

*Four
Classes
of Faith*

*by
B. R. Hicks*

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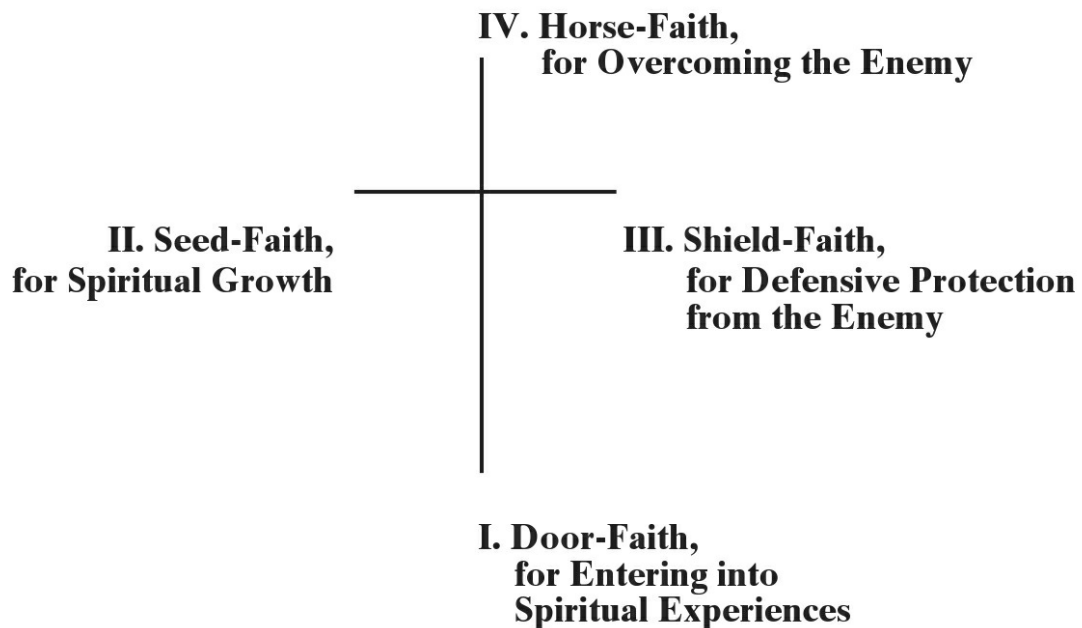
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Four Classes of Faith

Faith, a necessary part of daily living, is absolutely essential to the Christian because it is the spiritual fruit of his belief and trust in God.

God's Word teaches us about four classes of faith that we need to help us in our spiritual journey.

The first class of faith, Door-Faith, enables us to enter the spiritual experiences of safety from God's judgment; of protection from spiritual death; of finding our provision of spiritual food; and it enables us to enter the spiritual oneness of relationship with our Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. The second class of faith, Seed-Faith, is the seed of faith that enters a heart and grows into a mighty tree, given the right conditions. The third class of faith, Shield-Faith, is a Shield that defends the believer from the enemy's attacks; and the fourth class of faith, Horse-Faith, is the mighty, aggressive Horse of Faith that the believer must have if he is to overcome in the battles he will have to fight against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, before his course on earth is finished.



I. Door-Faith — for Entering into Spiritual Experiences

The door on the outside of a natural house allows a person to enter into the house. Then, after he has entered through the door, he finds other doors that allow him to enter into other rooms.

God has a class of spiritual faith that is like a door because it allows a repentant sinner to enter into the wonderful "House of Salvation," where he experiences the joyful privilege of finding Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. Then, after walking through that Door of Faith, the believer is able to enter into many other spiritual experiences as he discovers many other "Rooms of Truth" in God's Word.

The Word of God reveals four special doors that help believers understand more about what is found inside each door of faith. The ark that God told Noah to build pictures or reveals the first of these doors of faith.

A. The Ark-Door of Faith

By Noah's time, wickedness had become so wide-spread that, as a whole, the thoughts produced in the imagination of the hearts of men had become only evil. When God looked down upon the world and saw the wicked depravity of man, He repented that He had made man, and He purposed to destroy the world and all that was in it.

However, in the midst of all the wickedness, there was one man who found Grace in the Eyes of the LORD. God's Word declares that Noah was a "just man and perfect in his generations, and he walked with God" (Genesis 6:6). So, before the LORD poured out His judgmental waters upon the world, He told Noah to build an ark and to put a door in it because the ark would be a place of safety and refuge to save him and his household from the judgmental flood waters that He was going to pour out upon the Earth.

