

D&C Lesson # 43
Take Upon You My Whole Armor
(D&C 76:25-29; 27:15-18; 42:21-24; 51:9; 52:16; 59:6; 63:16, 60-62; 97:8; 121:45-6; 136:24)
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(Here is inspirational background and evidences supporting the Restoration)

I. While some discount a belief in the Devil, (likely due to outlandish portrayals of him), Latter-day Saints know he is real, and that he truly has evil purposes.

A. Remember we have seen such terribly evil men as Hitler and other dictators of today. So it should not be hard to believe that there could be such an evil personage on the other side of the veil.

B. Modern revelation testifies that “[the devil] maketh war with the Saints of God” (D&C 76:29). And that his followers “encompasseth [us] ... round about.”

1. This adds to the Biblical witness that there is such a personage and that he seeks to thwart the Lord of Heaven’s purposes. (The *Topical Guide* has many references to him and his works).

2. This scripture also shows that he has a special desire to destroy those who are servants of the Lord.

C. Surely at no other time has the devil’s messages of disbelief, self-indulgence, sin, and other evils been so prevalent as in our times.

1. And today, through the omnipresence of mass media, it is almost impossible to escape exposure to his influence.

II. The Lord has told us we can defend ourselves by putting on “the Whole Armor of God;” and the Book of Mormon dramatically illustrates the value of armor and other defensive measures which demonstrates how to combat the powers of this supernatural enemy.

A. When the Lamanites came to destroy the Nephites, Moroni had prepared them with “breastplates and with arm-shields... and shields to defend their heads,” as well as the wearing of “thick clothing” (Alma 43:19).

B. The Lamanites, although much more numerous, were “naked, save it were a skin which was girded about their loins” (v. 20).

1. When “the work of death commenced...it was more dreadful [for] the Lamanites, for their nakedness was exposed... which brought death almost at every stroke” (v. 37).

C. We can learn truths through the things of the world. **Through these incidents we can learn why we need to have armor to defend ourselves against the more destructive evils of today.**

III. When the Lamanites similarly adopted body armor, the Nephites still had an advantage: this time Moroni had caused the building of defensive walls surrounding their cities. They had dug deep ditches, piled the earth high into earthen walls, and put wooden barricades above with **watchtowers**, etc. Then they constructed just one place of entrance, designed to make an intruding army extremely vulnerable to their weapons (Alma 49:1-9. 18-20).

A. Thus they did not just protect their individual bodies, but **they had walled off the destructive powers of their enemies.**

B. Can we not learn much from all these defensive measures?

1. Are there not ways we can try to “wall off” the destructive powers of today?

2. Are there not ways we can erect our own “watch towers?”

IV. The Nephites had a final advantage. **The Lord Himself helped them as long as they were humble, tried to be obedient, and sought His help.** This theme appears repeatedly.

A. Often they prevailed because they “were inspired by a better cause, for they were not fighting for money or power but they were fighting for their homes and their liberties, their wives and their children, and their all, yea, for their rites of worship and their church” (Alma 43:45).

B. And thus the Lord promised His help. “Inasmuch as ye are not guilty of the first offense, neither the second, [I] shall not suffer [you] to be slain by the hands of your enemies” (Alma 43:46). They did receive protection when they obeyed this guidance.

C. The Lord’s help was further validated when the two thousand stripling warriors did not suffer death because “they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted. Yea, they were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him” (Alma 53:20-21).

Because of their faith in the true principles their mothers had taught them, the Lord saw them through.

D. Thus they had taken upon themselves “the whole armor of God.”

V. Where can we find such armor today?

A. D&C 27 beautifully outlines the armor we are seeking.

B. And that Armor begins with the scriptures, particularly the *Book of Mormon*.

C. Through the examples of two individuals, facing similar problems, I have seen how that armor can be obtained and how it can truly protect, and how the neglect of it can leave one truly “naked.”

C. One young man had to move in his senior year of high school. After building a position of respect and accomplishment in a good-sized school, he had to move into a much larger school where he knew no one and his opportunities for similar success were greatly limited. In many ways his senior year was hugely disappointing.

1. However, one change for him turned into a great blessing. He went from early morning seminary to home study seminary. Because his previous habits had been to get up and go to seminary, he had the will power to continue to rise each morning and study his scriptures on his own. Frankly, his self-study was more beneficial to him because there were no distractions from other students. His scripture reading became morally strengthening, and a life-long habit.

2. I have seen that it continues to provide the armor he needs, even in other challenging experiences he has had in life.

D. On the other hand, another young man I know also had to move during high school. He also found this very challenging. Unfortunately, he did not make personal scripture study his armor. Feeling “alone,” he fell into friendships where moral standards were the opposite of his previous values. He later became a victim to pornography. Being young, he developed an addiction which, in spite of many efforts and heavy expenditures, he has yet to overcome.

I feel certain **the major difference in these two cases was whether one did or did not take upon himself the armor of personal daily scripture study.**

E. Daily scripture study leads to more meaningful and daily prayers, which is also part of the Armor of God.

F. There are many other forms of armor which we can obtain through the Lord.

VI. The Lord makes some amazing promises to those who take upon themselves the whole armor of God.

A. He promises “the Holy Ghost [to be a] constant companion” as we walk through this difficult and challenging life (D&C 121:45-46).

1. That is in and of itself a marvelous promise.

B. He promises if we do take upon ourselves the Whole Armor of God, eventually we shall “be caught up, that where I am ye shall be also” (D&C 27:18).

C. And He buttressed this by saying if we let “virtue garnish [our] thoughts unceasingly” then shall “our confidence wax strong **in the presence of God.**”

1. This seems to be further promise we will we ultimately be in His Presence, **and we will feel comfortable and welcomed there.**

D. He also promised “the doctrine of the priesthood shall distill itself upon [your] soul as the dews from heaven.” (Emphasis added)

1. As this promise is attached to the promise of being in His Presence, surely it means that fully understanding the power of the priesthood, and wearing the whole armor of God, will eventually lead to **full access to the enormous powers of the priesthood.**

VII. The Lord promises other “gifts” of armor to those who humble themselves and worthily go to the temple. What is received there are essential parts of “the Whole Armor of God.”

A. While these things are too sacred to explain in detail, I can personally testify that when kept in the way we are instructed, powerful helps to protect us against the most evil of all adversaries are granted, and is the main purpose of the most precious of these gifts.

VIII. Choosing to seek for and to put on the whole armor of God is obviously the far wiser choice:

A. Is it really wise to yield to the persuasions of Lucifer, who has no love at all for anyone, and whose only goal is to enslave their will to his, and who will eventually abandon and betray them, leaving them nothing but a searing conscience?

B. Is it not far wiser to accept the Lord’s proffered armor, who loves each individual deeply --- so deeply He has paid the ultimate sacrifice to save them. And who promises “All that I have is thine!” And who does not lie.

It would not only be foolish, but terribly tragic to choose the first over the Last!