

The sword of the spirit (Introduction)

Eph 6

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

¹¹Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

¹³Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

¹⁵And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

¹⁶Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

¹⁸Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

The author of the book that I've been reading about spiritual warfare described the Bible as an armory. An armory is a place where weapons are stored for use or rather immediate use. What I surmise is that the bible as an armory has many types of weapons that are not all for the same occasion. Different circumstances dictate or call for different weapons. As with the shoes of peace, you can't have the same shoes for hiking as you have for church. They both have the same ultimate purpose but one set is better for the situation that it was designed for. You go into the armory and you sign out that weapon you need in order to do the battle. All weapons are not applicable for different battles, whereas one weapon may slow you down because it is too bulky, another may be just the right thing in a different situation. Why bring out Mike Tyson to fight Michael Jackson. Both are Michaels but one you hire as a body guard the other you would have hired to give dance lessons.

During one recent Bible study in this series I went off on a tangent where I was talking about was talking about the Rhema Word versus the Logos word of God and I explained to you the difference. That lesson will come into play now as we delve into this lesson. This particular lesson is part eight of a nine part series with study up to this point all the other pieces of the full armor of God and now we're going to study the final piece. Your weapons of warfare are not carnal but they are mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds. The sword of the spirit is the most powerful item we have in our arsenal. It is the word. John 1:1 describes as like is in the beginning was the word, the word...

I. The relationship of the sword

II. The Explanation of the sword of the spirit

III. The emphasis of the sword or the spirit

IV. The example of the sword of the spirit

V. The effect of the sword of the spirit

The relationship of the sword

The sword of the Spirit is related to the other pieces of the whole armor of God by its relationship to the belt of truth. In the lesson about the belt we talked about how the sword hung from the belt of truth. The belt is like the logos the support apparatus for the sword of the spirit which a rhema to be used in combat.

The Explanation of the sword of the spirit

The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. Since Paul was a Jew who grew up in Greece he used one of the two words used in the Greek language for word. Rhema and Logos. The Logos is the whole word of God, while Rhema is the Specific word. The Logos can be compared to the long sword used to engage several enemies at a time. While the Rhema is tailored for close combat. The Logos is general the word of God in its entirety... The Rhema word of God when used stops the enemy from twisting the word as he so often does. The sword that Paul referred to in his description was more of a short to mid range dagger. Paul used his knowledge of the method the soldiers of that day used in choosing their weapons. The sword was between 9-18 inches long and hung from the belt in a scabbard that was easy to remove it from. The short sword is used in tight spots so that you can wield it without restrictions. You must use the right weapon for the right battle. The sword is used in tight spots so that you can wield it without restrictions. The Rhema refers to the truths, while the Logos is the entire truth. For every lie that the enemy can or will tell you, there is a Rhema to destroy the lie. We will discuss that later. Why the short sword? The mind set given is the fact that the enemy is always close by...no matter your status in life but especially if you are a Christian. He is always seeking to attack you. He is like a Chameleon Crab spider. This spider has a special ability to take on the color of his surrounding. It is a small spider so it can hide in the petals of a flower...awaiting for its prey. When that prey comes close it quickly jumps out, bites it and its venom paralyzes it. The enemy operates in the same way, you may not see him but he is there waiting among the flowers, something that seems harmless waiting to bite you and send venom into you situation trying to paralyze you with lies.

The emphasis of the sword or the spirit

The word of God say as it refers to the Logos states the bible is living, powerful and cuts coming and going and can separate the spirit from the soul. Side bar...remember the study of the triune nature of man...Notice how this scripture speaks to the misunderstand that people have which they were taught wrong about the soul and the spirit being the same when the word of God clearly separates them...Anyway. Every situation that one can face in life has occurred in the bible and the bible addresses each situation with a Godly solution. The word or Logos of God is an Armory where the Rhema is stored. If the Armory is compared to a refrigerator, I say don't let your Rhema get freezer burned. Freezer burn changes the taste and the effect of the food on your taste buds. In the same manner the Rhema being dulled by none usage loses its edge. This is another reason Paul said to study to show yourself approved. So the Rhema word is always sharp in your soul so that you can battle in the spirit.

The example of the sword of the spirit

The greatest example of a direct confrontation where the Rhema was used in its most effective manner is the encounter of Christ in the Desert with Satan. We will talk about that in a moment. First let me introduce you to some strategy of Satan. Gen Sun Zu gave us the phrase divide and conquer. Ever notice that the enemy always wants you to be in a desert and then while you are in your desert he attacks you. Two things are intended as he diverts you into desert lands. First he wants to isolate you physically and spiritually from the body of Christ. The Bible tells us to forsake not the fellowship for a reason. Then next he attacks you while you are your most vulnerable. Let's say somebody in church hurts your feeling. Either knowingly or unknown to them. The enemy uses a microscope held to the sun to magnify the hurt. His goal is to destroy you by slow injuries or if you have been injured before and it is fresh, he wants to snatch the band-aid off. He has studied you enough to know which buttons to push. Hang an out of order sign on your button.

