

The Shield of Faith

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[0 : 00] We're going to have scripture readings in two locations today. We'll start in Ephesians 6. And then we'll turn to Hebrews 11.

! So Ephesians 6 and then Hebrews 11.! So that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

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. 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.

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

[1 : 15] In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 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 saints. And then turn over to Hebrews 11. And we'll read verse 1.

And then we'll go to verses 24 through 28. So let's start in Hebrews 11. 1. Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see.

And now over to verse 24. By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking ahead to his reward. By faith, he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger.

[2 : 42] He persevered because he saw him who is invisible. By faith, he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

Let's hear the word preached. Well, in our series on the identity of the Christian, we've come to see that besides everything else that we are, we are never less than Christian soldiers.

Not in a political war against another nation, but rather a spiritual war against the kingdom of darkness. Not against mere flesh and blood, as we read again, mere humans, but against demons. And the prince of demons, Satan himself, a fallen angel. And so it's superhuman enemies that we fight against, and therefore it's superhuman strength and weaponry that we need.

And that's what we have. Ephesians 6 tells us to be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. The captain of our salvation was right here where we live, on this earth, under temptation, in hand-to-hand combat with our enemy, and he knows exactly what we need to defeat him.

[4 : 12] And so he has given us that kind of armor and weaponry to do so. Weapons that we are to take up, that we're to put on, we're to make use of. Now we've seen the sword of the Spirit and how to fight off Satan's temptations with the Word of God.

Remember, the challenge first was to not be ignorant of Satan's schemes. And so I asked you, if you were Satan, how would you tempt you to come up with three areas that you recognize, yes, he's coming at me in these ways.

Then to go to the Word of God and to find a verse to match each one of those temptations that you are beset with. The sword and making use of it. Now today we'll consider one more piece of weaponry before we move on to the next identity.

Part of the weaponry provided to enable us to stand and not fall. It's Ephesians 6.16. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil

one.

The shield of faith. Now in the original language, in the Greek language, we know that it's not talking about the little round shield.

[5 : 28] That has a certain word for shield in the Greek. And then there is the bigger rectangular shield and that's the word that's used here. It's not the little round shield, but the large rectangular shield of the Roman soldier.

Actually, it would be about the size of this pulpit from here on in and that long. It's a rather big shield, isn't it, to be carrying into war, but that's the size of this Roman soldier's shield.

And that would provide protection against spears and swords, but also against farther shot ammunition like sling stones, sling shots, and stones that would be hurled through catapults, and even an arrow from an archer's bow.

The shield of faith was necessary. Sometimes armies would fasten material to the end of the arrow and dip it into pitch or some other highly flammable substance, light it on fire, and shoot it at the enemy.

Flaming arrows. And sometimes they would come in great numbers as a preliminary tactic for war. You can imagine a whole shower of flaming arrows being shot at once, coming in upon you.

[6 : 51] Yes, there would be casualties, perhaps just from the shots themselves, but a greater benefit was to create havoc and confusion and panic and to put the enemy in disarray as it would start their clothing, perhaps, on fire and the surroundings where they were on fire.

You could see how this would become, as it were, the air war that would soften the enemy before the ground troops then rushed in, following up.

Well, it's in such an atmosphere of war that you can see why no soldier would be considered armed without a shield. These large wooden shields were often plated with metal or with layers of leather that would be soaked in water before the battle, and that would then extinguish the flames when they hit this wooden shield.

An absolutely critical piece of armor. Now, the Apostle Paul reminds us here of the evil one, the flaming arrows of the evil one.

That's what his temptations are like. They're like flaming arrows. So think of the swiftness of an arrow's flight. So sudden, it arrives unannounced, just out of nowhere.

[8 : 22] There it is, the arrow. It's there. And so it is with his temptations. Just a mere glance of the eye on Bathsheba. The temptation is there, isn't it?

It's arrived, and it sticks David's heart. Achan's eye, as he's running through Jericho, in and out of one house after another, and then his eye landed upon that Babylonian garment and that silver and that gold.

Just that quick, the temptation was upon him. Or just hearing an unkind word or two. And no sooner does the word enter our ears that we're stirred up to retaliate or to get revenge.

