

Lesson Ten

The Sword of the Spirit

Ephesians 6:17

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Text: Ephesians 6:17

Introduction: Details concerning the Sword

Introductory Story: The Gladiator

1. The 'rhema word of God'. The sword was taken from the belt.
2. Discipleship. The Roman soldier was trained to be skilful in the use of the sword. Need to be discipled in the use of the word of God.
3. Powerful weapon. Pointed and double edged. The sword of the Spirit will cut through every attack of the enemy.

Story: The Thrust

4. The Sword of the Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of the word of God.

Details concerning the Roman sword:

1. A short stabbing sword.

2. Size of Blade

approx. 54 cm (21 inches) long

approx. 6.4cm (2½ inches) in width near the hilt

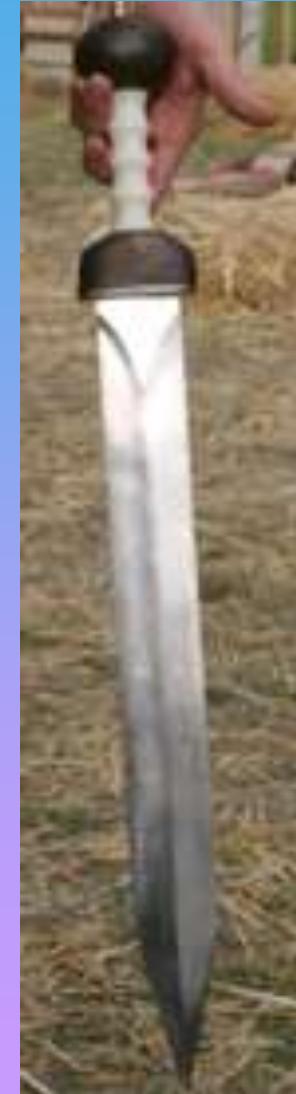
3. Sharp pointed

4. Two edges

5. Designed for close combat

6. Best used by a trained and skilled soldier

7. Deadly



Introduction: The Gladiator

The sword was called ‘gladius’ in Latin.

The name gladiator comes from the word gladius.

Gladiator – swordsman (one who uses a gladius)

The Gladiator was a professional fighter who fought in the arenas of ancient Rome.

Gladiators came from prisoners of war and slaves, but sometimes Romans became gladiators to gain wealth.

Gladiators fought each other; and sometimes they fought wild animals or condemned criminals.



The Gladiator Mosaic located at the Galleria Borghese in Rome

Illustration: The Turned Thumb

Applause of the Arena

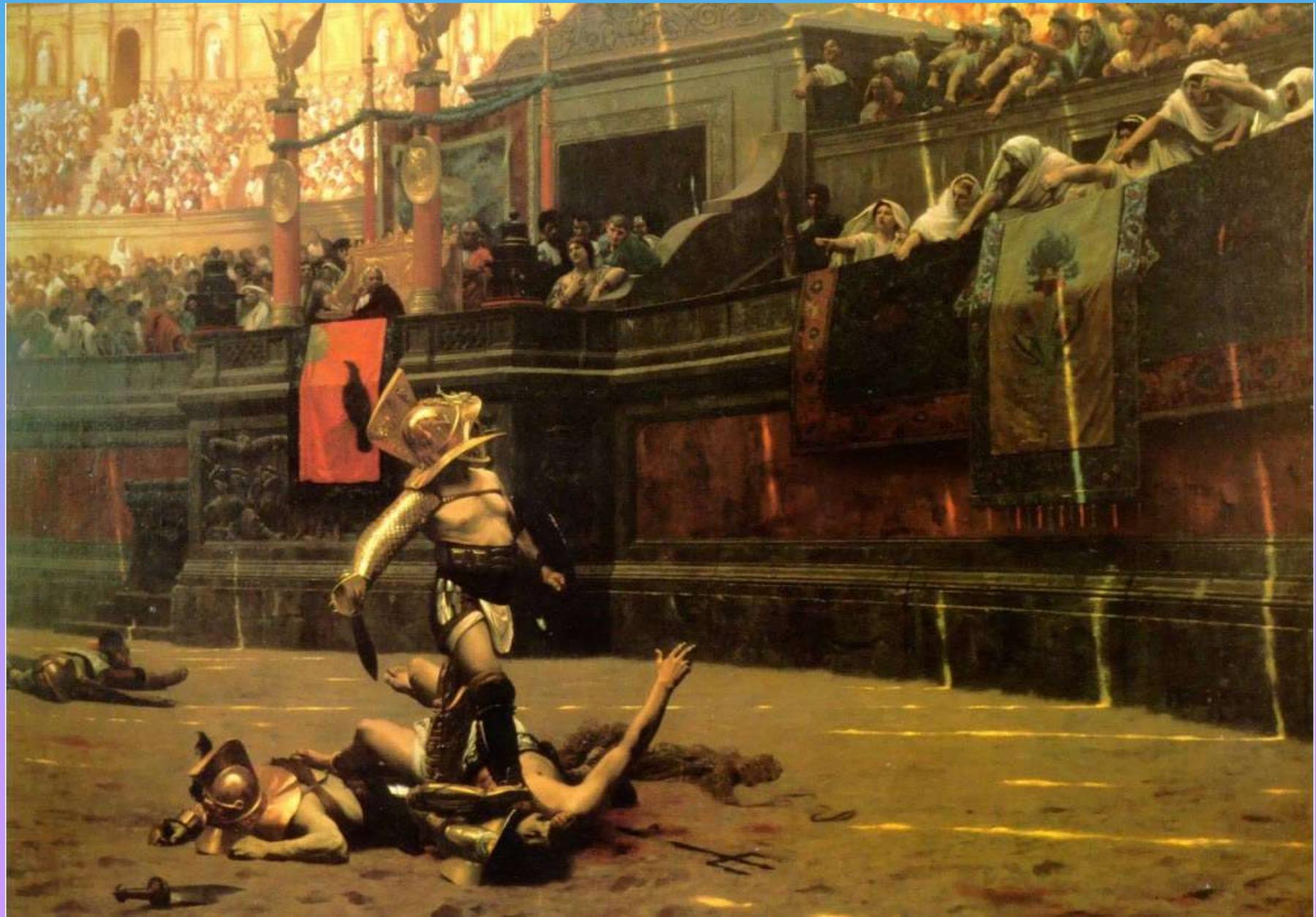
The skill of the Gladiator was applauded by the crowds of the Roman arena.

