

Ephesians 6:14b

Hilltown Baptist Church, 2006

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"...beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called..."
Ephesians 4:1

The Christian's Armor: Part 2 – The Breastplate of Righteousness

Muscle Cuirass: Early in Rome's history men wore bronze plate armor in the Greek hoplite style. In later years, it appears chest plates were reserved for those of higher rank. These were well decorated with animal, mythological and chest muscle designs. No examples have been found in excavations, but Roman sculpture shows them being used by officers well into the 1st century AD. The rectangular strips dangling at the sleeves and waist in this illustration are called *Pteruges*. Made of leather, they added protection to the upper arms and thighs, while conserving metal.



Segmented Armor: The term, *Lorica Segmentata*, is used today, although it is not known by what name the Romans themselves used. The Romans appear to have completely developed this style themselves. It may have partially patterned after the armor of certain gladiators. This armor was made up of many pieces of laminated iron all bound together with leather straps and metal hooks, forming a very flexible and strong protection. It began to be issued to the legions during the reign of Emperor Augustus. The earliest fragments of this armor have been found at Kalkriese, the presumed site of Varus 9 AD battle with the Germans in the Teutobergen Wald. By the reign of Tiberius this form of armor had gained widespread use. It appears to have fallen out of favor after the mid second century AD.



- The function of the “breastplate” for the Roman soldier was obvious – to protect the **VITAL ORGANS** of the human body. It served its purpose merely by being “put on”.
- For the ancient peoples, the organs and bowels represented the seat of the **MIND** and **EMOTIONS**. Satan attacks these in the believer, causing doubt.

What is this “righteousness” from God that protects the believer if we put it on?

- Two types of righteousness:
 - o **IMPUTED**: that very righteousness of Christ Himself which He procured for us by His life of perfect obedience to the Father – that life required of us but which we could not live ourselves. (Phi. 3:1-16, Rom. 5:17, II Peter 1:1)
 - o **PRACTICAL**: that which we are called to “work out” in loving obedience to our Redeemer. (Eph. 4:20-27; Phil. 2:12-13; Rev. 19:7-8; Rom. 6:13; I Tim. 6:11)
- It is by the **IMPUTED** righteousness of Christ that we stand justified before God and it is by that righteousness that we can stand unmoved against satanic attack, but God has also called us to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling.”
- See Zechariah 3:1-7: God’s own righteousness protected Joshua the priest from the “accuser of the brethren” but then God demands obedience from Joshua.

“So imputed righteousness is not to be divorced from actual (practical) righteousness. It is because he had been made righteous (imputed) that Joshua was to live righteously. (Boice)

“Imputed righteousness makes practical righteousness possible, but only obedience to the Lord makes practical righteousness a reality.” (MacArthur)

Application:

How do we as 21st century Christians “stand with the breastplate of righteousness”?

18 Q What is the misery of that state whereinto man fell?

A All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God (Ge 3:8,24), are under his wrath and curse (Eph 2:3 Ga 3:10), and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever (Ro 6:23 Mt 25:41).