



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Prayer

Lord, I thank You for giving me a shield of faith that completely covers me from head to toe. I don't have to constantly succumb to the devil's attacks. By holding my shield of faith above all and out in front so that it covers me completely as You intended it to do, I can be protected from the attacks that the enemy would like to wage against me. Forgive me for the times I've let my shield lay at my side while I stayed busy complaining about the devil giving me fits. I realize now that it's up to me to pick up my shield of faith and put it where it belongs. So with Your help, Lord, I am reaching out right now to pick it up, to hold it out front, and to do my part to make sure the enemy has no access to me, in Jesus' name. Amen.
Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Scripture

Genesis 29:1-35

1 THEN JACOB went [briskly and cheerfully] on his way [400 miles] and came to the land of the people of the East. 2 As he looked, he saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the well's mouth was a big one, 3 And when all the flocks were gathered there, [the shepherds] would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and replace the stone on the well's mouth. 4 And Jacob said to them, My brothers, where are you from? And they said, We are from Haran. 5 [Jacob] said to them, Do you know Laban the grandson of Nahor? And they said, We know him. 6 He said to them, Is it well with him? And they said, He is doing well; and behold, here comes his daughter Rachel with [his] sheep! 7 He said, The sun is still high; it is a long time yet before the flocks need be gathered [in their folds]. [Why not] water the sheep and return them to their pasture? 8 But they said, We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together; then [the shepherds] roll the stone from the well's mouth and we water the sheep. 9 While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she shepherded them. 10 When Jacob saw Rachel daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his uncle, Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of his uncle Laban. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel and he wept aloud. 12 Jacob told Rachel he was her father's relative, Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father. 13 When Laban heard of the arrival of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced and kissed him and brought him to his house. And [Jacob] told Laban all these things. 14 Then Laban said to him, Surely you are my bone and my flesh. And [Jacob] stayed with him a month. 15 Then Laban said to Jacob, Just because you are my relative, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be? 16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah's eyes were weak and dull looking, but Rachel was beautiful and attractive. 18 And Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, I will work for you for seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. 19 And Laban said, It is better that I give her to you than to another man. Stay and live with me. 20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her. 21 Finally, Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife, for my time is completed, so that I may take her to me. 22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast [with drinking]. 23 But when night came, he took Leah his daughter and brought her to [Jacob], who had intercourse with her. 24 And Laban gave Zilpah his maid to his daughter Leah to be her maid. 25 But in the morning [Jacob saw his wife, and] behold, it was Leah! And he said to Laban, What is this you have done to me? Did I not work for you [all those seven years] for Rachel? Why then have you deceived and cheated and thrown me down [like this]? 26 And Laban said, It is not permitted in our country to give the younger [in marriage] before the elder. 27 Finish the [wedding feast] week [for Leah]; then we will give you [Rachel] also, and you shall work for me yet seven more years in return. 28 So Jacob complied and fulfilled [Leah's] week; then [Laban] gave him Rachel his daughter as his wife. 29 (And Laban gave Bilhah his maid to Rachel his daughter to be her maid.) 30 And Jacob lived with Rachel also as his wife, and he loved Rachel more than Leah and served [Laban] another seven years [for her]. 31 And when the Lord saw that Leah was despised, He made her able to bear children, but Rachel was barren. 32 And Leah became pregnant and bore a son and named him Reuben [See, a son!]; for she said, Because the Lord has seen my humiliation and affliction; now my husband will love me. 33 [Leah] became pregnant again and bore a son and said, Because the Lord heard that I am despised, He has given me this son also; and she named him Simeon [God hears]. 34 And she became pregnant again and bore a son and said, Now this time will my husband be a companion to me, for I have borne him three sons. Therefore he was named Levi [companion]. 35 Again she conceived and bore a

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son, and she said, Now will I praise the Lord! So she called his name Judah [praise]; then [for a time] she ceased bearing.

Genesis 29–30. Jacob's Sojourn in Haran

Haran was 400 miles northeast of Canaan. It was the place where Jacob's mother, Rebekah, had been raised, and from which his grandfather Abraham had migrated many years before. Laban was Jacob's uncle. Jacob was there 20 years. They were years of hardship and suffering. A wife whom he did not want was forced on him by deceit, just as he had gotten his father's blessing by deceit. He had begun to reap what he had sown.

Jacob's Family

Jacob had two wives and two concubines whom, except for one, he did not want but who were forced on him. Of these, 12 sons were born:

- Of Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun
- Of Rachel: Joseph, Benjamin
- Of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant: Gad, Asher
- Of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant: Dan, Naphtali

This polygamous family, with many shameful things to its discredit, was accepted by God, as a whole, to be the beginning of the Twelve Tribes that became the Messianic Nation, chosen by God to bring the Savior into the world. This shows that

- God uses human beings as they are to serve His purposes; He does, so to speak, the best He can with the material He has.
- It is no indication that everyone whom God thus uses will be eternally saved. One may be useful in serving God's plans in this world and yet fail to qualify for the eternal world in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men for final disposition (Romans 2:12–16).
- The Bible writers were truthful. No other book narrates with such utter candor the weaknesses of its heroes and things so contrary to the ideals it aims to promote.
(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History & Commentaries; pages 121-122)

