



# Bible Study

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## The Breastplate of Righteousness

Here we are again with God's armour! We trust you have been carefully girding your loins with truth since our last Bible study. Today, we will look at the next piece of God's armour, which is the BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Let us first see what RIGHTEOUSNESS means. The dictionary describes *righteousness* as follows, *Righteousness is an attribute that implies that a person's actions are justified, and can have the connotation that the person has been "judged" or "reckoned" as leading a life that is pleasing to God.* It is interesting to note that the English word *righteous* was first introduced by William Tyndale, who remodeled the word after an earlier word *rihtwis*, which would have yielded modern English *rightwise* or *rightways*. He

used it to translate the Hebrew word *tzedek*, which appears more than five hundred times in the Old Testament, and the Greek word *dikaios*, which appears more than two hundred times in the New Testament.

The problem we are having nowadays is that people think they can be righteous without God - just to be good and do the right things. However, there is no righteousness outside of God. Righteousness is a character that God builds into a man and it is something that we need to have within ourselves. This character is very firm and cannot be changed or moved.

Now, how can we get this righteousness? Let me ask you a question: Have you ever been hungry or thirsty? How about in the morning when you wake up? Do you want to eat and drink? Well,

the Bible says that if you are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, you will get it. You just have to really want it. Matthew 5:6, ***Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.***

It also says in Matthew 6:33, ***But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things (food, clothes, etc.) shall be added unto you.*** This means that we can have all things that we need in our lives, but we have to seek God's righteousness and His Kingdom.

Now, let us look at what BREASTPLATE means. The dictionary describes it as follows: *In medieval weaponry, the breastplate is the front portion of armour covering the torso. It has been an armour mainstay since ancient times and was one of the*

*last pieces of functional armour to be used on the battlefield because it protected the vital organs (for example, heart or lungs) without limiting mobility.*

Do you know how important it is to have your breastplate of righteousness on? Put your hand over your chest and feel your heart beating. It keeps beating all the time and never stops, does it? In the spiritual sense, the heart is a central part of your soul. If you don't have God's righteousness, the devil will come and attack your heart, your soul, your emotions, your will, your desires, your mind. When you have righteousness (the breastplate), it will keep your heart safe.

How about lungs? Lungs are for breathing, aren't they? Try to stop breathing for a little while. How does it feel? It feels funny, doesn't it? When you don't breathe for a few minutes, you die. You see, we cannot live without the function of a heart or lungs. Can you understand now why this issue is so important? Do you think that when the devil comes, he does not know where to aim? Oh yes, he does. He has been battling with humanity for a long time. He is an experi-

enced fighter and that is why you have to have the breastplate of righteousness on day and night.

Let us go back to the breastplate itself. The breastplate used to be made out of steel or other firm metal. Sometimes there were different metals mixed together to make sure that it protected the soldier the best it could. The breastplate is something you could not shoot through. Nowadays, they still make breastplates for police men and soldiers, however, they don't call them breastplates anymore but bullet-proof

### EPHESIANS 6:14B

*...having on the breastplate of righteousness*

vests. They are made out of steel and ceramics. They do look like a breastplate, they are just made out of a different material.

Much more important than the natural breastplate is the spiritual one - the righteousness of God. The Bible says that ***there is none righteous, no, not one*** (Romans 3:10).

Jesus met many people in His life on this earth who believed that they were righteous, because they kept the law; they were called Pharisees. They had the right clothes on, they knew how many steps they could take on the Sabbath day, what to eat and what not to eat and so on. They thought they had righteousness, but they didn't. Yet, at the same time, it says in Matthew 5:20, ***For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*** If we want to enter into the Kingdom of God, our righteousness has to exceed the righteousness the Pharisees had. They learned everything that was written down and they did it. So how can we manage to do it? Have you ever written down a New Year's resolution that you would do the whole year? Did you keep it? It is hard, isn't it?

Let's see if we can find somebody in the Bible who is talked about as righteous. Do you know somebody? Abraham, for example. Do you think he ever did something that would be wrong? Oh yes, he did. And yet, he

was righteous. Romans 4:3 says, *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.* And so it will be counted to you, too, if you believe God.

When you transfer it to a day-to-day life, it is very simple. Imagine a situation - when you do school, or you do your chores, or you are to lend something to somebody. When you are with God, believe Him and do everything

with a thought of Him, you will do righteousness and you will be righteous. But if you do it because you have to or because you don't want to get punished or if you are grumpy while doing it, it is not righteousness. In every situation you always have a choice - righteousness or unrighteousness. And not only that; you have to believe that what God said is true: the things written in the Bible, the words He spoke to you personally, the things He said

they will come to pass. When you believe God, you will be more and more in Him and He will be more and more in you. Then, you will have that righteousness of God that will protect your soul.

Children, make sure that you put your breastplate of righteousness on every day so that your soul is protected from the evil darts of the devil.

(Based on children's lessons given by a number of teachers in Prague, Czech Republic.)