

December 2010

*“You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant...”*

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

#### **Our Mission Statement**

*Our passion is to help small and mid-size companies grow and produce wealth with the hope that it will result in more humanitarian acts and honor to God.*

This email is never sent unsolicited and American Business Advisors keeps all our subscribers' information strictly confidential. You have received this special offer by voluntarily providing your email information to us personally or at our website.

If you have any questions about our Privacy Policy or this email, feel free to call us directly at 303-335-4218.

## **Spiritual Warfare**

### **A Cosmic Battle Over Your Soul between God and Satan**

#### **Part IV, The Full Armor of God – The Shield of Faith**

By Robert C. Benson, President

*“Most Christians believe their problems are too big and God is too small.”*  
Dr. Bob Beltz

#### **A. Situational Analysis Summary**

In men's bible study years ago, Dr. Bob Beltz, author, Pastor at Highline Community Church, former Teaching Pastor at Cherry Hills Community Church and former Spiritual Advisor to multi-billionaire Phil Anschutz, said “most Christians believe their problems are too big and God is too small.”

We are writing a series of articles on Spiritual Warfare to encourage Christians to update their awareness of the Cosmic Battle they are engaged in and the enormous power God has to protect them in their daily lives. The Bible tells Christians they can be protected from and overcome Satan and the forces of darkness by putting “on the full Armor of God” because *“each piece has divine power to demolish strongholds.”*



Remember that Pastor Parker at Hawkwood Baptist Fellowship **reminds Christians “that we believe in a personal God.” He continues with “The Bible also teaches that a personality lies behind the evil in this world. The devil is as real as God, although he is not the same as God...he, like us and like all the angels, is a created being, dependent on God for his continued existence. But for all that, never forget he is also a personal being. He communicates with us, after a fashion...he can develop special strategies for individuals. There are people in which he takes special interest. And he is constantly seeking out those whom he can devour, metaphorically speaking.”**

**To battle Satan, the Apostle Paul instructs Christians to “put on the full armor of God, so...you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand”** (on its divine power).

**To date we have published Spiritual Warfare articles on the following topics:**

- Part I, What You Need to Know About Satan and his “Schemes”
- Part II, How to Take Your Stand Against the Devil's Schemes
  - The Belt of Truth
  - The Breastplate of Righteousness
  - How to Stand Firm After You Put on the Armor of God
- Part III, The Full Armor of God - The Gospel of Peace

If you didn't have a chance to read them, you can find them at [www.ABAdvisors.com](http://www.ABAdvisors.com), eNewsletter link.

**The purpose of this article is to help you understand how to put on “The Shield of Faith”** so Satan can't derail you from becoming a mature Christian or being effective in building Christ's Church The Great Commission, (Matthew 28:16-20). And for those who desire to build and lead a Kingdom business you would be wise to know the enemy and how to defend yourself against Satan or he will make your life miserable.

## **B. Putting on The Shield of Faith**

*“In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”* Ephesians 6:16

**It is our faith, not needs, that moves God.** Hebrews 11:6 teaches us that “*without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*” Faith is taking God at His word and acting on it!

**The Roman shield**—the *scutum*—was not the standard "medieval-esque" shield most pictured in their minds upon hearing the word. It was instead a very large, slightly curved rectangular shield featuring at its center a large metal knob (called a boss).

The *scutum* was an impressive line of defense. Because of its sheer size (some were three and a half feet tall and almost three feet wide); soldiers were afforded a great deal of protection from enemies. Because of its slight curve, it was able to deflect attacks

without transferring the full force of the assault to the man holding the shield. Because of its boss, it was able to deflect even the more vicious blows and function in a limited offensive capacity as a means of knocking an opponent backwards” (From Bible Study Guides at <http://www.freebiblestudyguides.org> ).

**Faith is based on indisputable truth and is real.** The Bible says that “...*faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Hebrews 11:1). Consider that “substance” is concrete, and “evidence” is solid proof. Therefore faith is not an emotion based on feelings, but reality.

*“For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance”* (Romans 8:24-25). “Though it is based on solid evidence, that doesn't mean faith comes naturally or easily. Paul here makes the obvious but necessary point: You don't hope for what you already have. Faith involves a huge element of trust. We must examine the evidence and see that God has proved Himself to be unchanging and consistent, and then we must firmly believe that He will fulfill His promises to us.”

### **Following are five characteristics of the Shield of Faith:**

1. **The shield is the first line of defense.** Parker says that the shield “was used by the Romans to ward off the opening barrage from the enemy. Using bows or catapults, the enemy would shoot flaming arrows, throw fireballs, fling rough metal darts covered in pitch and set on fire, all for the purpose of overwhelming the other side, to create chaos and confusion.” The devil tries to do the same thing to us and the Church. Just look at the barrage of lies and attacks on the Church of Jesus Christ today.