A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; **and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof**; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it (Genesis 6:16).

However, before Noah started building an ark, he had to have faith in God's prophetic Word because it never had rained upon the earth. Up to this point in time, a mist had gone up from the earth and watered the ground (Genesis 2:6). Then, after the ark had been built, Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their three wives had to have Door-Faith in God's merciful nature in order to walk through the door and remain inside the ark before the LORD shut the door, for only then could they enjoy the safety that God had provided for them.

God told Noah to put a window in the top of the ark, showing that Noah was supposed to look *up* to God and not *out* upon the death and destruction that would be surrounding the ark.

Actually, Noah built two windows in the ark. One was an inside window, and one looked outside.

Jewish history says that the inside window was a miraculous Stone which hung in the ceiling of the ark and illuminated the whole ark. In Hebrew, the word for this window is *tso-har*. The light from this window ruled the inhabitants of the ark during their many months of confinement in the ark. This *tso-har* window is mentioned in Genesis 6:16, while the *khal-lone* window, which was the outside window through which Noah released the birds at the end of the flood, is mentioned in Genesis 8:6. This window was also in the ceiling of the ark. If Noah had put a window in the side of the ark, and if he had allowed his eyes to gaze upon what was going on outside the ark, he might have been tempted to accuse God's holy, righteous nature, and he might have tried to boss the opening of the door to allow some of his unbelieving friends to come in. If he had done that, the judgmental waters would have flooded into the ark, and Noah and his family would have perished along with the wicked inhabitants of the earth.

After we, as believers, have entered through the door of salvation, we get in trouble, spiritually, if we stop looking up to the LORD and His merciful headship and, instead, start looking upon the death and corruption around us. This is especially true when the LORD is judging our own wicked, carnal flesh. If we take our eyes off the LORD's merciful nature, we may feel sorry for our flesh or our carnal heart and try to spare it, in one way or another, from the crucifixion and death that God has ordained for it.

God is the One Who controls the opening and the closing of the door to the ark of safety, and He is the one Who, in His merciful nature, opens the windows of Heaven and lets the waters of judgment pour down upon our rebellious, wicked flesh. Each person, then, must make the choice to go through the door of faith into the ark of safety while the LORD has the door open. Then, he must keep his eye fixed upon the LORD's headship that is ruling over all his spiritual life on the inside and over all the death and destruction on the outside that are swirling and roiling and pounding against him in the form of black clouds and stormy waters of trials and adverse circumstances. God has a place of safety for those of us who put our faith and trust in Him in every situation, no matter how dark and hopeless our lot may seem.

B. The Passover-Door of Faith

In order to escape the judgment of death that God had pronounced upon all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, Israel had to go through the Passover-Door.

When the Israelites were down in Egypt, suffering at the hands of their Egyptian taskmasters, God provided a special door with a blood-covering to protect His children when He passed through the land to smite the firstborn in Egypt.

The Israelites had to sanctify their doors by putting the lambs' blood upon the two side posts and the upper doorposts of their houses. Then, they were to go inside and stay there until morning, for the LORD was to pass through the land that night and smite all the firstborn in Egypt.

And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you (Exodus 12:22,23).

When the LORD went through Egypt that night, He smote all the firstborn in the land — from the firstborn of Pharaoh, to the firstborn of the captive in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the cattle. However, when the LORD saw the blood on the doors of the Israelites' houses, He passed over them and, thus, spared the lives of their firstborn.

The Passover-Door of faith was a peculiar door because it had blood on it and because the Almighty God hovered over it. The LORD said, "And the blood shall be to you for a token [*oth*, meaning a signal, as a flag, beacon, monument, omen, prodigy, evidence, mark, miracle, sign, token] upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:13).

In simply reading this verse, one might think that the LORD just took a look at the door, and, when He saw the lamb's blood upon it, He went on somewhere else. But, the Hebrew word for *pass over* means to hesitate, to halt. The connotation is to hover over, as a mother hen spreads out her wings over her brood of chickens.

The power to attract the LORD's eyes was not in the natural blood of the many lambs that were sacrificed on this day. It was in the spiritual Blood of Christ, God's holy Lamb, that overshadowed the natural lambs' blood on the doorposts. Christ's Blood became a token, a miracle, a beacon that attracted the LORD to come and hover over the houses of the believing Israelites.