A Gladiator did not always wear full armour

The Crowd Decides

It is thought the crowd would decide if the defeated gladiator should live or die. If the thumb was turned down then it may have meant – let him live (lower your weapon). If the thumb was turned up – let him die (to the throat).

Jean-Leon Gerome - Pollice Verso (With a Turned Thumb), 1872.



The Christian Gladiator seeks to glorify Jesus in his or her life.

The skill of the Christian Gladiator is not for personal glory but to glorify Jesus.

Every Christian should learn to be skilful with the Sword of the Spirit in spiritual warfare so that Jesus will be glorified in us.

The Christian needs to put on the whole armour of God – the enemy will easily defeat a Christian who uses the sword but doesn't put on the whole panoply of God.

The judgement (bema) seat of Christ.

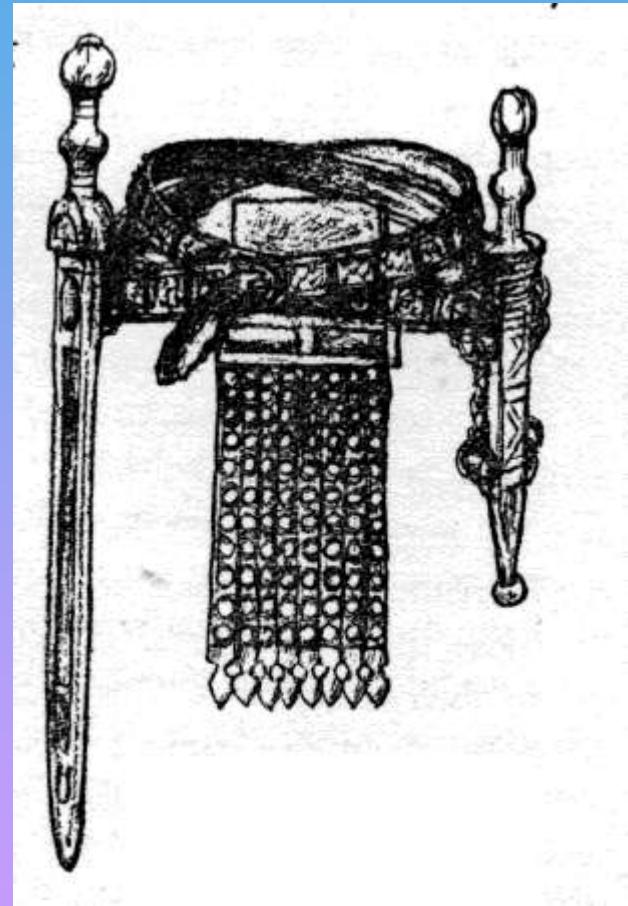
There will come a day when the skill of the Christian Gladiator will be rewarded at the bema seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10.

1. The ‘rhema’ word of God

Luke 1:37 ‘For no word (rhema) from God shall be void of power’, (ASV).

- The sword was taken from the belt.
- The Sword of the Spirit must be taken from the Belt of Truth.
- The Sword of the Spirit is the ‘rhema’ word of God.
- The Belt of Truth is the ‘logos’ word of God.
- The ‘rhema’ word of God is a word taken from the ‘logos’ belt of truth.
- The 'rhema' word of God' is the word that the Spirit brings to us for a specific purpose.



Vines defines the Greek ‘rhema’ meaning word (Ephesians 6:17) as:

‘...the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in a time of need’.

The Holy Spirit enables us to use the Word of God at a particular time and place.

Example of using the Sword of the Spirit - The rhema word of God.

Temptation of Jesus:

Jesus used the Sword of the Spirit when He was tempted by the devil

The devil attacked using scripture, Matthew 4:3,6.

Jesus answered with Sword of the Spirit, Matthew 4:4,7, ‘it is written...’.

