Lesson 136 - The Armor of God

1. What are we to be strong in? **Ephesians 6:10**

   EGW: In the Christian warfare life, spiritual life, courage, constancy, and decision are needed. Be strong in the Lord. Human courage will not suffice. The Christian soldier must be strong in the Lord. God is all-sufficient. In the omnipotence of His might gird on the armor. Make use of all the proper means of defense against the enemy of souls. You are everyone to perfect an individual character for yourselves. Resist temptation. Cultivate the Christian virtues. Be strong; yea, be strong! {UL 129.5}

2. What are we to have power in? **Ephesians 6:10**

   EGW: Satanic agencies in human form will take part in this last great conflict to oppose the building up of the kingdom of God. And heavenly angels in human guise will be on the field of action. The two opposing parties will continue to exist till the closing up of the last great chapter in this world's history. Satanic agencies are in every city. We can not afford to be off our guard for one moment. The true, stanch believers will pray more and more, and will talk less of matters of little consequence. More and more decided testimonies will come from their lips to encourage the weak and the needy. This is no time for the people of God to be weaklings, neither one thing nor the other. Let all be diligent students of the Word. We must be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We can not live haphazard lives and be true Christians. {RH, August 5, 1909 par. 8}

3. How much of the armor of God is to be put on? **Ephesians 6:11**

   EGW: A great crisis is coming upon us. If men still yield to men, as they have been doing for the last fifteen years, they will lose their own souls, and their example will lead others astray. God's soldiers must put on the whole armor of God. We are not required to put on human armor, but to gird ourselves with God's strength. If we keep God's glory ever in view, our eyes will be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve; we will be able to look deeper, and see afar off what the world is. As we discern its dishonesty, its craftiness, its selfish eye-service, its pretence, and its boasting, its want of fair, honest dealing in the ordinary intercourse of life, and its grasping covetousness, we can take our stand, by precept and example, to represent Christ, and convert souls from the world by our sound principles, our firm integrity, our hatred of all dissembling, and our holy boldness in acknowledging Christ. {17MR 193.1}

4. What will we be able to stand up against? **Ephesians 6:11**

EGW: The great conflict now being waged is not merely a strife of man against man. On one side stands the Prince of Life, acting as man's substitute and surety; on the other, the prince of darkness, with the fallen angels under his command. "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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." {RH, February 6, 1900 par. 16}

There will be a sharp conflict between those who are loyal to God and those who cast scorn upon his law. The church has joined hands with the world. Reverence to God's law has been subverted. The religious leaders are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. As it was in the days of Noah, so it is in this age of the world. But shall the prevalence of disloyalty and transgression cause those who have reverenced the law of God to have less respect for it, to unite with the powers of earth to make it void?--The truly loyal will not be carried away by the current of evil. They will not throw scorn and contempt on that which God has set apart as holy. The test comes to every one. There are only two sides. On which side are you? {RH, February 6, 1900 par. 17}

5. In practicality, how do we stand up? **James 4:7**

EGW: Faith is the first round in the ladder of advancement. Without faith it is impossible to please God. But many stop on this round, and never ascend higher. They seem to think that when they have professed Christ, when their names are on the church record, their work is completed. Faith is essential; but the inspired word says, "Add to your faith, virtue." Those who are seeking for eternal life, and a home in the kingdom of God, must lay for their character building the foundation of virtue. Jesus must be the chief corner stone. The things that defile the soul must be banished from the mind and life. When temptations are presented, they must be resisted in the strength of Christ. The virtue of the spotless Lamb of God must be woven into the character till the soul can stand in its integrity. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you." {RH, February 21, 1888 par. 3}

6. Who are we not fighting against, though it is often hard to restrain from doing so? **Ephesians 6:12**

EGW: The doctrines must be plainly understood. The men accepted to preach the truth must be anchored; then their vessel will hold against storm and tempest, because the anchor holds them firmly. The deceptions will increase, and we are to call rebellion by its right name. We are to stand with the whole armor on. In this conflict we do not meet men only, but principalities and powers. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Let Ephesians 6:10-18 be read carefully and impressively in our churches. {2SM 395.1}