It took faith for the Israelites to apply the blood to the side posts and the doorposts or their homes, and it took more faith for them to walk through the door and remain inside the house, while, on the outside, the Egyptians were wailing because their firstborn sons had been smitten.

There is cleansing, sanctifying, protecting power in the Blood of God's Lamb. Believers who choose to return to the things of this world, after having experienced the life of Christ, discover, sooner or later, that there is no life in the world like the life that comes through the Blood of the Lamb, and there is no peace of mind and peace of heart that can compare with that which a believer feels when he has the LORD's presence hovering over him.

C. The Food-Door of Faith

The tenth chapter of John reveals the Good Shepherd, Jesus, Who Himself is the Door through which His sheep must go "in" and "out" to find pasture. This chapter pictures the third class of Door-Faith, which is the Food-Door.

VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. **But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.** To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.** All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. **I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture** (John 10:1-9).

In Eastern countries, after a shepherd had led his sheep into the sheepfold, he lay down in the open doorway so that his own body became the door. What a beautiful picture of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, Who is both the Shepherd and the Food-Door for His sheep! He leads then "in" and "out" to find pasture or food.

The "out-pasture" experience relates to Jesus' resurrected life, which was obtained through His suffering and death on the Cross. In the Old Testament Dispensation, "outside the camp" was where cursers and murderers were stoned and where lepers and all unclean things were exiled. When Jesus went to the Cross, He went *outside* the camp in order to bear the shame and reproach of man's sin (Hebrews 13:12,13).

Believers who want to fellowship the resurrected life of Jesus must first go out to the place of rejection, humiliation, and crucifixion. It is the ministry of the Good Shepherd to lead each sheep out to the place of crucifixion so that he may find the special pasture of Christ's resurrected life.

The "in-pasture" experience represents the eternal life of Christ the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The Good Shepherd first leads His sheep to the "out-

pasture” where, through crucifixion of the believer’s flesh, his capacity for God is enlarged. Then, the Good Shepherd leads the sheep to the “in-pasture” to find His eternal life through divine revelation of His Word.

The Apostle Paul referred to this “in-pasture” experience as being seated in the Heavens in Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all **spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:**
(Ephesians 1:3).

Today, many people are starving spiritually because they are not allowing the Good Shepherd to lead them out through the Food-Door to the “out-pasture” and back in again to the “in-pasture.” Without new crucifixion of the flesh and new resurrection life of Jesus Christ, they have no capacity for new revelations of Truth from God’s Word.

A believer must have faith in Jesus’ compassionate nature; otherwise he will not be willing to be led in-and-out through the Food-Door. In the “out-pasture,” there is plenty of spiritual food to be found for the hungry soul of the person who is willing to go out there with Jesus and fellowship His humility and His suffering. The Good Shepherd always knows when it is time for a sheep to be led back into the “in-pasture” to feed on new revelations of Truth in God’s Word that will make his spiritual bones fat.

D. The Bride’s-Door of Faith

The Bridegroom, the LORD Jesus Christ, holds the key to the door to the bridal chamber, and His Bride must enter this door through faith. This door of faith, the Bride’s-Door, is described in the Book of Revelation.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, **he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;** (Revelation 3:7).

The Church of Philadelphia is the only one of the seven Churches* in the Book of Revelation upon whom the LORD Jesus Christ promised to write the name of Wife or Bride.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem [which is the name of the Bride], which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name (Revelation 3:12).

Jesus promised the Philadelphia Church that He would write the name of New Jerusalem or Bride upon her and let her enter in through the Bridal-Door into a spiritual oneness of relationship with Him, if she were an overcomer.

Jesus has to open the Bride’s-Door of Faith for the believer because He is the one Who holds the key. Furthermore, a believer has to go through the Bride’s-Door while the Bridegroom is holding it open. After Jesus has shut the door to the bridal chamber, it cannot be opened, regardless of how hard one may.

Believers enter into the Bride-Bridegroom relationship with Jesus through the door of faith, but they must do it when *He* is ready for them to do it, not when *they* decide they are ready.

II. Seed-Faith — for Spiritual Growth

God has a class of spiritual faith that is like a seed because it has procreating power in it. Seed-Faith will grow if it is planted in the proper soil and cultivated.

A. The Origin of Seed-Faith

Seed-Faith begins as a tiny grain, as small as a mustard seed.

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, **If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,** ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you (Matthew 17:20).