What's swifter than a thought? A thought. Lightning speed. The evil one can plant his suggestions in our minds. Now, to be sure, our own minds are capable of many evil thoughts.

Jesus said, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. So, yes, sometimes they're from ourselves, but other times, it's Satan or his henchmen that plant them into our minds.

[9 : 35] Remember we saw that with Peter. He no sooner had confessed that Jesus is the Messiah. And Jesus says, flesh and blood didn't reveal that to you.

That faith came from God. That's how you know who I am. And then he's saying, no, Lord, it'll never happen to you. You'll not be killed. You're not going to be mistreated and killed.

And remember, Jesus said, get behind me, Satan. You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of man that Satan had a hand in his mind and he wasn't thinking godly thoughts.

He was thinking the thoughts of men. Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit?

So, we find Satan filling the heart, the mind with temptations. Evil thoughts, unkind thoughts, blasphemous thoughts even, skeptical thoughts about the Bible, doubting thoughts.

[10 : 41] I remember singing around my mother's deathbed with the family, hymns of faith. And when she took her last breath, I was immediately hit with the question, how do you know it's true?

How do you know she's with the Lord? How do you know that Jesus Christ receives every one of his people who have trusted in him when they die and their spirit returns?

How do you know? Now, I've never been tempted with that kind of doubt before about the afterlife, about heaven, the reality of heaven.

And I believe it was a shot from the bow of an enemy just to confuse me and to steal my comfort in a time of grief. But it's so sudden. There it is, like an arrow, in the midst of our day.

Maybe even when you're worshiping God here on Sunday. Maybe you're reading your Bible. Maybe you're praying. And there it is, an arrow. It comes to us, doesn't it? A glance of an eye, a word in the ear, a thought in the mind.

[11 : 54] And so we'd better have our shield up, you see, a shield of faith up, ready to intercept temptations. They're not only swift as arrows, they're doubly dangerous because they are secondly flaming.

They're flaming. And when a flaming arrow hits home to our hearts, that's trouble because there's still plenty of gunpowder of the flesh, isn't there, in our hearts.

There's an indwelling sin within. There's an enemy within. And there's plenty of gunpowder to ignite. So David's glance ignited lust within. Achan's sighting of the robe and the gold and the silver inflamed his covetous desire to have that for himself.

Ananias and Sapphira couldn't help noticing that when others sold land like Barnabas did and donated it to the church, it drew a lot of praise from the rest of the church. And so that flaming arrow of temptation sparked something of pride.

[13 : 06] They were willing to play the hypocrite and pretend to give all that they got from the sale of the land so that others would think more highly of them than they really should have because they kept back some of it for themselves.

An unkind word in our ear soon kindles that fire of anger and bitterness and revenge. So the devil's quiver is full of all kinds of flaming arrows that he lets fly at us and they must be extinguished at once.

Time is on his side at this point. The longer he can keep an arrow of temptation, a flame in your heart, the better his chances of it igniting some inward powder keg of indwelling sin.

He knows where to push your buttons and when that stirs up lust within. That's the danger of this flaming arrow. So take up the shield of faith.

Take it up because with it you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Now this shield has been tried and proven. Our captain, Jesus, has taken this shield into battle and he has proven that it will indeed quench the very fire of hell.

[14 : 28] Every sort of flaming arrow has been shot into it and it's snuffed out each one. Remember Scripture's testimony that he was tempted in every way like we are.

So he's had every kind of dipped arrow flaming shot at him and he has shown that this shield of faith is flame proof.

It's impenetrable. But you say that was Christ and I'm not Jesus. Well, what can I say to you? Well, look again at Ephesians 6.16.

It's not talking about Christ here, is it? I want to emphasize three three-letter words. Three three-letter words. Take up the shield of faith with which you, Y-O-U, that's the first three-letter words, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the enemy.

not Christ, but you, Christian soldier. You who are so weak and who have no strength of your own. You who are so vulnerable with the explosives of indwelling sin within you, with which you can extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one.

[15 : 40] Second three-letter word, can. With this shield, you can extinguish all the flaming arrows. It's a word of ability.

With this shield, you shall be able, you will have the power, the ability to extinguish. you who have no ability on your own will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

There's our third three-letter word, all. You can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

There's not an arrow in Satan's quiver. There's no temptation that has taken you from him, but that this shield will extinguish it.

