

*The*  
*Two Breastplates*

BY R. W.



*EDINBURGH*

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# The Two Breastplates.

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“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the *breastplate* of *righteousness*; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”—EPHESIANS vi. 14, 15.

“But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the *breastplate* of *faith* and *love*; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”—1 THESSALONIANS v. 8.

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IN these two passages we have *two breastplates* spoken of—one for the devil, and the other for man. In Ephesians vi. it is the wiles and darts of the wicked one we need to be armed for. The devil does all he can to keep God's people from enjoying their place and portion *now*. Every

one *in Christ* now is as sure to be *in heaven* as Christ is there. Nothing can separate from the *love of God* which is *in Christ Jesus*. Romans viii. tells us there is *no condemnation* to them in Christ ; and *no separation* from Him and *His love* ; but we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. In Ephesians we are already in the place of *power* and *blessing*. Christ's *place*—*His portion* and *His power*—is ours to enjoy even *now*. His *relationship* is ours—His *standing* is ours. He says, “ I ascend to *my Father* and *your Father*, *my God* and *your God*. Go tell *my brethren* this.” As *He is*, so *are we* in *this world*. Not when we die, or when He comes again. We are taken *clean* out of the old standing as *of* the world and *in* the flesh. The cross puts an *end* to *all* that. We are not *of* the world, even as Christ is not of it. We are not *in* the flesh, though it is *in us*, as *bad* as ever ; and the world is no

better, but always getting worse. I look to the cross, and I see an end of *all flesh* ; just as the flood *covered* and put an *end* to all outside the ark. So the death of Christ puts an end to me as a man in the flesh, and also an end to all that suits the flesh—the world. I glory in the cross, and God forbid I should glory in anything else down here. The cross makes *me* useless for the world, and the world is no use to me ; for I am put an end to there. What use is the world to a dead man ? And what use is a dead man to the world ? Good for nothing ; only to be buried out of sight. That is what we get in Romans vi. The *death* and *destruction* of the *old* thing. *Sin* is gone to faith. Now we are brought out of the old place—*out of death*—and *in Christ* we have *life* and *peace*. But more than this : we are quickened—*raised* and *seated together*—*Jew* and *Gentile*, *in Him*. So that we are in a new

position — where Christ is now. And not only in the place, but as *near to God as He is*. Not only *in* the house, but there as a *child*, and not as a *stranger*; but at home there. Loved with the *same love* as Christ is loved with. As much at home as He is.

Moreover, I am one with Christ and all His members here. The same power that raised Him dwells in me. And by the Spirit I am united to Christ in heaven. I am a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. There is one body. All believers are in that body. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.” All nourishment comes from the Head—Christ in heaven—so that we, His members, share His blessings here by His Spirit.

Now, this is what the devil tries to keep God’s people from knowing. And until they *know* it they cannot enjoy it.

But even after it is known, if we would enter in and possess the land, we must fight. Israel had to fight for every foot they possessed. So must we. The devil is in the heavenly places—there we wrestle against wicked spirits. It is there we need the whole armour. The more we are there, the more we will find the devil is against us. To meet Him we are to be strong in the Lord and the power of His might—not in ourselves, nor in any might of our own. So it is the armour of God, and not the armour of man, we are to put on.

The first part is for the *loins*. *Truth* in the inward parts. The loins of our mind tightly girded about with truth. There is so much error abroad. And oh ! what carelessness about the Word. How little the truth is known ; and even by many who know it how lightly it is treated and loosely held. It is the truth that makes

free ; and it is only by knowing and having the truth we will be kept from error.

The next part is the *breastplate* of *righteousness*. I believe this is putting the Word to practice—living *out* what we receive *in*. A person may be quite sound in the faith, holding nothing but the truth, and yet not be walking in it. He might be right as to the Word, sound in doctrine, as far as he knows, and yet all wrong in his walk. Doing business, and even the Lord's work, in the world's way, and with the world's means. Such a one has not got on the *breastplate* ; and he will not be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Nor is he in a fit state for to carry the Gospel message. The *girdle* and the *breastplate* come before the *shoes*. How many run to preach, and yet they have not got the truth. They say a great deal that is not true. They say what they think, or what others have said.



