



Tablet of my Heart

Beth Jones, Christian Wife, Mom, Speaker and Writer

An Overview of the Armor of God Part 3: The Breastplate of Righteousness by Beth Jones

“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 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, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6: 11-18, NKJV)

We've been talking about the armor of God, which is essential for the spiritual warfare that we as Christians face every day. Yesterday's article was on the belt of truth. (<http://www.bethjones.net/the-armor-of-god-part-2-the-belt-of-truth/>). Today's article is on the breastplate of righteousness.

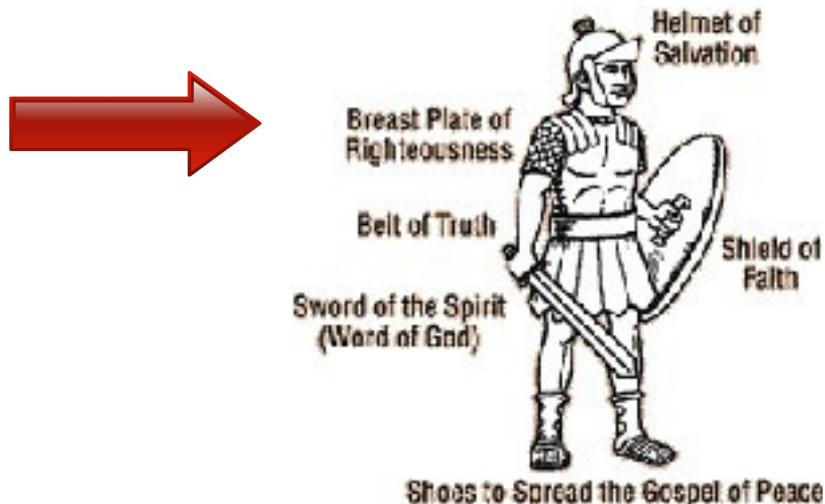


Image Source: <http://www.tgm.org/aogWholeArmor.htm>

The breastplate of righteousness is listed second in the armor of God. No Roman soldier would go into battle without his breastplate. It would be asking for death, because any attack could instantly kill him.¹

This piece of the armor could never be removed because it was vital to the life of the soldier. It was a tough, sleeveless piece of armor covering his full torso, made of leather or heavy linen, onto which were sewn overlapping slices of animals hooves, horns, or pieces of metal. Some breastplates were made of large pieces of metal molded or hammered to conform to the body. The breastplate's purpose was to protect the heart, lungs, intestines, and other vital organs.²

“In ancient Jewish thinking, the heart represented the mind and the will, and the bowels were considered the seat of emotions and feelings. The mind and the emotions are the the two areas where Satan most fiercely attacks believers.”³

We don't have to think very long to remember the last time we disobeyed God. In fact, just this morning I got annoyed over something minor! Yes, I desperately need Jesus every single day! I just couldn't make it without Him.

1 *The Great Teachings of The Bible and What They Mean for You: The Armor of God*, <http://www.freebiblestudyguides.org/bible-teachings/armor-of-god-breastplate-of-righteousness.htm>.

2 Liberty Online Ministries, *The Armor of God*, <http://www.libertyonlineministries.com/index.cfm?PID=1471.5>.

3 Ibid, <http://www.libertyonlineministries.com/index.cfm?PID=1471.5>.

The breastplate helps to keep us protected from the enemy's attacks which are to deceive and influence us to disobey God, like he did with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden.

“Righteousness” in the Ephesians 6 passage in the original language is the word, *dikaiosynē*, which means:

- the condition acceptable to God
- integrity
- virtue
- purity of life
- correctness of thinking and acting.

The first meaning, the condition acceptable to God, could be an entire teaching by itself. There is only one way to be acceptable to God. That is to be perfect. Will all the perfect people please stand up now?



This is a picture of our middle daughter Eden and her son Jacob when he was a baby (now 3 years old). A baby is about as perfect as a person can get. Yet even a baby is born with sin because of his Adamic nature (the sin all humans inherited from Adam). Even when we've had our very best day yet, it's still like “filthy rags” before a Holy God. (Isaiah 64:6) I know, none of us like to think or talk about sin! But there's hope.

The ONLY truly perfect person was Jesus Christ, the Sinless, Spotless Lamb of God. “Rather, the payment that freed you was the precious blood of Christ, the lamb with no defects or imperfections.” (1 Peter 1:19, God's Word Translation)

Jesus died on the cross over 2,000 years ago to be the substitute for us. He, by His death and resurrection, justified us before a Holy God. He took the punishment for our sins and **made us righteous, holy, and acceptable to God.**



Blake Lively trying to keep warm in freezing temperatures on the NYC set of *Gossip Girl*, by layering with two coats

Image Source: <http://www.popsugar.com/Pictures-Blake-Lively-Wearing-Two-Coats-Set-Gossip-Girl-NYC-13447692>

Then why do we need to put on righteousness?

If Jesus already died for our sins, then why do we need to put on the breastplate of righteousness? Wouldn't that be like putting on two sweaters or two coats?

Jesus made our **spirits righteous** before God. **It's our minds, bodies, and souls that need to be daily sanctified.** These are the areas Satan attacks us while we're living here on earth until we die.

