



### **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 resign 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 Shoes of Readiness*

"Military sandals (*caligae*) were as important as armor, because the legions won wars by fast marches as much as by battle. Made of leather, these boots were elaborately cut out from a one-piece upper with separate soles finished with conical iron hobnails. The boots were laced all the way up the front. These boots were strong and well-ventilated with patterns of iron hobnails especially designed to take weight and withstand miles of marching and used on the enemy when he had fallen. The nailing designs on the sole are arranged very ergonomically and anticipate modern training shoe soles designed to optimize the transfer of weight between the different parts of the foot when placed on the ground. Sculptural evidence shows that socks would be worn within the boot, open at the toe and the heel."



These sandals also had a defensive role in protecting the feet of the Roman soldier from "booby-traps" set by enemies. A common tactic among Rome's enemies was to bury sharp spikes just below the surface of the dirt so that they would be hidden. Without the thick soles of the sandals, a soldier who stepped on the spikes would be wounded. This would also draw from the army's resources because they would have to care for the wounded soldier.

Below is an actual Roman caligae from the French Natl. Archeological Museum:





## *The Breastplate & Shoes*

### Function of the breastplate for the Roman soldier:

- 1) To protect the **vital organs** of the human body. It served its purpose merely by being "put on".

### Function of the Shoes for the Roman soldier:

- 1) Allowed the soldier to move with **speed**, **agility**, and **confidence**.
- 2) Protected the soldiers feet, when a single wound might **remove** him from battle.
- 3) Served in an offensive role to **trample** the enemy as he fell.

### The Gospel: The Believer's Key to Peace and Safety

Our Problem: (Eph. 2:1-3)

- By nature we were enemies of God and out of relationship with Him.
  - o We violated God's law and His holiness demanded payment. (Rom. 3:23)
  - o We were "owned" by our father the devil – his slaves. (John 8:34)
  - o We lacked the ability and willingness to keep God's law perfectly.

Our Solution: "But God..." (Eph. 2:4-5)

- By Christ's work on earth, He perfectly fulfilled all the demands of a just God on our behalf - **SATISFACTION** and so God brings His elect back into fellowship with Himself – **JUSTIFICATION**. (Romans 3:21-26; 5:19, Eph. 2:13-22)

- o By His blood, He purchased us out of slavery. - **REDEMPTION**.  
(Eph. 1:7, John 8:36, Hebrews 2:14-15, Romans 3:24)

- o By His death, He turned aside the wrath of God. – **PROPITIATION**.  
(Romans 3:25, Hebrews 2:17, 9:27-28)

- o By His life of perfect obedience to the Father, He fulfilled the law that we could not. – **IMPUTATION** (Romans 5:18, Isaiah 61:10)

### Function of the breastplate for the Christian:

- For the ancient peoples, the organs and bowels represented the seat of the **mind** and **emotions**. Satan attacks these in the believer, causing doubt.

- Satan would attack our standing with God as His children in an attempt to cause us to falter. Christians can bear his assaults because we are justified before a holy God solely on the basis of Christ and Christ alone. Satan's sights are set on our own frailty and it is precisely that frailty that we DO NOT rest in.



## *The Breastplate & Shoes*

### Function of the Gospel of Peace for the Christian:

- Part of our duty as soldiers of the living God is to be “ready” and “prepared” to move quickly in His service. We are to be like the soldier of Rome who could move quickly in the confidence that his sandals would protect him.
- The gospel brings **PEACE** to the believer – a right relationship with God. We need to be secure in that new relationship so that we are ready to move in His service. (Luke 2:14, John 14:27, Romans 1:7; 5:1; 8:1, Eph. 2:14-17, Phil. 4:7, Col. 3:15)
- How big is the cross?
  - o God's purposes towards us were determined in eternity past – the eternal covenant. He saved us, not by plan B – we were never an afterthought.
  - o We are His adopted children with all the rights and privileges.
  - o He sends Himself – the Holy Spirit to help and comfort us.
  - o Christ Himself pleads our cause before the Father.

**Application:** How do we as 21st century Christians wear these pieces?

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### Additional Notes

Two types of righteousness found in Scripture:

- 1) 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)
  - 2) 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)