Casting Down Arguments (series)

**4— MY SWORD AND SHIELD**

(arguments, lies, high things, thoughts, fiery darts)

**Mark 11:22–24 (NKJV)** So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. **23** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. **24** Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

1. **Have faith**
2. **Speak your faith directly to the mountain**
3. **Pray to God in faith**

**2 Corinthians 10:4–5 (NKJV)** For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, **5** **casting down arguments** and every **high thing** that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity** to the obedience of Christ.

**Ephesians 6:11, 16–17 (NIV)** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against **the devil’s schemes.** **… VERSE 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. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**.

**THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN USING THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT… AND USING THE SHIELD OF FAITH.**

**WE USE THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT WHEN WE SPEAK OUT OR VOICE THE WORD OF GOD**

**EX – Remember how Jesus used the sword on the devil in the wilderness.**

**WE USE THE SHIELD OF FAITH WHEN WE SPEAK OR VOICE OUR FAITH IN GOD.**

**EX – Remember what Jesus said as soon as he received the news of Lazarus being very sick? He said, *“This sickness is not unto death.”***

**EX – Remember what Jesus said as soon as Jairus heard that his daughter had died? He said, *“*Do not be afraid; only believe.”**

**SATAN’S SCHEMES… HIS PLOTS… HIS WILES:**

**James 3:6 (NKJV)** And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

**SATAN HAS HIJACKED THE MOUTHS AND WORDS OF THIS WORLD, AND HE HAS SET THE TONGUES OF MEN ON FIRE.**

**Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV)** Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

**WE ARE LIVING IN A WAR ZONE… AND DEADLY BULLETS ARE FLYING ALL AROUND US… AND AT US.**

**AND… LET ME SHOW YOU HOW SUCCESSFUL JESUS WAS AT KEEPING THE DEVIL’S LIES, DECEPTIONS, AND THOUGHTS OUT OF HIS HEART.**

**John 14:30 (NKJV)** I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

**MUCH CAN BE LEARNED ABOUT THE DEVIL’S SCHEMES AND COMBATING HIM FROM THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH… LET’S READ A FEW EXCERPTS…**

**INTRODUCE THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH**

**Nehemiah 2:17–20 (NKJV)** Then I said to them, “You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach.” **18** And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king’s words that he had spoken to me. So they said, “Let us rise up and build.” Then they set their hands to this good work. **19** But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, “What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?” **20** So I answered them, and said to them, “The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem.”

**THAT’S WHAT SATAN DID TO JESUS… AND THAT’S WHAT SATAN DOES TO YOU… HE SPEAKS WORDS TO DISCOURAGE YOU… TO TELL YOU THAT THE PROMISES OF GOD WILL NOT COME TO PASS FOR YOU.**

**Nehemiah 4:1–18 (NKJV)** But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. **2** And **he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria,** and said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?” **3** Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, “Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall.” **4** Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! **5** Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders. **6** So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. **7** Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, **8** and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion. **9** Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night. **10** Then Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall.” **11** And our adversaries said, “They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease.” **12** So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, “From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us.” **13** Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. **14** And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.” **15** And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. **16** So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. **17** Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. **18** Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

**Nehemiah 6:1–16 (NKJV)** Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), **2** that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono.” But they thought to do me harm. **3** So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?” **4** But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner. **5** Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand. **6** In it was written: It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king. **7** And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, “There is a king in Judah!” Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together. **8** Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart.” **9** For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, “Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done.” Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands. **10** Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was a secret informer; and he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you.” **11** And I said, “Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!” **12** Then I perceived that God had not sent him at all, but that he pronounced this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. **13** For this reason he was hired, that I should be afraid and act that way and sin, so that they might have cause for an evil report, that they might reproach me. **14** My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid. **15** So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. **16** And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.