

The Armour of God part 3 The Breastplate of Righteousness.

Ephesians 6 : 10-18. 10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Recap on Spiritual warfare.

1/. If we are to live a victorious Christian life we must understand that we have a real enemy with a real agenda. Our enemies desire is to see us turn our backs on God and whether wilfully or in ignorance, place ourselves back under his authority where he will mercilessly destroy us while he looks up at our God and laughs. There is no compromise with satan. There is no common ground on which to plead for an easy life. If you give him a foothold in your life, he will endeavour to barge in and wreak havoc until you are completely overcome.

2/. God has given us everything we need to defend ourselves against any and every attack that satan can bring. God's armour is perfectly designed and eternally effective. When used properly it will never fail to do its job.

The Breastplate of Righteousness.

Covered the chest area.

Exodus 28 : 15. "Fashion a breast-piece for making decisions--the work of a skilled craftsman.

Exodus 28 : 30. Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate, so they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD.

The High priest would wear this breastplate while entering into the Holy of Holies. In the breastplate would be the Urim and the Thummim. These two objects were used for making decisions. When the high priest would enquire of God for the nation of Israel, these objects would be used in ascertaining God's will. One of the objects would light up. One for no, the other for yes.

It is from the heart that we make decisions. Our very innermost being.

Psalm 51 : 10. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.



Proverbs 4 : 23. 23 Keep your heart with all diligence,
For out of it spring the issues of life.

The spiritual heart is the place of discerning the will and knowledge of God. To have a pure heart is to have a heart that has no other desires within it other than a devotion to God and a devotion for the will and ways of God.

The Heart. The physical organ of the body.

The physical human Heart pumps the blood around the body. It is the organ that is used to deliver the blood to the various parts of the body, providing them with the necessary oxygen and nutrients that promote life. If our natural heart were not working as it should, the blood flow being interfered with and were not pumping the blood properly, then we would suffer from a poor circulation. This would create the effect of certain parts of our body growing cold. This coldness would have its effects on us, and on others who touched us. In extreme cases, certain areas of our body could die without a proper blood supply.

Leviticus 17: 11. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'

Our spiritual heart is also used to deliver the life of the spirit to the body and the soul which in turn, permeates the different areas of our life. For out of it flows the issues of life. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Just as if our physical hearts were interfered with causing a poor circulation of blood, so it is with our spiritual hearts. If interfered with and the free flowing life of the spirit is hindered or prevented from flowing through us, we can begin to grow cold in different areas of our life towards God. Our emotions will become affected in a negative way by the world around us and the demonic influences we encounter on a daily basis. Soon others will notice this as they are touched negatively, by our words and actions.

Satan aims his fiery darts at our hearts. He wants to interfere with the condition of our hearts. One way he does this is by getting us to focus on our own behaviour, convince us that we are not who we are supposed to be in Christ and lose sight of how God sees us and who He says we are. He attacks our perfection in Christ and our position in Christ. Perfection being the new creation that we are. The spiritual creature made in the image of the one who made it. See 2 corinthians 5:17 and Colossians 3:10.

Satan knows a truth that many of us don't. God has given us a breastplate. He has provided us with an impenetrable piece of armour that will protect our hearts, if we use it. **The Breastplate of Righteousness.**

Understanding Righteousness.

Question: What does righteous mean?

Right standing. Justified. To be in a state of right standing before God. To be of a good character. Righteous and Justified in the bible really mean the same thing. To be able to stand before God upright in heart, free from condemnation and guilt.



Some truths to know about righteousness.

- 1/. Righteousness can not be earned or obtained through keeping religious rules such as observing the ten commandments. **Ephesians 2:8**
- 2/. Righteousness is a gift that God gives to those who believe in His Son Jesus. When we believe on Jesus, God declares that we are righteous in His eyes. **2 Corinthians 5:21**
- 3/. Jesus exchanged His righteousness for our sin. When anyone believes and repents, Jesus forgives and removes our sin and we are declared righteous through faith in Him. It is by faith in Christ and Him crucified for us that we are declared righteous, nothing else. **2 Corinthians 5:21**

This righteousness is also not maintained or built upon by our actions, but is a perfected and permanent condition appointed to us as a direct result of the finished work Christ achieved for us on the cross. **Galatians 3:3**

This righteousness is also a positional standing that we have been given and was accomplished by God when He raised us up and seated us at His right hand in Christ.

Ephesians 2:4-5 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

This state of positional righteousness is not dependant upon our lifestyles. It is not dependant upon our godliness or holiness. It is a gift from God given because of what Jesus did for us and can only be received by faith.

Ephesians 1 : 2-7. Living bible. 2. May his blessings and peace be yours, sent to you from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. 3. How we praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every blessing in heaven because we belong to Christ. 4. Long ago, even before he made the world, God chose us to be his very own, through what Christ would do for us; he decided then to make us holy in his eyes, without a single fault--we who stand before him covered with his love. 5. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by sending Jesus Christ to die for us. And he did this because he wanted to!

6. Now all praise to God for his wonderful kindness to us and his favor that he has poured out upon us, because we belong to his dearly loved Son. 7. So overflowing is his kindness toward us that he took away all our sins through the blood of his Son, by whom we are saved;

The breastplate as a form of defence.