7. What are we fighting against that is in high places? **Ephesians 6:12**

EGW: God calls upon those to whom he has intrusted his goods to acquit themselves as faithful stewards. The Lord would have all things of temporal interest occupy a secondary place in the heart and thoughts; but Satan would have the matters of the earth take the first place in our lives. The Lord would have us approve the things that are excellent. He shows us the conflict in which we must engage, reveals the character and plan of redemption. He lays open before you the perils you will meet, the self-denial that will be required, and he bids you count the cost, assuring you that if you zealously engage in the conflict, divine power will combine with human effort. The Christian's warfare is not a warfare waged against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The Christian must contend with supernatural forces, but he is not to be left alone to engage in the conflict. The Saviour is the captain of his salvation, and with him man may be more than conqueror. {RH, July 1, 1890 par. 8}

8. What day shall we be able to stand in without falling? **Ephesians 6:13**

EGW: Paul declares: "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. Wherefore," He enjoins us, "take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Whatever trial may come upon you, however oppressed by persecution you may be, remember that beside you stands One mighty in power, even the Captain of the Lord's host. Resolve that not one jot or tittle of the sacred law of Jehovah shall be marred or dishonored by your course, that its authority shall not weaken in your hands. {ST, July 25, 1900 par. 7}

9. What day are they ultimately referring to? **1 Thessalonians 5:2-8**

EGW: The time is now approaching when God will vindicate his honor, and bring this

unrighteousness to an end. Of this time the apostle Paul speaks when he says: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." When the attractions of the horse-race are all-absorbing; when the excitement of the cricket-match runs high; when the fascination of the gambling hall is strong; when parties are indulging in luxurious feasts, and revelry is at its height; when all are forgetful of God and of eternity, and "Peace and safety" is the cry that is heard, "then sudden destruction" will come upon men, "and they shall not escape." {RH, August 31, 1897 par. 11}

10. What part are we to play in that day? **End of Ephesians 6:13**

EGW: There is no safety for any of us unless we trust fully in God, and take a decided stand, guarding the avenues of the will, resisting the first insinuations of Satan, rejecting his counsel to yield to questionable impulses. This requires watchfulness, perseverance, and continual adherence to the word of God under all circumstances. We are here as probationers, and are deciding our own eternal destiny. Then how important it is that we daily educate and train the will power to render obedience to God in the least as well as in the greatest tests. How important to ever remember the fact, "Thou God seest me. Thou knowest every thought, and art acquainted with every action"! How important that we regard ourselves as pupils in the school of Christ, that we learn to repress every vain, trifling word! Jesus has been tempted in all points like as we are, and it is our Saviour who admonishes and warns us concerning evil. He has identified his interest with that of suffering humanity, and he bids us "watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." We should esteem his counsel as of the highest value. You are not to be off guard for an instant, but as a faithful sentinel to stand at your post of duty, and having done all to stand. But with all our watchfulness we are to remember that "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Man must cooperate with the heavenly agencies; he must use his God-given abilities to their utmost in earnest endeavor to keep his own soul from being degraded by sin; but he must not trust in his own finite strength, for it will be as a broken staff, a bruised reed. With his human endeavor he must mingle faith in a divine Deliverer, and express his dependence upon God in prayer. The promise is given, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me, and he shall make peace with Me." There is no safety for us outside of entire dependence on Jesus Christ. His wisdom, his power, his grace, his love must be our only support. We are to unite prayer with watchfulness, and thus lay hold upon his mighty power, feeling our insufficiency to cope with self and the powers of darkness. {ST, May 15, 1893 par. 7}

11. What are the loins to be girt about with? **Ephesians 6:14**

EGW: Let truth-telling be held with no loose hand or uncertain grasp. Let it become a part of the life.