So what the shield was to the Roman soldier, faith is to the Christian soldier. But notice, you must take it up. You must put it to use.

So there's a Roman soldier and he's charging into battle and the guy beside him says, well, where's your shield? Oh, I've got it, but it's at home. Well, what good is it doing back at home when you're going into battle?

[16:54] And so it's not enough to say, well, I have faith. You must take it up. You must put it into action. Faith is a rigorous mental activity.

It's an active grace. It's useless unless it is exercised. Indeed, it's non-existent at that point if it's not active and put in use.

As Jesus often had to say to his disciples, where is your faith? You haven't taken it up. Where is it? Did you leave it at home?

So it's not enough to say, I have a shield. I have faith. No, a faith that does not work is no real faith at all. True faith is an active grace.

It purifies the heart. It overcomes the world. It works by love. It extinguishes temptations. So, do you know how to use the shield of faith against those specific temptations that you've marked down as these are ways that Satan comes at me and I've got these verses to fight him off with my sword.

[18:10] But now I'm asking, do you know how to use the shield of faith against those very same temptations? Let's understand first how faith works. What is faith and how does it work?

Well, faith is a formative principle of life. It shapes and forms the way we live. 2 Corinthians 5, 7, the Apostle Paul says of himself and all true Christians, we live by faith, not by sight.

So, in that statement, there's basically two ways to live your life. By sight and by faith. Now, the world lives by sight. That's the way they decide things.

They choose how they're going to live. It's all based on sight. They navigate themselves through life based on what they see. They live for things that are seen.

What they see determines their goals and choices and decisions. Oh, but there's so much more to reality than what we see with our eyes. Than what can be experienced by the five senses.

[19:19] And that's how Satan keeps the world in bondage. He blinds them to the unseen spiritual realities that are just as real as the things that we can see, touch, smell, and so on.

He blinds the unbelievers mind to the glory of God in Christ. That's how the world lives. They live by sight. But a believer lives in all with a whole different principle.

It's the principle of faith. Not by sight, but by faith. Hebrews 11.1 reminds us how faith operates in our lives.

Now, faith is being sure of what we hope for, certain of what we do not see. So you see how faith works in the believer's life.

It gives us a certainty about things that are unseen. The things that you're reading about in your sword. Those things that you're seeking to fight the devil with.

[20:27] Faith will give those things a reality in your mind, a certainty. You'll be sure of them. That's what faith does. It's being sure and certain of what we don't see.

Like heaven, hell, like Satan, demons, unfallen angels, the living and true God, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit.

We've not seen God. Peter says, you've not seen Christ. And yet he's so real to you that you love him. And though you don't see him, you believe in him.

And you so believe and are convinced of him that it fills you with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. That's what faith does for us. It makes us certain of these unseen realities.

Hebrews 11, 27 says of Moses, by faith, he saw him who is invisible. How do you see someone who's invisible?

[21:41] Scripture says by faith. That's how he saw him who is invisible. Listen to Calvin at this point. He says, at first, this sounds like a parable or a paradox.

I'm sorry. How can you see what cannot be seen? How can you see what is invisible? But then he goes on to say, it makes perfect sense, though, when it's understood of faith.

It's by faith that we see unseen things. So faith is to the soul what sight and eyes are to the body. With my physical eyes, I see you.

You're not phantoms. You're real. If I was closer, I could touch you. And with the senses, I see that you're real. Well, with faith, I have that same certainty that the Father is real, that Satan is real, that heaven is real, that hell is real.

It's faith that gives that certainty. So it's kind of like a sixth sense that perceives the realities that the other five senses don't pick up on.

[22:45] Somebody says, I'll believe it when I see it. Well, faith says, no, I believe it even though I don't see it. That's what faith does. It's certain of the unseen simply because God says, talks about it in his word.

So it's kind of like those night vision glasses that are issued to our military. And with those infrared and thermal imaging glasses, they can be outside on a completely dark night.

And they look out and they can see. there's people out there rushing around and hiding behind obstacles.

They can see them with this night vision. Now, the glasses are not creating anything out there, are they?

They're just allowing him to see what otherwise he'd never see with the naked eye. And that's what faith does. It doesn't create reality. faith just shows you what's real.

