

Come Follow Me
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Week 41
Ephesians

I know this is the week you have been waiting for. It is always so exciting when we get to talk about the armor of God. There is so much power and faith building doctrine in this book, that it is a huge blessing. How grateful we are that Paul received this revelation so many years ago and wrote it down for us in our day. Praise be to God for His boundless mercy.

But as usual we are not just going to talk about the armor of God in the normal way and outline every piece and identify what it means to us. No, you can get that in your gospel doctrine class. Here we are going to dig deep and uncover somethings that perhaps you have not thought of before.

Chapter six breaks into this topic this way:

“11 Put on the whole **armour** of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we **wrestle** not **against flesh and blood**, but against principalities, against powers, against the **rulers** of the **darkness** of this world, against spiritual **wickedness** in high *places*.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day,” (Ephesians 6:11-13)

Paul then goes on to list all the different parts of the armor we are to put on. Each having its own purpose for protection, all except one. All of these parts to a whole armor that we need in order to stay protected in the battle that we are all in everyday are defensive items, except our single and only weapon that we have to fight back with. And that is the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. That is your weapon. And it is vital that if we go to war we have something to fight with. Have you ever seen a soldier with just body armor? Can you imagine an army that went to war and they were all armored up, but they did not have any weapons. I highly doubt that that army would be very victorious. It would just be a matter of time until the enemy would penetrate their armor and the slaughter would begin. Our weapon is a vital part of this armor in the battle that is waging. So what exactly is it and how do we use this weapon? Let's look at two examples in the scriptures that will teach us not only how we are to use this weapon but how the adversary uses this weapon against us.

In Genesis one we read about the creation. We are so blessed to have this record of the creation. But, (that's a big but there.) It is a very old book and some of it doesn't really make sense. What I mean by that is the chronology of the creation. In chapter one it says that God created man and woman, male and female and gave them dominion over every creature on the earth. But in chapter two it also says that God created man...again? I'm not telling you this to confuse you, I'm telling you this because there is something we can learn here. Let's assume

just for a moment to follow the chronology of Chapter 2 and not chapter one. In chapter two God created Adam, Then God gave the command to not eat of the fruit of the tree of life and then, God created Eve. This would mean that the serpent went to Eve not because she was a woman but because she would have heard the command to not eat of the tree from Adam, not from God. Now, please let me reiterate. The order of creation is not important to our salvation. I am simply using this to make a point. What if this was the case. That Eve did not hear the command from God but was told by Adam? It would make sense why the serpent went to her first. Listen to what he says.

“1 Now the **serpent** was more **subtil** than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, **Yea, hath God said**, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Genesis 3:1)

This is one of Satan’s most effective tactics. He tries to and is trying to get us to question the word of God. To question what God actually said. And listen to Eves response:

“We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the **tree** which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.” (Genesis 3:2)

Ok... Is she right? Nope.... That is not what God said. Eve does not accurately quote what it was that God said. God said “Don't eat of the fruit, but Eve says that God said not to eat of it OR touch it. See, she took God's command that was meant to keep them safe and she adds to it and turns it into a restriction. Now all of a sudden God is limiting them.

We do this all the time. Last sunday we had stake conference and a member of the seventy was there, Ahmad Corbitt. During his talk he said that many years ago he was serving as a high councilor in his stake. And the Spirit told him that: he would soon be presiding over his ward. It was that time that there would be a new bishop in his ward and he knew he was to be the next bishop. He went home and told his wife that he would be the next bishop of their ward. A few weeks later in high council meeting he was shocked when the stake President announced the new bishopric, and his name was not among those names. What do you do with that he asked? This was the same spirit that told him that the church was true and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet. He knew what the Spirit felt like and he had in fact received it that day. So, he had three options. He could question everything he has ever known. He could condemn the Stake President, saying that he got it wrong and that Ahmad knew what God wanted. Neither of those felt like the right choice, so he chose the third option. He trusted in God that He knew what He was doing. Ahmad put it on the shelf for later knowing that eventually he would understand God's purpose in all this. Well, six months later the stake presidency was recognized and he was called as a counselor to the president. His first assignment was to his own ward and as he was sitting on the stand with the Bishop the spirit whispered again to him: you will be presiding over this ward very soon. He knew at that moment what the Lord ment with His earlier revelation. There he was presiding over that ward but not as a Bishop like he had assumed. God spoke His word, and Ahmad super imposed his option over God's word, he added to what God had said it confused him. Just as Eve did and just as we do. I'm sure we do this more often