Others, again, go to preach without the breastplate. There is something in their walk not right, or something in their business. It may be household affairs or temporal duties are neglected. The *breastplate* is not on, though the feet are shod. And oh ! mark what the feet are to be shod with—*peace* — “ the preparation of the *gospel of peace.*” War comes before peace. What we are to fight for is peace ; what we are to go with is peace. Peace is *made*, and peace is *preached*, Eph. ii. We are apt to lose our shoes in the mud ; we need to have them well fastened on. It is no use going outside if we are not enjoying peace ourselves inside. We cannot carry a thing to others if we have not got it. Peace *with* God is first. Then the *peace of God* keeping our heart and mind. Thus we are delivered from our *sins*—from our *fears* and *cares* ; and are free to think about the things we are told in Philippians

iv., and to do them ; and we have the promise of “ the *God of peace* ” being with us. How needful is all this to do Gospel work. We should not only preach the *Gospel of peace*, but be an example of it—a living expression of what we preach. I fear we are sometimes out without our shoes—without the needful preparation. Some go to preach for peace ; they do not know what peace is unless they are doing something. Now, this is not God’s order. We do not work for to be happy or for peace, but because we have it. If you put on your shoes, it is to go out. And if the Gospel is to be made known, we must go to the people. It is not the rule for them to come to us. A lost sheep does not seek the shepherd ; he must go and seek it. If a person is going to carry a message he must travel. A sower must go out if he is to sow, and go about. Oh ! we need our feet shod. Soon it will be all over—

every opportunity passed—the lost left, and we in to go no more out. Oh ! then, let us take the shield of faith. Faith counts upon God, looks to Christ, and listens to the Word. Faith brings God on the scene, and He meets the difficulty. It is not occupied with what is around for sight, nor what I feel within. Faith has Christ as its object, and the Word as its guide. So I am occupied not with what I see around, or feel within, but with Christ, *where He is* ; and I am here to represent Him *where He is not*. In 1 Thessalonians v. 8 we are exhorted to be sober. The most of people are intoxicated, not with drink, but with pleasures and the vain things of this world. This is the way we are to meet man—“*Be sober.*” If it is Satan—“*Be strong in the Lord.*” *Strong for heaven—sober for earth. Strong for Satan—sober for man.* We wrestle with Satan, not man. It is the *breastplate of righteousness* for the

devil ; but for man it is the *breastplate* of *faith* and *love*. That is, I look at Christ there, and the world sees Christ in me here. It does not matter how I am treated, the only thing I am to show to both saint and sinner is *love*. Christ is to be seen, manifest, and magnified in my body, whether it be by living or dying, suffering or [serving. And what I am to be waiting for—just expecting every moment, the Lord Himself to come and take me away home. The *helmet* for the head in Ephesians vi. is “*salvation*.” In 1 Thessalonians v. it is “the hope of *salvation*.” In Ephesians we are looked at *in heaven*. In Thessalonians we are looked at *on earth*, waiting for God, soon to come from heaven and take our bodies there. We are not to expect anything here. It is not the place for sweet things.

We are to use “the sword of the Spirit,

which is the Word of God." That is the weapon we are to wield. And to keep it sharp we need to be much in prayer, "praying always." It is by prayer the edge is kept on the Word. And also we get wisdom and power to use it; and strength to stand and withstand in the evil day. Oh! what need to be in the presence of God, in order to stand in the presence of men. It is just when we have on the whole armour we will pray for *all* saints. Then it is to be "*in the Spirit* with all perseverance." At the same time there must be watching. Many pray—but not in the Spirit. Others fail to watch, and they faint. Then there should be special prayer for those who preach the Gospel—that they may do it boldly, and make it plain—that the words and wisdom may be from God. Those preaching the Gospel are more exposed to the *wiles* and *darts* of the

devil. They have to stand in the forefront of the battle—and it is very *hot* at times. They need to be borne up by the prayers of the saints.

O beloved fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ! let us put on the whole armour of God, and go boldly on for God. There is no armour for the back—nothing for cowards. So it is *face* or *fall*. Read Eph. vi. 10-20 ; 1 Thess. v.

R. W.

“ LEAD on, Almighty Lord !  
Lead on to victory ;  
Encouraged by Thy blessed Word,  
With joy we follow Thee.

“ We follow Thee our guide,  
Who didst salvation bring ;  
We follow Thee, through grace supplied  
From heaven’s eternal spring,

“ *Till*, of the prize possessed,  
We hear of war no more,  
And oh ! sweet thought, *for ever rest*  
On yonder peaceful shore.”

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