

# THE LEADER'S SWORD

(Responding To Antagonism God's Way)  
Matthew 26:36-56



## TEMPTED TO RETALIATE?

- ◆ Peter Was Impatient
- ◆ Peter Was Impulsive
- ◆ Peter Was Impetuous
- ◆ Peter Was Imprudent

*“Put your sword away Peter; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” (Matthew 26:52)*

Bill Kirk

## **“THE ARREST”**

**Text:** Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; John 18:10; Luke 22:50

**Subject:** How Jesus Overcomes the Carnal Nature

### **Introduction**

**Question:** How many of you have ever had your sleep interrupted?

◆ The disciples had their sleep interrupted one day, and Luke describes it (and what followed it).

### **Read Luke 22:45**

“And when Jesus rose up from prayer, and came to His disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow.”

### **What did Jesus say?**

Verse 46: “And He said unto them, why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”

### **What happened next?**

Verse 47; “And while Jesus was speaking, a mob led by Judas came to arrest Jesus.”

### **And in Verse 54**

“They took Jesus and brought Him to the high priest’s house.”

**Question:** But what happened in between Jesus’ prayer of surrender in the garden and the arrest by the mob led by Judas?

**Question:** What did Jesus do in these brief moments at His arrest?

**Question:** How did Jesus prepare us for the battles and temptations we face?

**Question:** Why did Jesus do what He did and say what He said?

### **Jesus addresses three things:**

1. How many of you have ever been tempted to be discouraged because of an unfulfilled expectation? **Jesus knows that!**
2. How many of you have ever been tempted to take matters into your own hands (or give somebody a piece of your mind?) **Jesus knows that!**
3. How many of you have ever had your feelings hurt by what someone else did or said to you? **Jesus knows that!**

- ◆ This is the last miracle Jesus performs before His death.
- ◆ It follows a season of prayer in Gethsemane where Jesus’ disciples fall asleep in prayer.
- ◆ Jesus surrendered His will in prayer. (Luke 22:42)
- ◆ Jesus finds support in prayer. (V. 43)
- ◆ Jesus teaches us the power of God in prayer. (V. 46)

### **Then it suddenly happens:**

1. Jesus is met by a mob with swords and clubs.

2. Judas kisses Jesus to signal, "He's the one."
3. The disciples ask Jesus, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" (V. 49)
4. And before Jesus can even answer the question, Peter cuts off the ear of Malchus and is rebuked by Jesus who says:

**"Put your sword away Peter; for all who take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matthew 26:52)**

**Remember now:**

- ◆ Jesus could have called 72,000 angels to His rescue.
- ◆ Jesus didn't have to allow Judas to betray Him.
- ◆ Jesus didn't have to go with the arresting soldiers.
- ◆ Jesus didn't have to heal the servant Malchus.

**But Jesus maintains His calmness.**

- ◆ And, #1, Jesus keeps His focus towards the cross.
- ◆ And #2, Jesus teaches us three incredible lessons about ourselves and about God's grace.

**The arrest teaches us:**

**I. The Helplessness Of Our Flesh (Luke 22:46)**

**Question:** What does Jesus say just before the mob appears to arrest Him?

**Answer:** Luke 22:46; "Watch and pray, otherwise temptation will overpower you."

**What is Jesus saying here? Three things:**

1. To **"watch"** means:
  - ◆ To be on guard and stand **ready**.
2. To **"pray"** means:
  - ◆ To seek the help and strength of **God**.
3. **"Lest you enter into temptation"** means:
  - ◆ "Lest you fail to stand **true** in the hour of your trial and testing."

**In other words:**

- ◆ Jesus recognizes the helplessness of our flesh.
- ◆ Jesus recognizes the temptation to get discouraged.
- ◆ Jesus recognizes the battles that you face.

**That's why Jesus said at His arrest:**

"The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Which means)

- ◆ Our minds may think we are ready to bear any cross in life, but in reality;
- ◆ Our flesh (or natural feelings) can weaken and let us down when a trial comes upon us.