[23 : 52] It gives you an inner certainty of unseen things and enables you to see God, the invisible, heaven, hell, all things that the scriptures speak of that we cannot see.

So the believer hears about these things and and maybe that's like you. I spoke to a man this week that he said, I believe all this stuff that you're talking about.

Well, it's the faith of the demons. They, they, I guess there was a historical Jesus. But it's not saving faith because they don't so believe and are so certain about him that they would offer their lives to him and serve him.

no, they just have this historical faith. Yeah, Jesus, he's real, he lived, he died, he rose again. I believe all that stuff. But that faith does not lay hold of that Christ and say, I worship you, you are my God, you're my Lord, I give you my life.

No, because it's just the faith of a demon. But real faith, you see, is so sure and certain of him that it changes the way we live.

[25 : 12] That's how Moses could see him who is invisible. It was by faith. And that's how you are supposed to fix your eyes on Jesus. How do you do that?

He's not here to see, is he? Well, you do it by faith. It's faith that fixes our eyes on Jesus. It's how you do what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4, 18.

So I fix my eyes not on what is seen. But on what is unseen. How do you fix your eyes on what is unseen? Because what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

You do that by faith, you see. That's the shield that we're talking about. That's the shield we have to fight against Satan's fiery darts. Faith that takes unseen things and makes us more certain of them, as certain of them, as the very things we see and touch.

And so it begins to shape our lives. So you see, it's only the Christian with faith that's operating with a full deck. Others, they've only got some of the cards, the things they can see, but they're missing a whole lot of other unseen things, and they're trying to make their way through with half a deck.

[26 : 29] Bless God for faith and what it opens up to us, what's real, what really exists. Now, can you see then why faith is such an effective shield against Satan's temptations?

What is it about our faith that can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one? Well, it's because of what faith sees.

It sees the unseen. Now, no small part of Satan's temptations are to get people to live for this world, to live for the things that are seen, the pleasures, the treasures, the possessions, the dreams, of this life, and he's very effective as most will only wake up a second after death to realize they live for the wrong world.

There's a whole other world that they didn't live for because they had no faith to see it as certain and as sure as this world. Satan's blinded their minds.

He's blinded their minds to the glory of Jesus. They don't see in Jesus any glory that they should serve him. And so they wake up finding they have nothing for eternity but the judgment that is due them for rejecting God's Son.

[27 : 44] The evil one tempts people to act as if God does not exist, at least not the God of the Bible, as if God has not spoken, as if he's not given commands to obey and promises and threats that he will keep because there really is a day of judgment when each one will receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Those kinds of things, they're just nebulous words to the worldling. They're not certainties that shape what he does and doesn't do in his life.

And so the evil one, you see, is trying to get people to forget about these realities, to be blinded to them so that they don't affect them. He presents the bait of sin's short-lived pleasures, but he hides the hook of eternal hell.

He hides the beauty and glory of Christ and the blessedness of knowing him and following him. Do you know if you caught one glimpse of the glory of Jesus and how kind and good and loving and gracious he is, you would serve him.

You'd fall to his feet and say, my Lord and my God. That's why when every eye sees him, every knee's going to bow and they're going to confess that he is Lord.

[29 : 02] Every knee will bow, every tongue confess, because of who he is. But you see, for now, the world is blinded to that. They don't see that in Jesus, so they don't fall at his feet.

They don't serve him. They live for themselves and the things of time. Well, what's the shield of faith then? How does it help us in temptation? Well, it makes all that real to us.

It's the very things that Satan's trying to hide. Let me give you some examples. From Psalm 16, we find David, and David was often in trouble, wasn't he?

Fiery arrows of the enemy tempting him to worry, to fear. You see that as a common theme, don't you, in the book of Psalms? That he's tempted to be afraid, to panic, and the longer the trials are, he's tempted to lose hope, to lose heart, to despair.

And indeed, if all David has is his own resources and what he sees, he has every reason to panic and despair. But faith sees the unseen Lord as an ever-present help in his troubles, and that extinguishes the flaming temptation to panic that David was facing.

[30 : 26] And here in Psalm 16 and verse 8, we see him taking up the shield of faith. He says, I have set the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

What does he see? He sees what can't be seen. It's the Lord. The Lord who says, I will be with you. I will not leave you. And what does David do with that?

