

# Pattern of Seven – The Armor of God ~ Breastplate of Righteousness

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## SERVANT

Wisdom Principle – **Authority** |  
Piece of God’s Armor – **Breastplate of Righteousness**

*Therefore, 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.*

**“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, ...”**

*Ephesians 6:13-14a*

### The Roman Breastplate

When Paul wrote to the Ephesians about the pieces of the Armor of God, he was surely inspired at sight of the armor worn by the Roman soldiers that surrounded him. No doubt they sported a commanding appearance in keeping with their level of granted authority. However, no matter how much governmental authority they aspired to wield, safe protection of vital organs of the heart and lungs was necessary. The breastplate was not designed to cover retreating backs, but their very breaths of life and beating hearts.

Before he ever wrote the epistle, Paul had encountered the God-appointed authority of the Messiah.<sup>1</sup> “All authority has been given to Me”<sup>2</sup> took on shape and form in the [Person of Christ](#) as Paul saw that Jesus bore in His flesh the fullness of God the Father. Paul’s penning of Colossians 1:19 – *It was in Him that the full nature of God chose to live (dwell)* is a glorious mission statement inspired by Holy Spirit as Paul wrote.

Juxtaposed against his divinely inspired understanding of what it meant to “put on Christ”, the Roman soldier’s armor became servant to the magnified spiritual significance of the Armor of God in Christ.

### The Breastplate of Decision (*aka* Priestly Breastplate or Breastplate of Judgment)

To grasp the [pattern of seven more fully in the Armor of God](#), the Apostle Paul provides the picture of the Roman soldier’s armor. Moses’ book of Exodus symbolizes the pattern through the High Priest’s garments.

**Exodus 28**, the Old Covenant chapter detailing the priestly garments, is a prophetic representation of that which was to come. **Aaron, older brother of Moses** (*whom God initially approached to be His chosen High Priest, {Exodus 4:10-17} in context of Moses’ entire life story*) **was appointed High Priest**. With his sons, Aaron was part of the priesthood, **yet set apart for the sacred service of High Priest to the Lord and the sons of Israel**. Moses and Aaron were thus distinct, called and anointed for their God-appointed service.

The Lord’s instructions to Moses were to, **“Fashion a breastpiece for making decisions – the work of a skilled craftsman.”** The Lord identified the **fashioners**. “Tell all the skillful persons {wise - (*hearted*) in mind, word or act} to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve Me as priest.” (*Exodus 28:1-3; 15 NIV*)

## ***Redemptive vs Non-Redemptive Servant Purpose***

The sacred garments – **including the breastpiece** – were to give dignity and honor to Aaron. However, if puffed up by his position and authority, his entrance into or exit from the Holy Place would spell death.<sup>3</sup> The attitude, protection through obedient authority, and discipline of his heart – and the hearts of the hundreds of High Priests who followed through the Jewish ages – came to tell for *humility and righteousness unto the Lord*, or for *pride and unfaithfulness in their appointment*. The Lord’s purpose concluded His instructions:

*“Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the LORD. Also put the Urim and the Thummim<sup>4</sup> in the breastpiece, 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.” (Exodus 28:29-30)*

What began with Aaron held true for each high priest who followed, up to [the cross of Jesus](#). For servants under the Lord’s authority, Paul unveiled for us *the nature and character* of what it means to “put on Christ.”

### **“Strict Servant”**

Recalling my dream briefly recounted in [Prophet – Belt of Truth](#), “Foolish Prophet!” was quickly followed with a loud shouting of the second identifier: “Strict Servant!” As I thought about this next portion of our human spirit so identified, two passages of scripture and three aspects of servant authority leapt to mind.

***How we recognize authority; how we respond when under authority; and how we use our authority*** is understood by Holy Spirit when it comes down to the ‘breastplate of decision’<sup>5</sup> firmly secured over our heart. Or, as captured in [Wellspring](#), the [thousand little choices](#) our Servant portion makes on a repeated basis.

### ***the faith of the Roman officer***

The first passage is found in **Matthew 8:5-13**, which tells of the healing of a Roman Centurion’s servant boy, ***based upon the faith of the Roman officer*** who approached Jesus. While on duty, quiet observation and careful listening with ‘ears to hear what the Spirit was saying’, [persuaded him that he could trust Jesus’ authority](#) and power to heal. Authority recognizes righteous authority, even if it does not fully grasp it.

Jesus told him he would go to his house then and there. *The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”*

*When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.” Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that moment.*

### *the parable of the Unmerciful Servant*

The second passage that came to mind is **Matthew 18:21-35**. It is another of Jesus' parables of the Kingdom of Heaven being *like*; this one about a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

Peter had just asked Jesus how many times he had to forgive his brother or sister who sins against him. In answer, Jesus launched into the story of the servant, brought before the king, who owed an enormous debt for which he had no means to pay. The master's initial order for repayment (*the servant, his wife, and his children to be sold to pay the debt*) turned to compassion as the servant fell on his knees and begged for time and patience to pay back everything he owed. The master-king canceled the debt and released him.