In spite of its small size, a grain of Seed-Faith is tremendously powerful. My first experience with this class of faith was when Jesus appeared to me and told me about the Holy Ghost. Although I knew nothing about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and speaking in other tongues, I wanted to receive this experience because Jesus had said it was

for me. As I sought His Will in this matter, earnestly praying, I watched Jesus reach into a big container and get a grain of something and cast it into my heart. I know, now, that He picked up a grain of faith because my spiritual heart began to swell, and I just *knew* that Jesus was going to give me this experience of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. As I started to praise the LORD, suddenly, the Holy Ghost came upon me, and I started speaking in other tongues. For over three hours, the Power of God was on me, and I could hear myself speak in one language and then another, as the Holy Ghost moved me in the Spirit from one country to another. My experience, at this time, ended by my speaking Russian. I know that it was Russian because the Spirit of God allowed me remember the last two or three sentences that I had spoken. Later, when I went to the Hebrew class I was taking, my teacher, who was from Russia, interpreted the words for me. This is how I came to know the power that is contained in just one little grain of faith.

Some Christians think that they must have a mountain of faith before they can see God move in their behalf. But, they are wrong. The origin of faith is small. A tiny, living “mustard” Seed of Faith can do miracles because it is full of God’s procreative power.

Now, when a man came to Jesus, begging for mercy and deliverance for his lunatic son, Jesus described faith to him as being like a mustard seed. The father already had taken his son to the LORD’s Disciples who had tried, unsuccessfully, to cast the lunatic devil out of the boy.

Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And **Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief:** for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:17-21).

Jesus’ Disciples could not cast the lunatic devil out of the man’s son because they did not have the Mustard-Seed Faith they needed in order to cast the unbelief out of their own hearts. The LORD compared both the unbelief that was in their own hearts and the lunatic devil that was in the boy to a mountain so that He could show them how big their unbelief was in the spiritual realm. In so many words, Jesus said, “If you had some living faith the size of a grain of mustard seed, you could have said to your mountain of unbelief ‘Remove hence to yonder place,’ and it would have been removed. Furthermore, after the unbelief had been cast out of your own heart, you would have been able to say to the lunatic devil ‘Be removed from this boy,’ and it would have had to go.”

Seed-Faith has a small beginning, but it does not remain small.

B. The Manner of Growth of Seed-Faith

Natural seeds have to be planted before they will germinate and grow. This is true also of the spiritual Seed of Faith. Jesus described the Kingdom of Heaven as being like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field so that it would grow.

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like **a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:** (Matthew 13:31).

The Kingdom of Heaven refers to Christ’s reigning power on the earth during the Millennium. Christ’s reigning power will begin small and grow until it rules over the whole earth.

A natural mustard seed does not grow until it has fallen into the ground and has died; then, God brings it up with new life. So also does the Kingdom of Heaven begin as a tiny grain of Seed-Faith that must be cast into the ground of a believer’s heart and die before it can grow and increase.

The Kingdom of God, which pertains to the Universal Reign of God and the Lamb and His Bride out of the New City, also is compared to a seed in God’s Word.

And he said, **so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;** And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how (Mark 4:26,27).

When my younger brother was just a little boy, our mother gave him a peach seed to plant. After it had been in the ground for about two weeks, he dug it up to see how it was doing. He was so excited about his peach seed

having little roots growing out of it that he ran into the house to tell mother. She had to give him the unfortunate news that it never would grow to be a tree if he kept digging it up and looking at it. He would have to leave it in the ground if he ever expected to have any peaches to eat.

My little brother discovered by digging up his seed that, in the beginning, its growth was unseen and gradual when it was putting down just roots underground. But, had he had enough faith in God's principle of growth to have waited, its growth would have manifested itself by sending a new, green shoot or blade above the ground, where it would have become visible.

Christians sometimes have the same problem of not believing that God will nourish their beginning Seed of Faith in Him in their unconscious realm until it eventually manifests itself in their winning a major battle in their lives through faith in the LORD. He can and will move our mountains if we keep believing and trusting. Eventually, the fruit of faith *will be* produced in our Tree of Confidence in God.*

Seed-Faith has to be planted in the ground of a believer's heart and, then, go down into the death of Jesus and be resurrected with new ruling power and glory. While the Seed is down in the low place, in the unconscious realm of the heart, the believer must keep rising up every day to pray and study God's Word and serve the LORD. Every night, he must go to sleep trusting in the LORD's grace and mercy and keeping power. Then, one day, the LORD will put him in a situation that will reveal exactly how much his Seed-Faith has grown.

