

Luke 22:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

Analysis

Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough (ἰκανόν ἐστιν, hikanon estin). The disciples' literal response reveals their continued misunderstanding—they thought Jesus meant physical warfare. Jesus's cryptic reply, It is enough, likely expresses exasperation ("Enough of this!") rather than approving two swords as sufficient arsenal. The tone resembles Mark 8:21: "How is it that ye do not understand?"

This exchange highlights the disciples' persistent failure to grasp Jesus's teaching even hours before His crucifixion. They still expected military messianic victory. Only Pentecost would open their eyes to understand Scripture (Luke 24:45, Acts 2). Two swords would fulfill Isaiah 53:12 (Jesus numbered with transgressors/armed men) but were utterly inadequate for—and contrary to—Jesus's kingdom purposes. The church conquers through martyrdom, not militia.

Historical Context

The Zealot movement advocated armed rebellion against Rome, and some expected Messiah to lead such a revolt. The disciples' readiness to produce swords shows they'd entertained such thinking. Peter would soon use one of these swords to attack Malchus (John 18:10), only to have Jesus heal the wound and rebuke the violence. Forty years later, zealot rebellion would result in Jerusalem's destruction (AD 70), vindicating Jesus's rejection of armed resistance.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. In what ways do Christians today misunderstand Jesus's kingdom, expecting worldly power rather than suffering servanthood?
2. How does the church's history of using political or military force contradict Jesus's explicit rejection of the sword?
3. What spiritual weapons has God given the church for warfare against evil (Ephesians 6:10-18), and how do they differ from worldly power?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|-------|------------|
| οἱ | δὲ | εἶπεν | Κύριε | ἰδού, | μάχαιραι | ῶδε | δύο | ό | δὲ |
| G3588 | And | he said | Lord | behold | swords | here | are two | G3588 | And |
| G1161 | | G2036 | G2962 | G2400 | G3162 | G5602 | G1417 | | G1161 |
| <i>εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἰκανόν ἐστιν</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| he said | unto them | enough | It is | | | | | | |
| G2036 | G846 | G2425 | G2076 | | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

John 18:36 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Luke 22:49 (Word): When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

1 Thessalonians 5:8 (Parallel theme): 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 Peter 5:9 (Parallel theme): Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

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