He mentally says, God is right here with me. He's at my right hand. It's a mental activity that he's doing when he says, I set the Lord always before me.

He didn't take the Lord and put him there. The Lord is there. He is with him. But in his mind, he sees him as ever always being at his right hand. That's what faith does.

I set the Lord at my right hand because he's always with me. I won't be shaken. I won't panic. I won't fear. That's the shield of faith. That's what it does for him.

[31 : 24] So Satan's fiery arrow to panic and fear, it's extinguished as faith lays hold of a present Lord. God. And it was that same shield of faith that teenage David took down into the valley of Elah to face that experienced Philistine champion, the giant Goliath, who towered over him by three feet, three feet taller, who was armed to the teeth, with sword and spear against David's slingshot.

And each day as Goliath made his boastful and blasphemous challenge to Israel, King Saul and his fighting men. Men of these were the best of Israel and they were scared to death of him and retreated to their tents, shaking in fear.

Why? They didn't have the shield of faith up. All they saw was the giant and themselves and they said, there's no way we can fight him. They were absent of the shield of faith.

But how different Goliath looks to David when he's armed with his shield of faith. Yes, he's bigger than me, but he's not bigger than my God. This God who's with me, who's ever at my right hand, he's not bigger than him.

Yes, he's got more experience than I, a teenager, do at war, but not more experience than my God, not more power than my God. That's what the shield of faith does.

[32 : 53] That unseen reality that faith made certain to David. The Lord's presence, an ever present help in trouble. Nothing ever looks the same when God's in sight and God's in view.

You see that God's on the battlefield with me. And so he's not moved. And even Goliath looks small, doesn't he? Who does he think he is, that blaspheming uncircumcised man?

Who does he think he is to blaspheme the God of Israel? I'll fight him. No, I don't need your armor, Saul. I've got the shield of faith and a slingshot.

That's all I need. And he runs down to meet him and the rest is history. I suggest to you that that was the shield of faith.

Seeing God with him, enabling him to not panic and fear. But this is a messianic psalm too, Psalm 16, which means that it not only was true of David in some way, but this was a psalm that in at least some of the portions was true of David's greater son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

[34 : 08] And Jesus could take these very words up. And yes, this is our captain who was here on earth as a real man with real fears facing him, teaching us how to use the shield of faith.

And so that Psalm 16, 8 and following records our Lord's use of the shield of faith. And what's he afraid of? What's he facing? He's facing the cross. He's facing death.

He's facing the grave and the flaming arrows that would stir up panic and fear were met with the shield of faith that sees his God with him at his right hand.

Therefore, I will not be shaken and therefore my heart is glad and my spirit also will rejoice. My body also will rest secure because you will not abandon me to the grave nor will you let your holy one see decay because you've made known to me the way, the path of life and you'll fill me with joy in your presence and eternal pleasures at your right hand.

That's Jesus exercising faith in the face of the cross and death and the grave. You're not going to let me mold in the grave. You're going to raise me up to life and that's exactly what happens.

[35 : 26] So the shield of faith fighting off the temptations of the evil one. But it's something that must be taken up, isn't it?

It's something that must be exercised. We've seen David doing that. But you know there were other days when David didn't do that. right? And so we made reference of the flaming arrow of Bathsheba and the glance.

He doesn't have his shield of faith up that day. He doesn't take it up. So that flaming arrow enters his heart, stirs up lust and inflames him and he soon found sending for the woman who was another man's wife.

where is the Lord at his right hand now? Is he seeing him there? Well, yes, he's there.

He's always there. I will never leave you. But he hadn't set him there in his own mind, had he? Bathsheba's real.

[36 : 33] I can see her. The Lord's nowhere in sight and nowhere in mind. So he falls and the evil one triumphs and the shield of faith was not taken up.

How different when we see Joseph under a similar temptation in Genesis 39. I would posit that the flaming arrows of temptation through Potiphar's wife were multiplied far more and far more difficult for Joseph than David's scenario.

It was day after day that she propositions him. And he fights. He's got the shield of faith. His response to her seductive offer shows that he saw God with him.

How can I do such a wicked thing and sin against God? Oh, God? Who brought him into the discussion? Well, I did because he's right here with me.