Contained in a seed is the whole plant; so contained in a Seed of Faith is the spiritual Tree of Confidence in God that produces roots of Believing and branches of Trust and the mature fruit of Faith.

C. Manifestation of the Stature of Seed-Faith

Pride may cause believers to think that their faith has grown much bigger than it really has. But, God's Word reveals that both natural and spiritual seeds grow in stages. The example God's Word uses to describe gradual spiritual growth is the corn plant.

For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; **first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear** (Mark 4:28).

In the natural realm, a living seed must be cast into the ground and die before it can reproduce itself. The first visible manifestation of a corn seed's new life comes in the form of a little green blade that breaks through the crust of the earth. As the plant continues to grow, night and day, it eventually produces some immature ears of corn. At this stage of growth, the corn can be eaten; however, it does not have the power to reproduce itself if it is planted in the ground. The corn plant has to continue maturing until each kernel in the ear has procreating life in it. Then, if a grain from a mature ear of corn is planted in good ground and properly nourished, it will reproduce another corn plant, just as the parent-seed did.

Spiritual Seeds follow the same pattern of growth as natural seeds. The first *visible* manifestation comes in the form of a humble little blade. Then, as faith grows, it produces an immature "ear" which feeds the believer's own heart. Only after faith has become mature does it possess the life and power to grow when cast into the heart of another believer.

D. The Ministry of the Seed

God has ordained that every seed should mature and bring forth after its own kind. This is an irrevocable Law of Almighty God in both the natural and spiritual realms.

And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? **It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches;** so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it (Mark 4:30-33).

As ministers of the Gospel, if we are to be strong and full of life, we must grow past the blade stage and the ready-to-eat stage in our personal growth. If we want to do more than preach just a little bit of Truth in order to satisfy our people enough to keep them from starving spiritually, we must grow personally so that we have mature Seed-Word to give them that will reproduce the Life of Christ in their hearts.

God wants Seed-Faith to grow and mature in a believer's heart until it becomes like a mighty tree that spreads its

branches out to feed, support, and shelter others because we all are ministers of the Gospel to those around us.

III. Shield-Faith — for Defensive Protection from the Enemy

When a believer is in the midst of a spiritual battle with the Devil, he must have a class of faith in his spiritual armory that is like a shield. This will give him power to defend his spiritual experiences in Christ and will be a protection to keep him from being hurt by the Devil's fiery darts.

The Shield of Faith is actually only one Shield; however, in the Word of God it carries four aspects so that the believer can better understand the source of its great power.

A. The Shield-Faith of the Lord God, *Adonai Yehhovee*, the Master, Husband, and Owner

Whenever the King James version of the Bible writes the Name LORD in all capital letters, it refers to the secret Name of God in the Old Testament. God's secret tetragrammaton Name — JHVH — was written in the side of the Ark. Translators have inserted vowels to spell the name Jehovah, the self-existent one Who reveals Himself.

When God came to Abram, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, He came in the way that Abram already knew him — as LORD; in addition, He came to reveal Himself to Abram in a new way — as a Shield and a Reward.

AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? (Genesis 15:1,2).

The Hebrew word for *shield* is *maw-gane*, meaning a shield (i.e., the small one or buckler), a protector, also the scaly hide of the crocodile, armed, buckler, defense, ruler, scale, shield. The word for *reward* is *saw-kawr*, meaning payments of contract, salary, fare, maintenance, compensation, benefit, hire, price, reward, wages, worth.

Notice that Abram *immediately* addressed God as “Lord GOD” — *Adonai Yehhovee*. This is the first time this particular name of God appears in Scripture. The name *Lord*, spelled with capital and lower case letters, identifies the Hebrew name *Adonai* which means “my Lord.” *Adonai* comes from the root word *awdone*, meaning to rule, sovereign controller, master, owner. *Yehhovee* is a variation of the spelling of Jehovah.

The name *Adonai* GOD, the Master-God, the Husband-God, the Owner-God, is the defensive Shield that the believer must hold up, by faith, to protect himself from his own flesh, as well as from the workings of fallen Lucifer.

This Shield of the Lord will not work for the believer, however, until the believer gets tired of being married to his own proud redemptive will and his own fleshly ways. A believer must be willing to marry his human will to the divine Will of the heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, he can lift up the Shield of *Adonai* GOD, his master and owner and sovereign controller, by faith, and the Shield will protect him from being controlled and ruled over by his old masters, the flesh and the Devil.