Playing fast and loose with truth, and dissembling to suit one's own selfish plans, means a shipwreck of faith. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." He who utters untruths sells his soul in a cheap market. His falsehoods may seem to serve in emergencies. He may seem to make business advancement because he gains by falsehood what he could not gain by fair dealing. But he finally reaches the place where he can trust no one. Himself a falsifier, he has no confidence in the word of others. {RH, February 2, 1911 par. 18}

12. Where do we find that item so as to girt our loins? **John 17:17, Psalms 119:151, John 14:6**

EGW: Truth will bear the test of all opposition. Let it be put strongly, as in Jesus, and let the characteristics of the worker be hidden in Christ. Let not one word be expressed to stir up the spirit of retaliation in opposers of the truth. Let nothing be done to arouse the dragon-like spirit, for it will reveal itself soon enough, and in all its dragon character, against those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. There are hereditary tendencies and natural dispositions that will wrestle for exhibition, but self must be lost in Jesus. The truth must appear in its beautiful, solemn character, dignified, uplifting, and ennobling. Let souls that are ready to perish receive from the teacher of truth only such impressions as are not perishable, but enduring as eternity. Give opportunity for the Holy Spirit to place the acceptable mold upon the souls that are turning from error to truth, from darkness to light.... {CTr 131.3}

13. What is the breastplate representative of? **Ephesians 6:14**

EGW: In this matter, Ezra and his companies discerned an opportunity to magnify the name of God before the heathen; and so they determined to put their trust wholly in him. They knew that if they kept the law of the Lord continually before them, and practised this law, they would be protected by the breastplate of righteousness. They realized that if they wilfully chose to violate even one precept of the decalogue, they would be like a soldier without a breastplate,--unprotected from the assaults of Satan. "So we fasted," said Ezra, "and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us." {RH, February 13, 1908 par. 12}

14. Whose breastplate are we to wear? **2 Peter 1:1**

EGW: Fiction, spurious interpretations of the Scriptures, dishes of fables, are everywhere presented for your acceptance. But great discernment is needed that the girdle should be the golden chain of truth. "And having on the breastplate of righteousness"--not your own, but the righteousness of

Christ. This is the fortress of the soul. We may, with Christ's righteousness going before us, withstand the moral darkness and penetrate the devices of the satanic agencies. {TMK 346.5}

15. What is to be on our feet? **Ephesians 6:15**

EGW: "Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," you will be prepared to walk from house to house, carrying the truth to the people. Sometimes you will find it very trying to do work of this kind; but if you go forth in faith, the Lord will go before you, and his light will shine upon your pathway. As you enter the homes of your neighbors to sell or to give away our literature, and in humility to teach them the truth, you will be accompanied by the light of heaven. Learn to sing the simplest of songs. These will help you in house-to-house labor, and hearts will be touched by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Christ was often heard singing hymns of praise; and yet I have heard persons say, "Christ never smiled." How mistaken their ideas in regard to the Saviour! There was joy in his heart. We learn from the Word that there is joy among the heavenly angels over one repentant sinner, and that the Lord himself rejoices over his church with singing. {RH, November 11, 1902 par. 14}

16. What does it mean to have that item on our feet? **Leviticus 4:26, 1 John 1:9**

EGW: My brethren, we are living in a most solemn period of this earth's history. There is never time to sin; it is always perilous to continue in transgression; but in a special sense is this true at the present time. We are now upon the very borders of the eternal world, and stand in a more solemn relation to time and to eternity than ever before. Now let every person search his own heart, and plead for the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness to expel all spiritual darkness, and cleanse from defilement. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Through faith, irrespective of feeling, Jesus, the author of our salvation, the finisher of our faith, will, by his precious grace, strengthen the moral powers, and the sinner may reckon himself "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ." Simple faith, with the love of Christ in the soul, unites the believer to God. While toiling in battle as a faithful soldier of Christ, he has the sympathy of the whole loyal universe. The ministering angels are round about him to aid in the conflict, so that he may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper," "the Lord is my strength and my shield:" I shall not be overcome. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." {SpTA01a 6.1}

17. What is the shield representative of? **First half of Ephesians 6:16**

EGW: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Satan is near, for the purpose of preventing souls from gaining the spiritual attainments they may receive. Confidence in God, a constant exercise of faith, will quench his fiery darts. {ST, July 11, 1900 par. 12}

