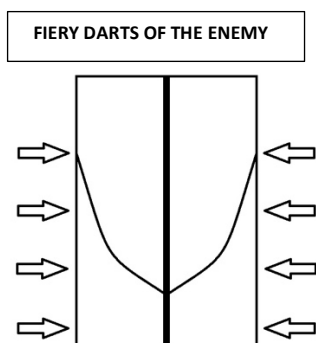
shields back in those days. They had the *little buckler shield*, the little round one that they held on the arm, and they had this kind of shield that was actually called, *the door*, a large shield.



The Shield called "The Door"

The reason these shields were called 'the door', is because the enemy knew that unless they could get behind those shields they could not prevail! The door is has got be opened first. See, the devil wants to take your faith, because if he can take your faith, he can get all of the rest of you. If he can take your faith he has managed to open the door that leads to your defeat. The army would take their shields and they would plant them in the ground, next to one another, and that's how they created this massive wall of defence. And Paul the Apostle said, "above all, take the shield of faith where you will be able to quench the fiery darts of the devil". What were the fiery darts?

Back in those days, the most advanced technology in warfare were the fiery darts. These were darts with a combustion on the tip of them, and they would light them before they shot them, and whatever target they would hit, if it was a human being for example, the dart would explode and the target would burn to death. Paul the Apostle used the latest technology of warfare to show us that this shield of faith will take down and defend you from any latest strategy of the enemy. The latest strategy of the enemy today *is technology*.



Everything you have in your technology, whether it be an iPhone, (and don't misunderstand me, I have an iPhone, I have an iPad, I have a laptop, I have it all), but I'm so cautious of how I use it. Nothing wrong with an iPhone. An iPhone is neither an immoral nor a moral instrument, it is amoral. Amoral simply means it depends on what you use it for, it's neither right or wrong. A hammer is neither a moral or an immoral instrument. I can use a hammer to construct a beautiful building, in which case it is a very moral instrument. Or, I can use the same hammer to kill somebody, in which case it becomes an immoral instrument. So your iPhone and your iPad and your laptop; nothing wrong with them, nothing wrong with the technology. However, it depends on how you use these latest devices. Do they take your mind and take your heart, and steal you away from the Mountain?

The shield was the very first line of defence in military warfare. If the enemy could not take that down, he could not get to the one that he was after, or he could not reach the targeted goal. Above all, *in front of all*, in front of everything, take the shield of faith. So, **what is faith?**

We know that the *shield is a door*, (you can look it up in your concordance, that word shield actually means 'a door'). It means a large door. It means a door to open or to close. See, we've all got a shield. The question is, are we opening it up to the latest advances (and technologies) of the devil, or are we keeping our door closed? If you keep your door closed, you will be mocked, you will be scorned, you will be ridiculed, you will be told that you are a fanatic; oh there's a lot of things that will come your way if you stay behind your shield, that's the truth.

Now, *shield..... the door of faith*. The word **faith**, the first meaning of the word faith..... are you ready for this?, is **persuasion**.

What is your *persuasion*? What have you been persuaded about as far as God is concerned. You know what God's people are doing today, throwing down, throwing away, giving up on, and rejecting their persuasions.

(Demonstration of throwing down the shield, the door of faith on the floor).

Faith also means *convictions*. What did God once convict you of that you have let down, thrown down, rejected, and then allowed fiery darts to come with combustions into your heart and your soul and take you away from pursuing after the presence of the Almighty God?

What is your persuasion tonight, and do you have a persuasion? Are you persuaded that He is the King and the Ruler and the Master of your existence. Are you persuaded that He has the right to say to you, "Thou shalt, and thou shalt not!" Are you persuaded that He is the Head of your home? What is your persuasion about God? What report have you believed? I don't know if I make any sense here tonight.

Do you know what the shield of faith is? ***It's my persuasion.*** When the fiery darts of the enemy come, glory be to God, when the fiery darts of the enemy are being hurled your way, you can say,..... "Oh no, I'm persuaded. No, I'm not going that way, I'm persuaded"! This is my shield, this is my persuasion about the truthfulness of God, the truthfulness of Who God is to me. The truthfulness of the Ancient of Days that He's always been, always shall be. The truthfulness that He made me for Himself. He has called me, I am bound for Zion, I am persuaded! What is your persuasion? Think about it tonight. How big is your shield? How large is your persuasion of Who God is in your life and what is your persuasion of His purpose for your life?

Above all, in front of all, in front of everything else, put out the door of your persuasions, and don't open it for anything. Don't open it to let a little bit of doubt in, don't open it to let a little bit of the world in. Don't open it to let a little bit of the gossip in, don't open it to let a little bit of demonic influences to come in, *stand in your persuasion.* Am I making any sense? Glory be to God!!!

The problem with so many of God's people today, sincere people, is that they have *lost the persuasion of their faith.* "I was once persuaded about that, but then again, I'm not sure I was persuaded. Well, I believed that once, but yeah, I don't want to do that anymore, because it cost me something". So we open our door, our FAITH, and say, "Oh look at all those beautiful flying things in the air", and they coming right at you to destroy you!

The result, why you feel so dead..... Because you are, dead!

Why do I feel like I've lost something, because you have. Oh, what we have lost because we have laid down our persuasions. We have laid down the shield, the door, that God said, "put that door in front of everything else". It will defend the preparation of the gospel of peace on your feet. It will defend the girding of your loins with truth, it will defend your heart and the breastplate of righteousness. It will defend the helmet of your salvation, it will even defend the sword of the Spirit that you hold in your hand,..... your persuasion!!!! You see, you let your persuasion go, you will even drop your sword.

Raise your hands and love Him for a moment. Let Him touch you. Praise you sweet Lamb of God.

Many of you have put down your persuasions, it's time to pick up your shield again, raise up your door. Raise up your persuasion against the fiery darts of the devil that have been combusting in your soul. Tell Him, "Jesus, give me back my persuasion, Lord. Give me back my faith, my faith in You, my faith in Who You are. My faith in your promised purpose for my life". Praise the Lamb of God. Hallelujah!, Bless Your Name Jesus! Thank you Jesus!

This is your moment to pick up your persuasion, pick it up one more time, this is the time to say, "Lord, give it to me, I'm sorry for putting it down, I'm sorry for

giving it up. I'm sorry oh God that I opened the door to those combustions of the enemy." This is your time to come to the altar. This is your opportunity, this is your season, this is your time to say, "Lord, I pick up my shield of faith, I pick up my door, I hold it up again, I put it in the face of the enemy, I will not open it any more to fiery darts. Lord, show me where I've put my shield down." Shout out to the Lord.