Jacob Marries: V 17 "Tender-eyed" means blueyed. Blue eyes were considered a weakness then. VV 23-27 Laban was just as scheming as Jacob in giving his older daughter to Jacob in place of his beloved Rachel, for whom Jacob had worked seven years. V27 The seven years' work for each daughter was a dowry paid to Laban by Jacob. VV 30-31 Jacob made his preference of Rachel over Leah obvious. V 22 "Reuben" means see, a son. V 33 "Simeon" means heard V 34 "Levi" means joined. V 35 : Judah" means praise the Lord. (Old Testament Study Guide, The Word For Today; Chuck Smith, 2005, commentaries; page 16)

The Bible indicates that Leah was not nearly as beautiful or desirable as Rachel (see Genesis 29:17). Have you ever felt rejected, as she must have? Remember that God loves you; He wants you, and He has an awesome plan for your life!

Take Up Your Shield of Faith!

Ephesians 6:16

Many people wrongly assume that the shield of faith is the most important part of their spiritual weaponry because Paul said, "Above all, taking the shield of faith..." (Ephesians 6:16). But if you think about it for a moment, you see that the shield of faith can't be more important than the "loin belt of truth"—the Word of God—because faith comes from God's Word (Romans 10:17).

So just what did Paul mean when he said, "Above all...."? The phrase "above all" is taken from the Greek phrase epi pasin. The word epi means over. The word pasin means all or everything. So rather than stating that the shield of faith is more important than the other pieces of armor, the phrase epi pasin describes the position faith should have over the other pieces of armor. It could be better translated, "Out in front of all...." or "Covering all...."

Therefore, the phrase "above all" emphatically tells you that your "shield of faith" is never meant to be held next to your side or timidly held behind your back. Faith is supposed to be out front where it can completely cover you and protect you from harm—especially when you are marching forward to take new ground for the Kingdom of God! Just as Roman soldiers kept their shields out in front of them to defend them from deadly attacks and blows from their enemies, God wants you to tightly grip your shield of faith while keeping it out in front where it can protect and defend you. When your shield of faith is kept in this out-front and covering position, it can do what God intended for it to do! This is why Paul continues to say, "... wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (See September 6 to refresh your memory regarding what the Bible says about the fiery darts of the wicked.) But it is also very important for you to notice that Paul says, "... Taking the shield of faith...."

The word "taking" is from the word *analambano*, which is a compound of the Greek words *ana* and *lambano*. The word *ana* means up, back, or again; the word *lambano* means to take up or to take in hand. When compounded together, it means to take something up in hand or to pick something back up again. This plainly means your shield of faith can be either picked up or laid down. It places the responsibility on you as to whether you will use your shield of faith or allow yourself to go through life unprotected.

If you want to employ the use of your faith, you must make the choice to take it in hand and to place it in front of you. It will not assume its defensive position over your life by accident. Your faith will only operate in your life the way it was meant to do when you choose to pick it up and put it where it belongs—out in front.

If you ever go into battle without your shield of faith, you are making a mistake you will seriously regret. Keeping your shield of faith in position is not an option if you intend to overcome the enemy and win the battles that are before you.

Therefore, I urge you not to go into battle without this all-important piece of your spiritual armor. If you fail to keep that protective shield in front of you, you leave yourself exposed to the deadly strikes of your adversary, the devil.

On the other hand, as you choose to daily take up your shield of faith, holding it out in front of you so that it completely covers every part of your life, you put yourself in position to thwart every single attack that the enemy throws your way! Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Can you say that your faith is alive and active and out in front of you as God intended for it to be, or have you allowed your faith to become inactive so that it lags behind?

Please answer these questions honestly, for a truthful answer may prevent future disaster in your life: Did you once walk in faith more consistently than you do today? Have you allowed your shield of faith to drop to your side instead of maintaining it in the forward position that allows it to defend you from the enemy's attacks?

What steps are you going to take to reignite your faith and return it to its position as the mighty shield of protection that God intended for it to be? What kind of plan are you going to follow to see your faith recharged, reenergized, and repositioned out in front of your life?

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Psalm 16:1-11 (AMP)

1 KEEP and protect me, O God, for in You I have found refuge, and in You do I put my trust and hide myself.

2 I say to the Lord, You are my Lord; I have no good beside or beyond You.

3 As for the godly (the saints) who are in the land, they are the excellent, the noble, and the glorious, in whom is all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied who choose another god; their drink offerings of blood will I not offer or take their names upon my lips.

5 The Lord is my chosen and assigned portion, my cup; You hold and maintain my lot.

6 The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good heritage.

7 I will bless the Lord, Who has given me counsel; yes, my heart instructs me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the Lord continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory [my inner self] rejoices; my body too shall rest and confidently dwell in safety,

10 For You will not abandon me to Sheol (the place of the dead), neither will You suffer Your holy one [Holy One] to see corruption.

11 You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

(Word 9 Bible Software: Bible Software, multiple translations, dictionary, atlas, sermons of the past saints, concordance, 2005)
(The Everyday Life Bible; Amplified, 2005, Joyce Meyers, Scripture, Commentaries, page 49-51)