18. With the shield, what shall we be able to do? **Second half of Ephesians 6:16**

EGW: Man is Satan's captive and is naturally inclined to follow his suggestions and do his bidding. He has in himself no power to oppose effectual resistance to evil. It is only as Christ abides in him by living faith, influencing his desires and strengthening him with strength from above, that man may venture to face so terrible a foe. Every other means of defense is utterly vain. It is only through Christ that Satan's power is limited. This is a momentous truth that all should understand. Satan is busy every moment, going to and fro, walking up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour. But the earnest prayer of faith will baffle his strongest efforts. Then take "the shield of faith," brethren, "wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." {5T 294.2}

19. What do we take advantage of to use the shield practically? **1 Corinthians 10:13**

EGW: We must not think that by walking in the path of obedience, we shall escape trials; for the enemy will do all in his power to hinder us from gaining heaven. But the Saviour has promised to help us. Have you trials? So had Jesus. Are you tempted? So was He--in all points like as we are. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him,. and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received him not. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." {5MR 251.1}

20. What does the helmet represent? **Ephesians 6:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:8**

EGW: God has provided abundant means for successful warfare with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places; for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The Bible is the armory where we may equip for the struggle. Our loins must be girt about with truth. Our breastplate must be righteousness. The

shield of faith must be in our hands, the helmet of salvation shine on our brows, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, be wielded to cut our way through the ranks of our bitter foes. We must be ready, at the command of our Captain to follow where he may lead. We must be doers of his word, not deceiving our own selves. {RH, January 10, 1888 par. 8}

21. What is the helmet protecting? **Philippians 1:27**

EGW: All who are enrolled as citizens of the heavenly country are required that their behavior shall be such as the gospel of Christ can approve. And it is our privilege to claim the rights and privileges of subjects of the kingdom of heaven. But to everyone who accepts Christ as his personal Saviour, He says, "Come out from among them [the world] and be ye separate." We are to conform to the Lord's requirements, and not disgrace our citizenship before the angels of heaven or before men. We are to render to God cheerful service. Christ does not speak to those who are no more to wrestle with temptation; who are not in any danger of being drawn away from Christ and overcome by the wiles of Satan, when He says: "Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ. . . . Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; . . . For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Philippians 1:27, 29). There is to be no strife or vainglory, no selfishness or murmuring, no disputing, nothing impure or dishonest found in the characters of the followers of Christ.--Letter 58a, 1898, pp. 1-11. (To Mrs. Gorick, July, 1898. Copied July 19, 1898.) White Estate Washington, D. C. December 10, 1981 {11MR 341.3}

22. What does the sword of the Spirit represent? **Ephesians 6:17**

EGW: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse," he continued, "deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. . . . All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." God has provided abundant means for successful warfare against the evil that is in the world. The Bible is the armory where we may equip for the struggle. Our loins must be girt about with truth. Our breastplate must be righteousness. The shield of faith must be in our hand, the helmet of salvation on our brow; and with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, we are to cut our way through the obstructions and entanglements of sin. {AA 502.2}

23. What is so important about the sword? **2 Timothy 3:16-17 [Answer at the beginning of verse 17.]**

EGW: God has provided abundant means for successful warfare with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places; for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The Bible is the armory where we may equip for the struggle. Our loins must be girt about with truth. Our breastplate must be righteousness. The shield of faith must be in our hands, the helmet of salvation shine on our brows, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, be wielded to cut our way through the ranks of our bitter foes. We must be ready, at the command of our Captain to follow where he may lead. We must be doers of his word, not deceiving our own selves. {RH, January 10, 1888 par. 8}

24. What are we to always do in the supplication of the Spirit? **First half of Ephesians 6:18**

EGW: How are the faithful servants of Christ employed? "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit," praying in the closet, in the family, in the congregation, everywhere; "and watching thereunto with all perseverance." They feel that souls are in peril, and with earnest, humble faith they plead the promises of God in their behalf. The ransom paid by Christ--the atonement on the cross--is ever before them. They will have souls as seals of their ministry. {5T 190.2}

25. What are we to do with all perseverance? **Second half of Ephesians 6:18**

EGW: By the word of God we are to overcome every temptation of the enemy. Satan may present every attraction, bring to our notice every deceiving, alluring bribe, in seeking to eclipse the brightness of Jesus from our view, and to obliterate from our minds his plainest requirements, but we are to meet his deceptions with the word of God. "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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." {ST, December 3, 1894 par. 4}