You see, that's the shield of faith that sees the reality of God in the midst of his temptation. temptation. To the outward eye, no one else was in the house but Potiphar's wife and Joseph.

[37 : 41] That's what made the temptation so great. But to the eye of faith, God was the ever-present third person who was in the house that day with Joseph. He's always before him.

He's right there at his right hand. And his presence, made real by faith, shielded him against this temptation. Just snuffed it right out, enabling him to run for his life.

You know, there are some things you wouldn't do if Jesus was standing at your right hand watching you. You just wouldn't do them. There are some sins that you wouldn't do if Jesus was right there just in the flesh, watching you.

There's some things you wouldn't do if I was standing there watching you. Right? And I'm a nobody, but you wouldn't do certain things if I was standing there. It's the presence of someone else, isn't it? And there's no higher presence than the God that made you. And if you see him as standing there, there's some things you won't do. That's what saved Joseph.

[38 : 47] What was it that gave him a sense that God was in the room with him? It was faith, faith that sees the invisible. And it changes how we live in his presence.

We sing it, temptations lose their power when thou art nigh. Now, he's always nigh. He's always near. But when we sing temptations lose their power when thou art nigh, we're saying what we've just talked about.

When we know you to be nigh, when we have set you at our right hand and we know you're standing there with us, then do temptations lose their power. then does the sizzle of the flaming arrow hit that shield of faith and extinguishes it.

So Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, he's alarmed at the report of the vast army, a coalition of nations coming to make war against him. He lifts up the shield of faith and he says, O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven?

You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations and power and might are in your hand. No one can withstand you, but now here's this invading army. Oh, our God, will you not judge them?
[40 : 01] For we have no power to face this vast army that's attacking us. We have no power of our own capable of this challenge. We have no answers. He says, we don't know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.

There's faith again, you see. Jehoshaphat had the shield of faith. Our eyes are on you. That's a statement of faith and exercise, looking away from our resources to the God who is with us and for us, and who fought for Israel that day.

Well, Satan's temptations come in two forms. They come to scare us into sin, or they come to allure us into sin. And let me give you one more example of each.

They're found in the life of Moses, as was read for you in Hebrews chapter 11. Notice how he used the shield of faith to extinguish both temptations, to be scared into sinning, or to be allured into sinning.

First, the flaming arrows to allure. We find in verses 24 to 26 of Hebrews 11. By faith, Moses, when he grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

[41 : 22] He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ of greater value than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking ahead to his reward. Do you see his use of the shield of faith?

What was faith looking at? Something that's unseen. What was it? His reward. Oh, yeah, there's coming a day when Jesus will reward his servants for every one of their acts of faithfulness, every one of their saying no to sin and yes to God, every single thing they've ever done in obedience to Jesus Christ, everything that they've done to serve him, there's a day of reward coming.

The Bible speaks of it gobs. And for those without faith, it doesn't change the way people live. But for Moses, he was looking ahead to his reward.

And so here he's got this decision to make. He's the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He's got all the perks of palace life, all the wealth, all the pleasures that he could dream of to satisfy his flesh. And he walked away from it all. He chose rather to be disgraced and mistreated with God's people rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin. Why? Well, it tells us because of the shield of faith.

[42 : 44] By faith, he chose that because he was looking to his reward. So the temptation just shows us part of the situation.

It doesn't show us the whole reality. Oh, but faith opens up a whole other door. There's a day of rewards. Each man will be rewarded according to his deeds. Well, that's faith making a difference in temptation, revealing the hook beneath the worm.

It sees the true blessedness belongs to God's people. Even if we're mistreated and disgraced here and now, what's coming for us is so much more valuable than all the treasures of Egypt without God.

And then there's the flaming arrows to scare. We see that in Hebrews 11 27.

By faith Moses left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He persevered because he saw him who is invisible. The very first time Moses is sent to Pharaoh and he says, Jehovah has sent me.

[43 : 58] And he has a message for you, Pharaoh. He says, let my people go. And it ticked Pharaoh off. You remember, he was angry.

You're just a bunch of lazy bums and you're trying to pull my workforce away. Now, get back to work and you're not going to have the straw provided for you anymore. You're going to have to get your own straw and make the same cord of bricks.