Question : What is the breastplate meant to protect us from?

When we remember that where the armour is to be placed on the body, reveals the nature of the attack, we can understand how to defend against him.

Satan as the Accuser of the brethren.

Revelation 12 :10. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

Satan accuses Job.

Job 1:7-11. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." 8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the



earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?” 9 So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!” (Also in Job 2:2)

Notice how God speaks of Job and how Satan speaks of Job. God sees Job as righteous. Satan maligns Job's character and accuses Job of being deceptive, only loves God because of what God does for him.

Under and before the old covenant, Satan was able to come before God and accuse people to God's face. Look at Revelation 12 :10. again. **Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down."**

Notice how the word tells us that Satan has been cast down. Satan no longer has the ability or right to come before God and accuse the brethren. So Satan goes around on earth, seeking whom he may devour. He now accuses us to our face in order to bring us down and get at God.

Accuse meaning :

To charge someone with an offence or crime.

To claim the someone has done something wrong.

Under the New covenant.

Colossians 2:13-17 **And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. 16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.**

There are no requirements from God. Therefore there are no more grounds for Satan to accuse us before God.

See this truth in the context of having a permanent connection to God through our righteous state and position in Christ:

Romans 8:28-37 **And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is**



also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

One of the most common ways that satan attacks us is to accuse us directly or indirectly of sin.

Questions :

Do you have trouble praying sometimes because you feel such a terrible christian?

Do you ever feel like a hypocrite?

Do you sometimes feel that you are not worthy of being a christian because of the things you do, say or think?

Do you struggle with constant thoughts about how far away you are from God, based upon your lack of holiness and spirituality?

If you are battling with any of these thoughts then you are under attack from the accuser of the brethren.

The symptoms of being accused.

- 1/. You may be feeling discouraged about your so called failings and desire to give up the fight.
- 2/. You may be feeling guilty about your actions and living under a cloud of heaviness.
- 3/. You may be feeling the need to confess to everyone to clear the air.
- 4/. You may be feeling the pressure of becoming more godly in order to counter act your feelings of inadequacy as a christian.

If you are feeling any of these emotions or struggling to fend off any of these thoughts, you are under attack from the accuser. Just as God said to Adam in the garden, "Who told you you were naked?", so Satan keeps accusing us of sin. His sole purpose is to interfere with our relationship with God, undermining our spiritual perfection and position in Christ in order to rob us of our confidence before God and thereby hindering our effectiveness as Gods children in the world.

1 John 3: My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. 20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.

The truth is that God has declared you righteous, not because of your godly living, but because of your faith in Jesus. You will never be able to earn the title of righteous before God.

The need to discern between conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit and the accusations of satan.

When God convicts of sin it brings a godly sorrow which leads to repentance. God never uses Guilt, fear, shame or condemnation to correct His children.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.



When we say sorry before God and change our ways, the sin is dealt with and brings no condemnation with it.

When satan accuses us of sin and we repent trying to find remedy for the guilt or shame we feel, we will find no peace, no freedom from guilt or condemnation but only a continuing struggle against the bad feelings.

We do not answer to satan or to man. God is our judge, the word of God is His tool and our conscience is His mouth piece.

Satan will try to get you to forfeit your position of being righteous by bombarding your mind with accusations of sin. If satan can get one thought to stick in your mind, if we accept one accusation from him we will open the door to the spirits of guilt and condemnation. He will then pour on accusations of, “you're not a real christian are you, you'r not really saved, God can't use you anymore, God doesn't love you any more, you're a bad witness for Jesus”. All these thoughts and more can come directly from satan to your mind or indirectly through people.

You must never accept accusations about your behaviour as being from God. Satan knows that “as a man thinks, so is he”. If he can get us to believe we are sinful, then our actions will follow that path. As we stand against the enemy, defy his accusations and declare our state of righteousness and Holiness, we will know true freedom from sin and Satan and our lives will shine bright for Jesus.

Taking ground back.

The Israelites were told to go in and possess the land of promise. Our lives are our land. Our body and soul. Our heart is God's garden upon which He sows His seed, His word. If we allow satan to sow his seed into our hearts then they will grow into weeds and choke what God is trying to develop in our lives. We must, by an act of our liberated will, actively claim back any land that satan has stolen from us. e.g. If I recognise that I have lost my piece and am feeling guilty about something, or worried, anxious, then I must examine my heart to see what seeds, what thoughts I have allowed into my mind, to bring about these feelings affecting my heart, my emotions, and deal with them. Firstly. By recognising the thoughts, examining if they have any truth in them. If they have, then repent of what you have done and command the guilt, the condemnation, the worry etc to leave. If there is no truth too them at all, then we must strongly and firmly refuse to accept satans lies, by verbally renouncing the lies or deeds I am being falsely accused of, and then with my voice, verbally take back the ground that satan stole from me, claiming back my piece and God's blessings for my life.

Suffering wrongly under accusation.

Due to the principle, “as a person thinks, so they are”, then it does not matter if the accusation are true or false. If we chose to accept the accusation as true, we will suffer as much as we believe the lie as if it were actually true.

This is why we must never move from our position of being made righteous through Christs blood and not our actions. Let the redeemed of the lord say so.