**Question:** What's the answer? **Answer:** "Watch and pray"

### **In Other Words**

- ◆ If we seek strength from on high, our inner man will be **prepared** when the cross comes our way.
- ◆ If we seek strength from on high, we will be **equipped** to meet all the demands of life.
- ◆ Of we seek strength from on high, Jesus will prove to be **more** than sufficient.

### **The arrest of Jesus teaches us:**

#### **II. The Hastiness Of Our Flesh**

**Question:** What's the temptation when you are surprised by an injustice (or offence?)

**Answer:** The temptation is to be hasty and take matters into your own hands!

- ◆ The temptation is to retaliate.
- ◆ The temptation is to get even.
- ◆ The temptation is to pursue vengeance.
- ◆ The temptation is to get bitter.
- ◆ The temptation is to hurt yourself through unforgiveness.
- ◆ The temptation is to carry the offense.

**Question:** What did Peter do?

**Answer:** Luke 22:50; "And Peter smote Malchus, the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear."

**Question:** What provoked Peter?

- ◆ Judas secretly leads the soldiers and civilians to the rendezvous place.
- ◆ Judas then kisses Jesus and sells his soul for 30 pieces of silver.
- ◆ Jesus then permits His enemies to lay hold of Him and arrest Him.

### **Then hastiness of the flesh**

- ◆ Peter draws his sword and begins to slash wildly.
- ◆ Peter forgets that it's only he and 10 disciples against a mob of Roman soldiers.
- ◆ Peter then cuts off Malchus' ear in haste and Jesus responds immediately.

### **Matthew 26:52**

"Put your sword away Peter, for those who take the sword will perish with the sword."

**Question:** Why was Peter hasty with his sword?

**Question:** What gets us into trouble when flesh isn't subdued in the secret place of prayer?

1. Peter was **impatient** (which means)

"Showing annoyance because of delay, not willing to wait for something to happen."

- ◆ Peter asked, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" (V. 49)
- ◆ Peter never waited for an answer from Jesus.

- ◆ Peter simply spoke and sliced with a hurried spirit.

**Question:** Are you annoyed because of a delay in life?

**Question:** Are you waiting for a job, a spouse, a prodigal child, an answer to specific prayers?

**Question:** Are you tempted to rush ahead before a word from Jesus?

2. Peter was **impulsive** (which means)

"A sudden inclination without conscious thought; moving without thinking carefully first."

- ◆ Peter wasn't thinking about the multitude behind the servant he injured.
- ◆ Peter's unholy zeal caused him to leap before he looked.

3. Peter was **impetuous** (which means)

"Moving with force or violence; acting furiously, rash, rushing"

- ◆ Peter is fighting flesh with flesh.
- ◆ Peter is trying to accomplish something the wrong way.

4. Peter was **imprudent** (which means)

"Acting without thought of the consequences; lacking in judgement or caution."

- ◆ Peter never paused to think of the consequences of killing the servant.
- ◆ Peter never thought how his one act could have cost the lives of the other 10 disciples.
- ◆ Peter never looked beyond his own personal decision to slice away.

**Question:** Have you thought much about the consequences?

**Question:** Have you thought much about the law of sowing and reaping?

#### **Brother Bartholomew has often said these four things:**

1. "If you have a short fuse, you can be sure that someone will light it."
2. "No carnal means ever solved a spiritual problem."
3. "No provocation ever justifies an unchristian response."
4. "Learn to practice the principle of delayed response."

**Question:** What was the Lord's rebuke? "Put your sword away Peter." (**Why?**)

"Because they who take the sword shall perish with the sword."

#### **Which means:**

1. Those who engage in carnal warfare will perish by the very means they use.
2. You do not win victories for Jesus with swords, you win them with spiritual weapons.
3. You do not win battles for God by resisting and fighting the cross, but by taking up the cross.
4. You never advance the kingdom of God by fleshly words, fleshly deeds, fleshly schemes, fleshly plans, fleshly attack or fleshly efforts.