than we realize. God's word is enough, it is sufficient. We do not need to add anything to it. Because when we do we expose a weakness and the adversary will attack.

Did God really say? That is what the Devil will always ask, if we don't know for ourselves the word of God. It is so important that we know exactly what God is saying. Otherwise when we come to that moment unarmed and unfamiliar with our weapon the word of God, then the adversary will conquer. Did God really say that He loves you? Did God really say that you're special? That your Chosen, called out, blessed, watched over. If we don't know His word, the best we can answer is: I don't know. I don't know if God loves me, or that He cares for me and is mindful of me... i don't know.

Our second example is when; after fasting for forty days and forty nights, Jesus is tempted by the Devil. In this account we find out that Satan, the enemy of God is tempting Jesus, the Son of God and he is trying to get Jesus to use His power to do something selfish. But what is the weapon that Satan used to try and get Jesus to falter? He used the word of God. Satan quotes scripture in order to attack Jesus. So, what does Jesus use to counter Satan's attacks? The word of God. But, Jesus did not just memorize a few verses. Listen carefully, Jesus uses the word of God correctly understood, because he understands the heart of God. Jesus is able to withstand the attacks of the adversary because He knows perfectly the pure word of God.

I remember watching Military or Law enforcement officers do demonstrations, where they would take their firearm and lay it on a table in front of them. As they are timed they would take that weapon, take it all apart and put it all back together in seconds. It's pretty amazing to watch. They are so familiar with their weapon because their life depends on it. If they go into battle or into a scary situation and their firearm jams or mis-fires they must know what to do and how to fix it in a very short time because their safety is dependent on them being intimately familiar with their weapon.

I wonder how that would work in our lives if we were intimately familiar with the word of God that nothing the adversary could throw at us would even have an impact. Because here is a question that could rock your world: Is the adversary more familiar with the word of God than you are? If you answer yes then that could be a very scary situation.

In closing I have just one final thought that I would like to share with you. When we visualize all the different parts of the armor Paul describes for us there seems to be something missing. I know it sounds crazy, but look: We have the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit. We are covered, well... almost. We don't have any covering or protection for our back. I think it is intentional. I believe it was intended to be like this because I'm supposed to have your back and you are supposed to have mine.

Battles are rarely fought alone. Yet most of us go into the battle of life not properly armed with the safety God intended and we usually go alone. As christians we have a community that is our

army. When soldiers went to battle they never went alone and they didn't even go in groups of two or three. History refers to them as a legion, a group or a large number of soldiers all fighting together for the same purpose. Defending and protecting one another. See, if you put on the armor of God and I don't. You are still vulnerable. If I put on the armor of God and you don't, I am still vulnerable. In ancient times they would link their shields together to create a barrier or a wall of protection to keep themselves and everyone around them safe from the attacks of their enemy. Just like they did back then, might we link our shields of faith together to give us all protection for the fiery darts of the adversary that is constantly flying towards us.

See the truth is: that we need the armor of God and the people of God to be effective in this battle.

I am sure that God gave us these protections with the intent that we would use them.

I testify that as we suit up for battle, that God will send not only his earthly angels to our ranks to stand by our side but He will also send legions of angels from the spiritual realm to fight with and protect us from our enemy that is seeking to destroy our souls. Might we fight valiantly; is my prayer.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.