*“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ‘Never, Lord!’ he said. ‘This shall never happen to you!’ Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men’”* (Matt 16:21-23). Jesus was not rebuking Peter, but Satan who was tempting both Him and Peter to disobey God's will.

2. **A shield guards.** *“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need”* (Hebrews 4:14-16).
3. **A shield deflects.** Faith in God and His promises causes Satan's “flaming arrows” to bounce off, not able to penetrate our mind and soul, *“Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised (those who believe in Christ), he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure”* (Hebrews 6:17-19a).

4. **A shield can incapacitate the enemy.** “Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.”’ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him” (Matthew 4:10-11).
5. **There is strength in numbers of shields.** “The Roman military had an inventive and very effective tactic that made use of their large shields. When enemies would begin firing arrows and other projectiles at the army, the soldiers would close ranks into a rectangular array—called the *testudo*, or “tortoise,” formation—and those on the outside would use their shields to create a wall around the perimeter. Then those in the middle would raise their shields over their heads to protect everyone from airborne missiles. The result was a formidable human tank that could be stopped only through a tremendous effort” (The Bible Study Guides). “*Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken*” (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

**Sometimes God tests our faith by allowing the devil to tempt us.** Pastor Parker notes that in each of the following cases that bad things happened to good men in Scripture “it was a direct result of God allowing it.”

**Job** – “Does Job fear [you] for nothing?’ Satan replied. ‘Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.’ The Lord said to Satan, ‘Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger’” (Job1:9-12).

**Christ** – “Jesus was...led by the Spirit in the desert where for forty days he was tempted by the devil” (Luke 4:1b-2a).

**Peter** – Peter was allowed to be sifted like wheat, “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:31-32).

**Parker asks, “What does all this mean for me and you?** Well, it at least means that we should not be shocked when we are attacked by the devil. It doesn’t mean God has forgotten us. Nor does it mean we’re doomed. In fact, these stories tell us that attacks from Satan are a part of God’s plan for each of our lives. Think of it like this. None of these men would have known the victory of God had they not suffered for God. **None would have known the power of God had they not come to the end of their own strength.**” “*For the battle is not yours, but God’s*” (2 Chronicles 20:15b).

**Parker continues, “To me, the interesting thing about these three stories is how in each case Satan uses the flesh** [The Sinful Nature – See Real Christianity at [www.ABAdvisors.com](http://www.ABAdvisors.com), eNewsletters] as his avenue of influence...When the devil comes with his ungodly suggestions, whether it’s to entice us by our desires or to flog us with our fears, our fleshly nature immediately agrees with his idea...The only way we know when Satan is trying to influence us is when we develop a sense of right and wrong so keen that we can instantly spot the source of all suggested actions. We need to know God’s character [and culture] so well that whenever a suggestion [thought or fear] pops into our minds, we can immediately know whether it comes from above or below...Which brings us back to the shield of faith. Often, Satan throws his ideas at us from a long way off. The shield of faith enables us to ward them off.”

**The “flaming arrows of the evil one” are no ordinary temptations.** Pastor Parker says they are “things that seem to suddenly come from nowhere to pierce and penetrate and torment the soul.” Satan is an intelligent being. Martin Luther, the great Reformer, was

battling it out with Satan. The spiritual battle was so real that Luther picked up an ink well full of black ink and threw it and it splattered against a white wall. He refused to paint the wall as a reminder of just how fierce the spiritual battle against the fiery darts of the evil one.

**Satan knows how to shoot his flaming arrows at your venerable places.** These include, but are not limited to:

1. **Anything to get you to disobey God.** Why, because God's blessings and protection are related to your obedience to Him.

*“And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17).*

*“See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you.... This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life...” (Deuteronomy 30:15-20).*

*“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).*

*“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).*

*“Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me’” (John 14:23-24).*

2. **Blasphemous thoughts.** What if there is no God? God does not love you. God is not good. Would a good God allow all this pain and suffering? (Remember God delegated dominion over the earth to man, therefore whatever goes on here on earth is man's responsibility. See Genesis 1:28-30).
3. **Critical and hateful thoughts** about yourself and others leading to breaking fellowship with God and man. *“My command is this ‘love each other as I have loved you’” (John 15:12).*
4. **Thoughts of lust, wrath, revenge, or despair** which Parker says are “capable of burning themselves deeply into your very souls, and all of them weakening your ability to resist whatever strategy he (Satan) plans next.”
5. **Sudden fears, anxieties, panic attacks,** a dull feeling like nothing is right, especially with God.
6. **Medical attacks,** as in the case of Job.
7. **Questioning** the inspiration and authority of the Bible, or the deity and atoning substitutionary sacrifice of Christ on your behalf, or your salvation by grace, through faith in Christ alone.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, influential in the Reformed wing of the British evangelical movement in the 20th century and, for almost 30 years, minister of Westminster Chapel in London, says that **“Faith in ‘the shield of faith’ means application of what we believe as an answer to everything that the devil hurls at us.”** Of course our faith is in God, not the shield. “The armor of God” is a metaphor, a strong symbol of the power of God and the different supernatural resources and options we have in our struggle *“against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”* (Philippians 6:12b).