There is strength in numbers as it pertains to our spiritual walk. The divide and conquer is an effective strategy that allowed the Europeans to take people from Africa into slavery and allows the slavery mentality to still ring strong. This strategy allowed Europeans to take America from the natives. The opposite of there being power in numbers is weakness in division. When the enemy takes you to the desert place he then challenges your knowledge of the word to try and confuse you. He attacked Christ in a desert place. He used a three pronged approach to attack him.

1. Lust of the flesh

First he used the lust of the flesh. Jesus had not eaten for 40 days and in the natural he was hungry. So here comes the enemy. He said to Christ, if you are the son of God...well let's cut that short because if he wasn't the son of God the enemy would not have wasted his time... He said turn these stones into bread. Pulling a sword from the armory... The word Christ used to combat him was taking a scripture from the book of Deu 8:3...

³And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Deut 8:3

What use of the word was this, Rhema or Logos.. His attempt was to get Jesus to act independently of the will of God. Jesus said many times he came to do the Father's will...Not my will be done but yours...

³⁹And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. Matthew 26:39

2. The Lust of the eyes

Next the enemy appealed to the kinship of Christ as the son of God. IN the first temptation the enemy didn't use the word of God against Christ, he just approached him in general conversation. But seeing how Christ was using the Rhema of God, the enemy attempted to twist the Rhema. By saying:

⁶And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Matthew 4:6

The enemy used an old Hebrew tradition which said that the Christ would descend from the pinnacle of the temple to earth. Strictly a Rabbinic tradition not found in prophecy in the bible. The enemy tried to use word against the word which lets you know he knows the word. This is why we must be strong in the word. The enemy was again trying to get Jesus to act independently of God. Independence of the word of God in the case of Christ mission would have been rebellion. Seeing the trick Jesus used word pulling out another sword from the armory in the Deut room.

*¹⁶Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.
-Deut 6:16*

Playing game with God isn't really an advised method of strengthening your relationship with him... Tempting in this case was a dare to God.

3. Pride

With two strikes thrown straight across the plate. The enemy next attempt was to appeal to the human desire for power. So he took Jesus to the mountains where he could see the kingdoms of the world. This attack the enemy didn't try to use the word he tried to use pride. He offered to Jesus power if he would worship him. Once again he wanted Jesus to act independently of the will of God. This is where the strongest rebuke took place. This is where God was really glorified as Jesus told the enemy to leave stating...that only God is to be worshipped.

¹³Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

*¹⁴Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;
-Deut 6:13-14*

³Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Deut 20:3

The effect of the sword of the spirit

There are three effects of the sword of the spirit.

The first is the dynamic of preaching, Being taught the word of God is dangerous if you are not a Christian or even more dangerous if you are a Christian living wrong. Ignorance of the law is no excuse. I have been told that many are punished even if they are not aware of the law...The same is so among those who say they didn't know God forbade a certain thing. The gospel of Jesus has been preached for two thousand years to the far reachest of the planet. Many great missionaries have braved deep forest untreatable diseases and death to bring the gospel to all the world as the great commission tells us. Now with the Internet, 24 hour a day Christian channels broadcast in every language, the

bible printed in every language used today. Smart phones that have the bible as an app. Who can say the word of God hasn't reached everybody on earth?

Next it encourages a systematic approach to reading the bible.

Jesus knew what to say because of who he is...But this in no way limits us from having a systematic approach to defeating the enemy by the word of God. There are books in the bible that has so many weapons that we have never touched Jesus was full of the word Even on the cross...Pull up Psalms 22...Take the time to read even books that you say bore you...Look at I Chronicles 4. Start at verse 1. read to three and then skip to verse 9.

This little jewel in the bible could easily blend into the background if not for the diligent study of the word of God.

Finally we are exhorted to the diligent study of the word memorizing key passages.

The experience of Jesus lets us know we should commit ourselves to knowing the word so that when attempts to twist the word comes our way we know the word...

Notice Jesus didn't say exactly where it was written at...this illustrates that though you may not know the verse, book, exact page...this doesn't nullify the effect of the word of God. This of course doesn't relieve you from studying. The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. Proper use of the word of God is vital to our survival

"Heavenly Father, I praise and worship you because you are God. I am honored to be your servant and I take my stand today against the devil and his schemes against me, my family and my ministry. Father, as I take up each piece of the armor, please secure it in place on me.

I will use the Sword of the Spirit by speaking the Word of God as it applies to whatever situation I may face today. Father, please remind me of your Word via the Holy Spirit.

Thank you, Father, for the whole armor of God. Please surround me with your hedge of protection as I move forward on the spiritual battlefield today. I praise and worship you now and forever, Amen."