#### **Victory is won Jesus' way**

1. He **prayed** in the garden while others were sleeping.
2. He **surrendered** His rights to God in accepting the bitter cup of judgement for our sin.
3. He **submitted** to the Father's will, even when it went against the grain of His own feelings.

**Question:** Have you been tempted lately?

**Question:** Do you need the Lord to overcome a hasty spirit?

**Question:** Has anybody made you angry?

**Question:** Rather, has anyone brought to the surface a response that God wants to correct?

### **Illustration**

In February 1990, the Los Angeles bomb squad received a call about a suspicious pickup truck parked downtown. They checked it out and found 400 pounds of explosives packed into several 55 gallon drums. Had the bomb been detonated, it would have blown a crater 75 feet wide and 25 feet deep.

A man was arrested for the attempted bombing. Why was this man on such a horrible mission? Well, the bombs were all in or near the IRS building. It turns out that the man believed the IRS owed him money, and he wasn't going to leave them alone until he got the money. The amount he believed they owed him?" \$14.00.

### **III. The Healing Of Our Flesh**

**Question:** What did Jesus do to the arresting soldier who came to apprehend Him?

**Question:** What did Jesus do to Malchus who was bleeding?

(Verse 51) "He **touched** his ear and **healed** him."

**Question:** Why did Jesus heal the enemy's ear?

1. To save Peter and the other ten from being killed for Peters' rash blunder with the sword.
2. To touch Malchus and lead him into a relationship with the One who could save him.
3. To teach you and me how to bear the cross and not attempt to fight flesh with flesh.
4. To reveal to us the two opposites: Peter and Jesus.

#### **◆ There is Peter: Who cuts off the ear with an unholy zeal.**

**Question:** Have you cut off any ears lately?

**Question:** Have you wielded any tongue lashings or cutting remarks?

**Question:** Have you hastily or angrily cut anyone instead of responding like Jesus?

#### **It's been well said;**

"How busy we keep the Lord putting on ears, that we in our fleshly zeal cut off."

#### **◆ There is Jesus: Who heals what someone else has served in a hasty outburst.**

**Question:** Has anybody cut **your** ear off lately?

**Question:** Has anyone severed **you**?

**Question:** Have **you** been betrayed by a loved one?

**Question:** Do you need Jesus to pick up the ear, stop the bleeding and place His hand upon **you**?

You may feel like undisciplined Peter or undeserving Malchus,

- ◆ But Amazing Grace...touched them both!
  - ...rescued them both!
  - ...restored them both!
  - ...healed them both!

**Question:** Why did Jesus heal the ear of the enemy?

1. To show us how to forgive someone who doesn't deserve it!
2. To show us how He can forgive us, who do not deserve it!
3. To show us how He can heal you from what someone else may have done to you!

**So much so, that in Verse 53, Jesus says to the arresters:**

"When I was with you in the temple, you stretched forth no hands against Me, but this is your hour and the power of darkness."

**Question:** What does Jesus mean when He says to His arresters, "This is your hour of power"?

**An incredible encouragement to you**

1. The power of darkness (or evil intentions) will only be an hour, or a short time and soon to pass.
2. This power of darkness (for just an hour) will be conquered by light.

**In Other Words**

- ◆ When light appears, the presence of darkness is destroyed.
- ◆ So when the presence of Jesus comes to you, what evil meant to overcome you will be destroyed and healed by the presence of Jesus himself.

**In Other Words**

- ◆ Your hour of darkness must give way to the healing light.
- ◆ Your hour of pain will pass and cannot stay.

**In Other Words**

- ◆ Pain is real, sin is real, and injustices are real, yes.
- ◆ But they are **seasonal** and **healable** when the presence of God is placed against you.

Amen!  
Bill Kirk