Sometimes the circumstances and situations of life touch a believer so deeply that he is not satisfied until he has had what is called “his say”; yet, he finds he is not happy after he has poured out his angry emotions, for he realizes that his Spiritual Man was being oppressed during the time his flesh was ruling and reigning.

A believer does not have to allow either the Devil or his own flesh to rule over him. He can choose to get in touch with the Lord Jesus Christ, the spiritual Bridegroom, and surrender his proud redemptive will to Him. Then, the believer can lift up the Name of the *Lord GOD, Adonai Yehhovee*, as the mighty Shield Who can protect him and make him fruitful, just as He protected Abram and made him fruitful.

B. The Shield-Faith of Salvation

The Shield of Salvation has power to save a believer and lift him up out of the depths of despair.

Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great (II Samuel 22:36).

The Hebrew word for *salvation* in this verse is *yeshshah*, meaning liberty, deliverance, prosperity, safety, salvation, saving. *Yeshshah* comes from the primary root word *yawsah*, which means to open wide or free, by

implication to be safe; to free or succor. It also means avenging, defend, deliver, help, preserve, rescue, be safe, bring or having salvation, save or saviour, get victory.

David's song of thanksgiving in Second Samuel was written to express his gratitude to the LORD for saving him from his enemies. Since this song spoke of happenings that went far beyond anything David personally endured, it very obviously was prophetic of the experiences that the LORD Jesus Christ encountered when He went to Death and Hell in order to save fallen mankind.

The Shield of Faith has a layer, as it were, of salvation that comes especially through the name of Jesus. When Joseph, the espoused husband of Mary, learned that she was going to have a child, he was minded to put her away privately. But before Joseph could carry out his plan to put Mary away, the Lord sent the Angel Gabriel to tell him that Mary's Son had been supernaturally conceived by the Holy Ghost. Gabriel also said that the Son was to be called JESUS because He would save His people from their sins.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. **And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins** (Matthew 1:18-21).

When Jesus was down in Hell, He knew the LORD God as His Rock, His Fortress, His Deliverer, His Shield, the Horn of His Salvation, His High Tower, His Refuge, and His Saviour. In Hell, Jesus testified that His Father's gentleness had made Him great.

No pit that a person falls into in his human will is as deep as Hell. No discouragement nor despair can be compared to the depths of suffering that Jesus endured in order to redeem lost souls. Jesus is a merciful High Priest Who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Because He has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor those who are tempted. Jesus can save a person from anything in his flesh, if he is willing to be saved from it. Before a person can be saved from sin, initially, he must lift up the Shield of Faith and call upon the name of Jesus, the Saviour. This is also true after he becomes a believer; he must lift up the Shield of Faith and call upon the name of Jesus, the Saviour, when he wants deliverance from some unChrist-like attitude or disposition in his flesh.

A person who embraces the gentleness and meekness of Jesus in a situation cannot continue to hold on to the sinful feelings of self-pity, sadness, and discouragement. He gets "saved" from these low feelings by lifting up the Shield-Faith of Salvation.

C. Shield-Faith of Truth

The Truth is a Shield that protects those who are willing to use it.

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: **his truth shall be thy shield and buckler** (Psalm 91:4).

The Hebrew word for *shield* in this verse is *tsinnaw*, which is a feminine word meaning a hook (as pointed), also a large shield (as if guarding by prickliness), also cold (as piercing). *Tsin-naw*, comes from *tsane*, meaning to be prickly, a thorn, hence a cactus hedge. The Hebrew word for *buckler* in this verse has a very similar connotation; it means something surrounding a person, i.e., a shield.

Jesus Christ made it very clear that His Word was the Truth.

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free** (John 8:31,32).

People who do not know the Living Truth, as it is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, God's Son, are easily deceived by teachers who assert their own dogmatic opinions as though they were the Truth when, in fact, they are false doctrines.

