I have never been shot at. I hope I never experience a barrage of bullets. Not everyone is like ole Wyatt Earp. Remember that scene in *Tombstone* where Wyatt is going after the cowboys? They are on one side of the little river and he is on the other. Wyatt just wades right out into the water, crosses the river in a hail of gunfire, and is never struck by a single bullet. That may be cool, but it is not for me.

In a similar way, we do face fire every single day. Our spiritual enemies are shooting fiery arrows at us. Arrows of doubt and temptation and circumstances and appearances threaten to take us out. That is why Paul teaches us about armor. We **need** this spiritual armor. We need God’s armor, not just to survive. Let’s set our sights a little higher that survival, please. We need God’s armor to stand for Him. If we are to stand up, stand out and stand strong, we have to have this armor. We need it to thrive. **Thrival**, not survival; **thrival** is our goal!

The devil apparently was an angel. He is a very powerful supernatural being. He has an army of demonic allies who are also supernatural. Remember Paul says that we struggle “*not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil spiritual forces in the heavens*” (Eph 6.12). These demonic enemies are ***all*** more powerful than we are, as natural people. None of them is as powerful as our God. John said, “*Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world*” (1 Jn 4.4).

Paul instructs us to “*take up the shield of faith*” (Eph 6.16). The Lord provides one more piece of defensive equipment, the shield of faith. The is pictured as a large rectangular shield, probably bowed. It would be about 2.5 x 4 feet and made of wood covered by leather. It would often be soaked in water to extinguish the fiery arrows of the enemy. The shield would deflect stones and arrows or other missiles meant to cause harm and havoc.

Soldiers need to be protected in order to survive. The job of a soldier isn’t JUST to survive. Soldiers have missions. They have assignments. They have things they are supposed to do. The same is true of us. As God’s army, we have things to do. We cannot accomplish our tasks for the glory of God if we are hurt. One cannot fight in the infirmary.

We know about camouflage.

 We know about stealth technology.

 We have heard of invisibility.

The starship Enterprise had shields – ***Star Trek***.

 In ***Star Wars***, The Millennium Falcon had deflector shields.

 The shield of faith is like a spiritual force field that the Lord puts around us to protect us.

“*Take up the shield of faith*.” Paul was not talking about historical faith. He was not even talking about saving faith. “Paul is speaking of a practical, everyday faith that says, ‘I will not rely on myself or base my decisions on my experience or my knowledge. Instead, I’m trusting God to give me the victory today.’ This kind of faith is what overcomes stan and his forces : ‘*And this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith*’ (1 Jn 5.6).”

( Wiersbe, *What to Wear to the War*, p58 )

What kind of darts does satan hurl at us?

* Darts of FEAR (p59)
* Darts of DOUBT (p60)
	+ Doubting the Bible
	+ Doubting the people around us
	+ Doubting ourselves
* Darts of WORDS (p61)
* Darts of CONFUSION

The shield protects us in 2 ways:

 Keeps us from being injured

 Quenches the fire (p62)

Faith manifests itself in three ways :

 Faith in God’s person

 Faith in God’s promises

 Faith in God’s providence (p62-3)

“IN every situation - “*Above all*” – The shield is of paramount importance v16 (p64).

“On top of everything else . . .”

The other parts of the armor won’t function properly without faith (p64).

Faith is vital in the X’n life (p64).

Not only does the shield of faith protect the soldier and the rest of the armor, but it also unites the soldiers. The edges of the shields fit together in such a way they sort of interlocked. Remember “the tortoise,” the Roman military formation? (p64-5).

( Wiersbe, *What to Wear to the War* )

The “Hall of Fath” in **Hebrews 11** shows people who believed in spite of overwhelming odds and uncertain outcomes ( Hampson, *The Non-Prophet’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare*, p161 ).

See Heb 11 :

 1-2 Faith is…

 By faith our ancestors were approved

 3 By faith we understand

 6 must have faith to please God

 Must believe that He is and He rewards those who seek Him

 7 Noah

 8 Abraham

 13 These died in faith, although they had not received the things that were promised

 33-5 Powerful positives

 36-8 Painful negatives

 39 the CONCLUSION - *ALL these were approved through their faith*

Keep going – look at **chapter 12** . . . Awesome, huh?

Consider **Col 3.3** – “Our life *is hidden with X in God.”*
“Hidden” = ***Crypto*** = to cover, to hide, conceal

 “Life” = ***Zoe*** – NOT ***bios***, physical life, but ***zoe***, spiritual life

 We are hidden, our spiritual lives are hidden, concealed.

 Our *spiritual lives are hidden with Christ in God*.

That means that satan has to **FIND** us.
  ***Then*** he has to get thru JESUS to get to us!

Have you seen that show, ***Forged in Fire***? They’ll give these blacksmith type people some metal, like a 1974 Ford LTD and they’ll them to make a set of Ginsu knives or something. Then it is on! It takes HEATING & BEATING to make a masterpiece of a blade.

* The Lord is FORGING ***us***. He is making one-of-a-kind masterpieces out of **US**!
If we feel some heat, He is working.
* If we are being beaten, He is ***using*** that beating to move us along. He is shaping us. He is forging us. He is masterpiece-a-rizing us.
* The heating and the beating are not random. Neither are they accidental.
The heating and beating that He allows for us are intentional and purposeful.  He uses everything that comes to us in the process of making us what we ought to be.