2. Discipleship

The sword had to be used by the hand of skilful soldier.

The Roman soldier was trained to be skilful in the use of the sword.

Using the sword.

- Positioning - Finding the best position to fight.
- Skilled - It is dangerous for a novice to fight with the sword. A skilful soldier will easily defeat him. The sword can be far superior to the enemies but if the soldier is not trained he or she will soon be defeated.
- Experience - Handling the sword of the Spirit requires both skill and experience.

The Sword of the Spirit must be used skilfully.

It is necessary to be discipled in the use of the word of God.

It requires learning to be skilful but also it requires experience.

Young soldiers could learn from the experienced soldiers.

- Disciple is the Greek word ‘mathetes’ meaning ‘a learner’.
- Knowledge of the scriptures is essential in using the Sword of the Spirit.

Learning to know scripture so that the Word of Christ is in our thoughts continuously, Colossians 4:16; Ephesians 5:19; Psalms 19:14.

If we do not know the scriptures then we can not use the Sword effectively.

3. The sword was a powerful weapon. It was a pointed two edged sword.

The Method

The sword had to be thrust into the enemy.

- a) Watch carefully
- b) Guard for attack
- c) Move to attack
- d) Thrust the sword

The Roman soldier could thrust the sword in such a way that the weapon was deadly to the enemy.

The thrust - taking hold of the promises of God and thrusting with the 'rhema' word of God.



The Thrust

Here is a quote from ‘The whole armour of God’ by P.N.Correy (1931)

‘The Roman warrior had but one method of using his short sword, and that was the thrust.

The Romans paid special attention to the training of their legions in swordsmanship, and the effective use of the point was a mark of their advanced skill. For this the double-edged sword of Roman pattern stands out as a workmanlike and formidable weapon for a close fight, in which the point was always used by preference.

You are not called to dance around, playing and dallying with the enemy, but to break through his guard and destroy him with the thrust of your weapon.’

The sword's deadly character

- a) The Roman sword was a two edged sword.**

The double-edge of the sword made it difficult for the enemy to stand against it.

- b) The Roman sword was pointed**

The point of the sword was deadly when used skilfully.

The Roman soldier became skilful in thrusting the sword.

The Sword of the Spirit is used in the same way.

a) The Sword is a two edged sword.

Both sides of the blade will cut through the enemy.

Every other part of the armour is defensive, but the sword is both defensive and offensive.

The sword needed to be used both defensively – stopping the attacks of the enemy, and offensively –attacking the enemy.

b) Pointed Sword

When the enemy attacks, thrust the pointed sword of the ‘rhema’ word of God.

The sword of the Spirit is able to defeat every attack of the enemy.

Example: Fear is attacked by the thrust of faith, which means to firmly trust the promises of God in a difficult situation.

‘No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper’ (Isaiah 54:17)..

The Sword of the Spirit is not to be used to attack each other.

Quoting scriptures against one another.

This is using the sword like a dagger to stab other Christians in the back. Paul makes no mention of a dagger in Christian armour.

The Sword of the Spirit should be used to protect others.

The sword is both for fighting individually and for protecting each other.

Example:

A ‘rhema’ word is able to lift a person out of depression or discouragement.

It is a word from the Spirit that brings deliverance and joy.

4. The Sword is the ‘Sword of the Spirit’

When the Roman soldier fought ‘hand to hand’ he could only rely upon his own skill and the backup of other soldiers.

The Christian soldier has another Helper; the Holy Spirit. The Sword is called the Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17), and only the Holy Spirit can make the Christian victorious in spiritual warfare.

The power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of the word of God.

Using the scriptures without the Holy Spirit has no power.

Quoting scriptures alone does not defeat the enemy.

The Holy Spirit and the Word of God

Attempting to move in the power of the Holy Spirit without the word of God has no authority.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, John 16:13.

Trusting in the promises of God.

We need to know the scriptures and keep the scriptures continuously upon our heart.

So that when the trial comes we can take up the sword of the Spirit.

Hebrews 13:6 ¶ 'So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.'

Faith comes through the preaching of the 'rhema' word of God.

Romans 10:17 'So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the **word (rhema)** of God.'

Preaching and Teaching

Preaching is using the 'sword of the Spirit', the rhema word of God, to break through barriers and strongholds that keep people bound.

Teaching is presenting the word of God (logos) to equip God's people.

Preaching is the battlefield.

Teaching is the Academy.

Salvation comes through the preaching of the 'rhema' word of God

Word of faith is preached

With the heart we believed.

With our words we make outward confession of our faith

Romans 10:8-10 ' ... The **word (rhema)** is nigh thee, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the **word (rhema)** of faith, which we preach; That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Summary:

1. The Sword of the Spirit is the rhema word of God. It is the word given to us by the Holy Spirit for a specific purpose.
2. It requires discipleship. The soldier must be trained to use the sword skilfully.
3. The sword was a powerful weapon. It was a pointed two edged sword. Deadly to the enemy.
4. The sword is the ‘sword of the Spirit’. The Holy Spirit empowers the word the word on our heart so that we can speak with boldness.