Christ's Shield of Truth helps believers to protect and hold on to what they already have gained in God. For example, the Devil loves to shoot his fiery darts at believers, trying to penetrate their minds with thoughts of their unworthiness to worship God, and he delights in trying to convince believers that God no longer requires His children to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. However, if a believer picks up the Shield of Truth and lets it

surround his mind, as though it were a hedge of prickly cactus, that Truth protects him from the Devil's deceitful darts that would keep him all bound up by doubt and unbelief so that he cannot get in the Spirit when he goes to Church. The LORD's Shield-Faith protects our minds from the Devil's untruths so that we can be free to worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

Also, it is impossible for a person to go out into the world without being exposed to all manner of fleshly temptations. Pictures of scantily clothed women are used on billboards to promote the sale of almost every kind of product; for example, even a trip to the grocery store involves being bombarded with pornographic covers on magazines, situated at the check-out counters so that you cannot avoid them. This is why a believer who is wise will keep his mind protected by the Shield of Truth. Christ's prickly, cold light of Truth has power to cool a person's mind and put out the fire of the Devil's lustful thoughts before they inflame his whole being.

D. The Shield-Faith of the LORD, *Jehovah*, the Almighty One

In the beginning verses of Psalm 115, David described the false gods which were the works of man's hands. Men worshipped these gods of silver and gold, although they had no life and no true power. They had mouths but could not speak. They had eyes but could not see. They had noses but could not smell. They had hands and feet but could neither feel nor walk. These gods could not help themselves, nor could they help those who worshipped them.

Of these false gods, David went on to say, "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." (Psalm 115:8). In other words, the men who made these gods were just as impotent and dead as their gods.

Then, in verse nine, David let it be known that his trust was not in a false god but in the LORD Jehovah.

O Israel, **trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.** O house of Aaron, **trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.**

Ye that fear the LORD, **trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield** (Psalm 115:9-11).

David repeated the name of the LORD three times, saying that He was a powerful, mighty Shield for Israel, for the priestly house of Aaron, and for all those who fear Him.

We already have learned that the name, LORD, when spelled with all capital letters, identifies Jehovah, the self-existent One Who reveals Himself. He is the mighty One Who can conquer everything.

In the Book of Revelation, chapter nineteen, Jesus Christ is revealed as the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. He will come out of Heaven, riding upon His Horse of Faith, accompanied by His Bridal Army, to fight the Battle of Armageddon. He will tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God until all rebellious flesh is brought under subjection to His Feet.

Believers who put their trust in the LORD are safe, even when the LORD comes with His almighty power to tread down a new area of their flesh. As the believer lifts up the LORD's mighty name, His name becomes a Shield of Protection for the believer's Spiritual Man; thus, even while the flesh is being brought down into subjection under the feet of the LORD Jesus Christ, the believer's Spiritual Man, inside his heart, can continue to grow. The judgment that is poured out upon the flesh cannot penetrate the Shield-Faith of the LORD.

IV. Horse-Faith — for Overcoming the Enemy

The White Horse upon which Jesus Christ sits, as recorded in the nineteenth chapter of Revelation, is His own personal Horse of Faith.

And I saw heaven opened, and **behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True**, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. **And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS** (Revelation 19:11-16).

Neither the Horse that Jesus rides nor the ones being ridden by His Bridal Army are natural horses; these are spiritual Horses of Faith. When Christ returns to this earth to make war, He will be riding upon His Horse of Faith.

In the Old Testament Dispensation, when Job was being shown how small his power was in comparison to God's

Power, the LORD gave Job a revelation of the Horse of Faith.

Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting (Job 39:11-25).

Certain aspects of this description may be applied to a natural horse. For example, natural horses are very strong. They have been used for generations as work animals. In earlier times, they were ridden into war. However, no natural horse ever had a neck that was clothed with thunder; nor does glory go forth from the nostrils of a natural horse.

This is a description of the spiritual Horse of Faith, which is a mighty Warrior Horse. The sound of battle does not frighten him; it is a challenge to him. He paweth in the valley, anxious to ride forth against the enemy.

In the beginning of a believer's walk with the LORD, he often trembles at the very thought of having to do battle with fallen Lucifer or any of his cohorts. Many spiritual battles have been lost because believers have tried to fight without having a Horse of Faith. The Horse of Faith that goes forth to war against God's enemies is formed in the believer's heart as he lays hold of God's Living Word and the glory of it.

God is looking for people who will grow and mature spiritually. The ones who will come back with Jesus Christ in His Bridal Army will have formed in their hearts the Door-Faith, the Seed-Faith, the Shield-Faith, and the Horse-Faith that they need to make them strong, fearless warriors.

My prayer is that this lesson will help each reader to gain a new vision of the heights and depths of faith and a new desire to possess each class of faith in his or her own heart.



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