Here are some ways Satan tries to penetrate the armor of our breastplate of righteousness:

The Mind

Unholy thoughts, strongholds – lies, sexual impurity, anger, unforgiveness, depression, distractions, worries, anxieties, fears, unbelief, idolatry, envy, jealousy, pride, etc.

The Body – Satan knows that for Christians, their bodies are the holy temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). He attacks our bodies with fatigue, gluttony, over-eating, not eating enough, eating unhealthy foods such as junk foods, eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia, sleep deprivation or interruption, lack of exercise/laziness, illnesses, infirmity, injuries, accidents, etc. Satan's ultimate attack against the body is suicide.

The Soul (Emotions) – Our emotions are not sinful. God gave us emotions. To be alive is to have passions and feelings. But these emotions need to be under the rule and the reign of God's laws. A man certainly can't go up to someone and shoot them just because he's mad at him (although people have done this!). Our emotions need to be under the direction and control of the Holy Spirit. Satan attacks our emotions with fears, lusts, envy, jealousy (like Saul was of David), anger, rage, self-pity, spiritual apathy, condemnation, shame, loneliness, hopelessness, etc.

The armor of God protects us from all the flaming arrows of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16) and the breastplate is effective at deflecting these arrows aimed primarily at the heart and the mind.

Satan tries to penetrate our breastplate of righteousness with wounds from the world. He uses anyone and anything to get through to our hearts and our minds, to get our eyes off Jesus and our focus off obedience to God's word.



Think of the last time you were hurt. If you have forgiven the person who hurt you, the sting of that wound should be gone. (If not, there's some forgiveness work to do and Satan has used unforgiveness and perhaps bitterness to penetrate your armor!) If you think about the situation very long, you might start feeling hurt, upset, or mad again – and need to forgive that person again! Satan is a master at bringing up the reminders of old hurts and grievances to get through our armor.

Now think of a situation where God did something amazing – even miraculous. Notice the difference in your mind, body, and soul? Your very countenance is lighter just reflecting on God's wonders. Satan doesn't want you to do this because he hates God.

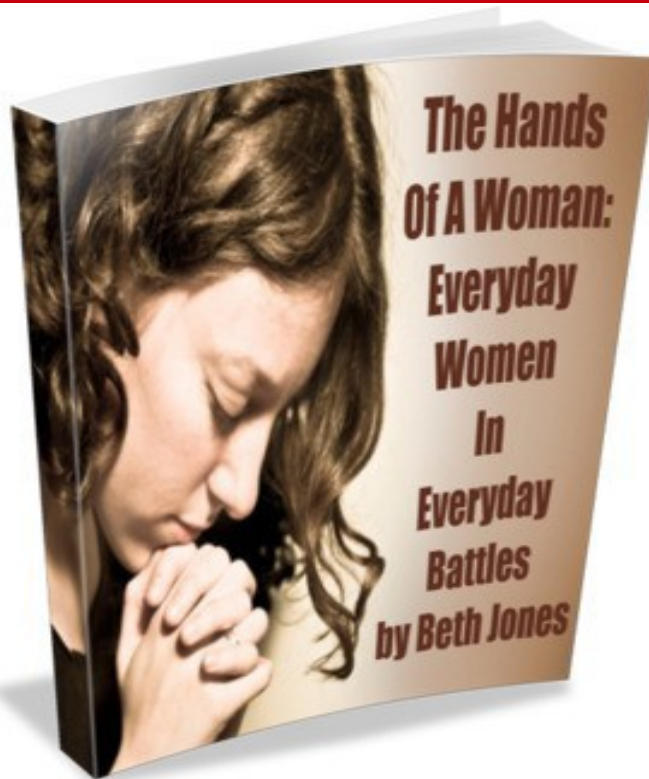
He wants to find some chink in your armor, some place of vulnerability in your armor to hurt you – and thus, hurt God because you are God's child. Satan attacks you because you belong to God. But God is greater than him and any demon in hell! With your armor on each day, the enemy won't be able to penetrate it.

The breastplate of righteousness protects you from Satan's lies to cause you to do what's wrong. It keeps us walking in righteousness each and every day, doing what is right before God. The breastplate of righteousness protects your mind, your body, and your soul from Satan's traps. Righteous living brings you peace, and God's pleasure.

“One day, the war we're fighting will be over. And when it is, we are promised, "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever" (Isaiah 32:17). By faithfully living God's way and staying clear of Satan's, we will find this peace, quietness and assurance—forever.”⁴

In the next article, we will discuss the shoes of peace.

4 The Great Teachings Of The Bible and What They Mean For You, The Armor of God, <http://www.freebiblestudyguides.org/bible-teachings/armor-of-god-breastplate-of-righteousness.htm>.



Did you enjoy this article? Do you want to learn more about spiritual warfare? My new ebook, **The Hands Of A Woman: Everyday Women In Everyday Battles**, has eight women's true, inspirational stories of their greatest spiritual battles and shares how they obtained victory through faith in Christ. Right now you can purchase this ebook at **a special 25% discount and complimentary gifts**, when you sign up for my update list here. <http://womensbattles.com/freereport.html>



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