But then...that same servant immediately went out, found a fellow servant who owed him a small sum, took him by the throat and demanded instant repayment. He too fell to his knees in front of his fellow servant whom he owed and likewise, pleaded for time and patience to repay the small outstanding debt.

However, the first servant was unwilling. Refusing, he arranged to have him put in prison until he paid the debt. Others observing what had happened became furious and told the master what had gone down. Calling in the unmerciful servant, the master spoke –

*'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. <sup>33</sup>Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' <sup>34</sup>In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. <sup>35</sup>{Jesus} - "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."*

A servant forgiven of all their debt and set free, who holds to their victim mindset, does not a redemptive servant make. Merciless treatment of fellow servants will be met by the Lord's authority over ingratitude.

The end result of Haman in [Esther's story – our Servant example](#), is a telling testament to God's authority.

### THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

**Then came Jesus.** The Armor of God, burnished in glowing flame<sup>6</sup>, meeting us in our humanity in like form.

<sup>15</sup>Jesus knew *that the Pharisees were plotting to kill Him* and left the area.

Many people followed Him, and He healed them all, always insisting that they tell no one about Him.

He did this in keeping with the prophecy Isaiah made so long ago:

**"This is My servant, whom I have *well* chosen;  
this is the One I love, the One in whom I delight.  
I will place My Spirit upon Him;  
He will proclaim justice to all the world.  
He will not fight or shout or talk loudly in the streets.  
He will not crush a reed under His heel  
or blow out a smoldering candle  
until He has led justice *and righteousness* to final victory.  
<sup>21</sup>All the world will find its hope in His name."**

*Matthew 12:15-21 The Voice*

## Our Stand Against the Devil's Schemes

The **Breastplate of Righteousness** is the **second essential piece** of the Armor of God we are exhorted to have in place. ***In more ways than we may be aware, the nature and character of Christ is our protection against the devil's deadly arrows.*** Whether aimed straight at our physical vital organs of heart and lungs or intended to fail our inner heart and quench our spiritual oxygen, Satan's goal is clear. *Kill. Steal. Destroy.*

***Therefore, Christ our Armor has imputed His righteousness to us*** to be able to stand against his schemes.

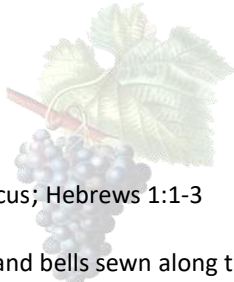
**Imputed** means ascribed, charged, assigned, attributed, and recognized. The picture of Jesus and the Roman soldier portrays [Servant portion's](#) spirit of recognition of authority, followed by a response of faith. The call and appointment for the righteous use of authority is met - *and* exercised - through faith and trust *in* Christ.

The capacity to **"Stand firm then...with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ..."** is reinforced as we recognize and take to heart the [Order of Authority of the Kingdom of God](#) *and the grace in which we stand.*

## Wisdom's House

*Wisdom has built her house.*<sup>7</sup> You, **Servant**, are the second of her seven hewn-out pillars. May the authority you carry be made manifest as you grow in **equitable act and character**, the **righteousness of Christ**.

~ Nancy



<sup>1</sup> Acts 22 - Paul's encounter on the road to Damascus; Hebrews 1:1-3

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 28:18

<sup>3</sup> The priestly robe had alternating pomegranates and bells sewn along the hem. A long cord was tied around the waist of the high priest that trailed outside the curtain of the Holy Place. If the bells stopped tinkling (as the high priest moved in accordance with his priestly duties), the people knew there was a problem. He was dead. Because they could not enter behind the curtain, they used the cord to pull him out. This did not happen to Aaron, the first appointed High Priest in Israel, and many more. However, many others in the office of high priest were struck dead by the Lord.

<sup>4</sup> Urim - "lights" and Thummim - "perfections" – two stones used to determine God's will, ie. "perfect light". They were carried in a sewn-in fold of the breastpiece, worn over the heart of the high priest. **Easton's Bible Dictionary** describes these two gemstones as "a divinely-given means by which God imparted, through the high priest, direction and counsel to Israel when these were needed." Believers in Christ Jesus today have the Bible, Holy Spirit, and fellow believers for godly counsel and wisdom in determining the will of God. Foundationally, it is Romans 12:2 taken to a believer's heart.

<sup>5</sup> Proverbs 4:23 – "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 1:12-16

<sup>7</sup> Hebrews 3:1-6 (*Amplified*) - Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, [*thoughtfully and attentively*] **consider the Apostle and High Priest whom we confessed [as ours when we accepted Him as Savior], namely, Jesus;** <sup>2</sup> He was faithful to Him who appointed Him [*Apostle and High Priest*], as Moses also was *faithful* in all God's house. <sup>3</sup> **Yet Jesus has been considered worthy of much greater glory and honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honor than the house.** <sup>4</sup> **For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.** <sup>5</sup> Now Moses was faithful in [*the administration of*] all God's house, [but only] as a *ministering* servant, [*his ministry serving*] as a testimony of the things which were to be spoken afterward [*the revelation to come in Christ*]; <sup>6</sup> **but Christ is faithful as a Son over His [Father's] house. And we are His house if we hold fast our confidence and sense of triumph in our hope [in Christ].**