He's angry with them. That would be enough to scare any man. off from the king's anger. But he just keeps sending, he's being sent back over and over for each plague, isn't he?

Comes before Pharaoh. After the ninth plague had basically reduced Egypt to scorched earth, Moses appeared once more before the Pharaoh king to say, Jehovah says, let my people go.

And then it says, but the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart and he was not willing to let them go. And then Pharaoh raged with anger against Moses saying, get out of my sight. Make sure you do not appear before me again.

[45 : 06] The day you see my face, you will die. He's really mad now. And that night, the tenth plague hid every Egyptian home and took the firstborn. The Israelites marched out of Egypt boldly, we're told, with Moses leading the way.

by faith, Moses left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

What kept Moses from caving into the temptation to fear that mighty Pharaoh of Egypt? Well, we're told it was faith that saw him who is invisible, the ruler of all the kings of the earth.

And that kept him from being scared into sinning against God, not going before Pharaoh, not bringing God's word to him. No, he stands true because the shield of faith that saw him who is invisible is far greater than any Pharaoh king.

So, how's your eyesight, Christian soldier? How's your eyesight? What do you see as you're being tempted? What do you see? Just the presentation? Is that all you see?

[46 : 17] The short-lived pleasures of sin? Or do you see things that are unseen? William Gurnall wrote a book on the Christian in complete armor about that fat.

And in it he says, the doubting Christian's eye of faith is so gummed up with unbelievable fears that he can see little to affect him. The average Christian, he says, has got gummed up eyes.

With unbelieving fears and it's so bad that he doesn't see anything to affect him, very little to affect him. So we need to make sure that the eye of faith is clear, that we see things clearly, we see this God who's invisible and almighty and faithful.

will and that will extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one, whether to scare us into sin or to allure us into sin. And faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

It is the victory that overcomes Satan's fiery temptations because of what faith lays hold of. All that Christ is, all that the Father is, all that the Spirit is, all that he's done, all that he's promised to do, things that are unseen, things that are unfulfilled yet, but we see them.

[47 : 39] So, what are the unseen realities that you need to hold before you to meet those three temptations that you've identified?

You've got your sword out and you've got your three verses, but you know those Bible verses, that sword will do nothing for you if you don't mix it with faith.

God never meant for the sword to be used without the shield of faith. Faith must mix with the word of God. So, what you see in the word of God, you need to act faith on. You need to set that invisible God that scriptures speak about.

Set him before your right hand and go into your day in fellowship with that Savior who's right there with you. Well, faith, the shield of faith.

It's not enough just to have a promise of God's word. We need faith in that word. To be without faith is to be without a shield of battle.

[48 : 50] God's love. So, keep your shield polished, soaking in water, ready to extinguish. You say, what do I do to make my faith more active, more strong, ready to meet these kind of temptations?

Well, you need to feed it. It's by the scriptures that it's fed. It says, we look at the object of faith, that faith grows.

So, faith comes by hearing, hearing the word of God. You need to keep it in exercise. Would you grow the muscle of faith? Just keep exercising every day. Lay hold of some promise.

Live by faith. Take him at his word. So, when temptation comes, it finds a faith that's exercised and active. And then pray for it. As Charlie said, it's a gift from God.

Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. And that faith then will shield you. Lost friend, let me just close by saying this. Satan can only keep you in his camp as long as he can keep you blind to the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[50 : 00] So, I want to ask you to fix your eyes on Jesus this morning. To look at him in the gospel. To see him as willing to die on the cross for hell deserving sinners. To take the punishment that we deserved.

See him willing to receive. All who come to him, no matter how they've lived. What a savior. Who would not serve him? Dying in the place of sinners, risen, reigning, willing to forgive all that repent and believe.

Well, let's pray together. We thank you, Father, for the gift of your son. we thank you that he's the one who fought with faith and who has given us this wonderful shield.

Help us to learn from him, to take it up and to use it, strengthen our faith. We pray that the unseen world would not be something that we are so much in a hurry, that we just ignore and neglect.

We would be still and know that you are God. we would set you at our right hand to see that you go all through the day with us and for us who are your people.

[51 : 20] So, protect us from those flaming arrows of the evil one and we give you thanks for making us soldiers in your army. In Jesus' name, amen.