Parker says that **“practically this means that as the devil flings evil thoughts our way; we turn them back with a quick application of God’s truth.”** If you feel your faith is weak, confess it to God and ask Him to increase your faith. *“Everything is possible for him who believes.”* Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, *‘I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!’*” (Mark 9:23-24).

**Faith is a gift from God** and it is one of the ways He keeps us from being prideful over what “we” do or did. *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”* (Ephesians 2:8-10).

**As Christians, our life is intended to be a strategic partnership with God.** He needs us to fulfill His purpose and plans summarized in The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). We need Him to give us life “to the full” and to protect us. As in any functional team, it requires, as my friend Dave Pyle taught me “a declaration of interdependence on each other.” In this case, God has already made a declaration of interdependence on man. We are His only plan to get the job done. There is no back-up plan. So it is now, up to each of us, to make a declaration of interdependence on Him and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ! Please read John 14, 15 and 16.

Always remember that the armor of God enables you to *“stand against the devil’s schemes”* because **“they have divine power to demolish strongholds”!**

### **C. How to Stand Firm After You Put on the Armor of God**

*“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...”* Ephesians 13-14a

*“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”* 2 Corinthians 10:4

**Note that Paul says “when” the day of evil comes, not if.** When the devil tempted Christ in Luke 4:1-13, Christ ALWAYS used Scripture, and ONLY Scripture, to take his stand against the devil. Knowing God is much more powerful than Satan and that

Scripture's "divine power to demolish strongholds..., demolish arguments..., and...take captive every thought," Jesus simply stood His ground with only Scripture as His weapon!

**Why? Because Christ knew Satan fears God the Father** and that if He stood on (had faith in) the truth of God's word, Satan would give up and go away, "When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time" (Luke 4:13). "Is that it?" you ask. "Is that all I have to do?" Yes, that's all there is and that's all you have to do! Do not battle with people. Do not battle with your flesh. Just quote Scripture to Satan, believe the Scripture and then trust in God's power and obey God. "I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the LORD," (1 Kings 20:28).

**Following is a brief Action Plan:**

1. **Read** the Bible regularly so the Holy Spirit can "remind you" of what Scripture says during Satan's attacks, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.
2. **Obey** Scripture in your daily life, see verses above.
3. Allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify you and teach you obedience, 1 Peter 5:8-9.
4. **"Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Resist means to repeal, not to agree with, not to receive his thoughts into your mind and soul and not to entertain anything that is contrary to the Word of God!
5. **Quote** Scripture back to Satan as Jesus did. Memorize a few key verses for this purpose, such as 1 John 5:11-13, 1 John 1:9, Galatians 2:20-21, John 15, John 15:9-12, and others as the Holy Spirit instructs you to.
6. **Focus** on overcoming the World and Satan, 1 John 5:4-5.
7. **Unity** with other Christians. Make a declaration of interdependence with true "believers" and work together. Satan uses the age old strategy of "divide and conquer", Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

**And remember that sanctification is a process, not an event!** "For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin — because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him" (Romans 6:5-8). **To succeed in sanctification rely on the power of Christ living in you,** "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body (of sin), I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" (Galatians 2:20-21).

**If you don't have a Bible,** you can go online to [www.netbible.org](http://www.netbible.org). In the upper left corner where it says Display Bible, scroll to John and click on Go. And if you want someone to talk to about the things in this letter, call us at ABA!

**In the next issue** of *The Spirit Led Business™*, Part V on Spiritual Warfare, we will continue with insights on how to use The Helmet of Salvation to take your stand against the devil's (Satan) schemes.

Note: All Bible verses are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

The Spirit Led Business is published by American Business Advisors, Inc. to provide business and personal improvement information and ideas. All material is presented to provide general and broad information only.

The information found in this publication does not constitute business, tax, financial, or legal advice and should not be acted upon without seeking the counsel of a professional advisor.

**American Business Advisors, Inc.**

[www.ABAdvisors.com](http://www.ABAdvisors.com)

6635 South Dayton Street, Suite 210

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Phone: 303-335-4218, Fax 303-220-1937, Toll Free: 877-902-3600

© 2003-2010 American Business Advisors, Inc. – All Rights Reserved