Think of it this way. We are just rough old rusty re-bar. We are mangled, rusty re-bar. Wee don’t show much potential. He saves us, reclaiming us from the scrap heap. Then He starts to work on us. He cleans us up. He purifies us. He shapes our lives. He is making us.

The Lord, the Ultimate Master-Craftsman can forge re-bar into Excalibur. He starts with us wherever we are. Jesus said, “*Come unto Me, and I will make you*…“ He starts to heat us. He starts to shape us. He forges us into a useful tool in His awesome hand. He starts to make us what He sees that we can be. He uses everything that comes to us in life in this process of making us. He is not done with us yet; He is still working on us. He is making us.

You see, it CAN’T be ALL health and wealth. It ***can’t*** be all sunshine and roses. If there comes to us some heating and beating, we **HAVE** to know that it is the Master at work. It does not mean that our faith has failed. It means that our faith has functioned. One definition of faith is **F**orsaking **A**ll **I** **T**rust **H**im.

Taking the shield of faith means trusting Him. PERIOD. I believe that NOTHING comes to us that does first come through His hands of love. Nothing comes to us that isn’t allowed by Him.

That old devil shoots fiery darts at us. He wants to beat us down. The Lord intends to build us up. The devil plans to burn us down, the Lord intends to shape us up. The devil is working to makes us dull and useless. The Lord is forging us to make us sharp and useful. The devil wants us to doubt and be afraid. Our Father wants us to trust Him and love Him. “*Perfect loves casts out fear*” (1 Jn 4.18).

It is not **the size of our faith** in God. It is **the size of the God** in Whom we place our faith.

Ps 91.1 – *dwelling in the secret place of the Most High*

Ps 18.30 – “*He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him*” – David

Prov 30.5-6 – Agur, in his proverb quoted David. Did David teach this to Solomon, who taught it to Agur? Could be.

Think about God’s witnesses in **Revelation 11**. The Bible says, “*I will grant my two witnesses authority to prophesy for 1,260 days, dressed in sackcloth.”****4****These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.****5****If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and consumes their enemies; if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way.****6****They have authority to close up the sky so that it does not rain during the days of their prophecy. They also have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every plague whenever they want.* ***7****When they finish their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war on them, conquer them, and kill them*.”

It is like they were immortal until “*they finished their testimony*” (7). “ Finished” = **τελέω (*teléō***) = end or goal. It means to make an end or to accomplish, to complete something, not merely to end it, but to bring it to perfection or its destined goal, to carry it through[[1]](#footnote-1) The Lord doesn’t protect these witnesses m indefinitely. He protected them according to His will. They had protection until they accomplished or completed their task of giving testimony. Then, and only then, the enemy was allowed to kill them.

Look at what it says, “*When they finish their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war on them, conquer them, and kill them*” (7). Is that not what the devil and his cohorts are about? Aren’t they “*making war on*” us? Don’t they want *to conquer* us? Wouldn’t they like *to kill* us? I think this is EXACTLY what is going on. This is why we need to take up the shield of faith.

These enemies are shooting flaming arrows at us. We must take up the shield of faith. When? “*at ALL times*.” We can’t wait until the first arrow hits. We have to armor-up every day. We have to ***stay*** ready because we might not have time to ***get*** ready.

We are the Lord’s soldiers. Look at us. We seem more like *Hogans Heroes* or *McHale’s Navy*. You may even think you are just *Gomer Pyle*. But we are the soldiers of the cross. We are God’s army. We are soldiers of the King. Did you know that just like we are called to place our faith in God, He places His faith in us??!!?? He is counting on us. He is trusting us to what we can do. As His soldiers we have assignments. We have tasks to do. We have battles to win. If we fail, it won’t get done. We have to suit up, get our shields up and take our stand.

Put on the whole armor of God. Take your stand. Get a good grip on the light-sabre of God’s word. Take up the shield of faith. And stand. Stand up. Stand out. Stand firm. Stand “*steadfast, immovable, always abounding the work of the Lord*“ (1 Cor 15.58).

George Duffield gave us a great hymn. It says this . . .

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross; lift high His royal banner, it must not suffer loss. From vict'ry unto vict'ry His army shall He lead, till ev'ry foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed.

2 Stand up, stand up for Jesus, the trumpet call obey; forth to the mighty conflict, in this His glorious day. Ye that are brave now serve him against unnumbered foes; let courage rise with danger, and strength to strength oppose.

3 Stand up, stand up for Jesus, stand in His strength alone; the arm of flesh will fail you,
ye dare not trust your own. Put on the gospel armor, each piece put on with prayer; where duty calls or danger, be never wanting there.

4 Stand up, stand up for Jesus, the strife will not be long; this day the noise of battle,
the next the victor's song. To him who over-cometh a crown of life shall be; they with the King of Glory shall reign eternally. ( *Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus* )

Take up the shield of faith so that you can stand.

Stand against all the cosmic powers and spiritual forces of this dark and evil day.

Put on the full armor of God so that you can STAND.

**YOU *are God’s WARRIOR***! Do NOT go out without **your armor**!

1. %A Zodhiates, Spiros
%C Chattanooga, TN
[%B The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](https://ref.ly/logosres/wsntdict?ref=GreekStrongs.5055&off=1&ctx=+%0a~5055.+%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B5%CC%81%CF%89+tele%CC%81o%CC%84%3b+contracted+telo%CC%84)
%I AMG Publishers
%D 2000 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)