

THE ROMAN SOLDIER

The following notes were taken from *The History of the decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbons, Esq., Boston Phillips, Sampson and Company, 1850.

1. The military establishment of the Roman Empire assured its tranquility and success.
2. In the purer ages of the Roman Empire, the use of military arms was reserved only for citizens who:
 - A. had a country to love,
 - B. had a property to defend,
 - C. had a share in enacting laws which were to their interest and duty to maintain.
3. The patriotism of the Romans made them almost undefeatable.
4. Upon entrance into the army, the soldier took a solemn oath
 - A. never to desert his standard (The standard was a golden eagle, an object of fondest devotion),
 - B. to submit his own will to the commands of the leaders,
 - C. to sacrifice his life for the safety of the Emperor and the Empire.
5. Soldiers were inspired by the pay which was excellent.
6. The soldiers were also inspired by fear.
 - A. It was impossible for cowardice or disobedience to escape the severest punishment.
 - B. Centurions were authorized to chastise soldiers with blows.
 - C. Generals were authorized to chastise with death.
7. It was an inflexible maxim that the soldiers should dread their officers more than the enemy. This dread produced:
 - A. firmness,
 - B. docility. They were easily managed, obedient, easily taught, and willing to learn; thus, a valor was produced that outdid the barbarians who were impetuous and of irregular passions.
8. Valor alone was not enough. Military exercises were vital and continuous.
 - A. These were held morning and evening.
 - B. Even if a soldier was older, he still did his exercises daily.

- C. Sheds were erected in the winter for exercises.
 - D. Arms used in the exercises were double the weight of those used in actual warfare.
 - E. The only difference in activity or circumstances during peace and war was the presence of blood on the battlefields.
 - F. They cultivated the science of tactics.
 - G. They could advance 20 miles in 6 hours, and they carried their baggage until they met the enemy.
9. The best generals and emperors encouraged the soldiers by the following:
- A. their presence,
 - B. their example,
 - C. their personal instruction, and
 - D. challenging their personal strength.

Now you can understand why Paul referred to the military life when he exhorted, instructed, warned, charged, and prepared Timothy to guard the gospel. Paul was well acquainted with the Roman army. Why? When Claudius Lysias ordered Paul to go to Caesarea for a government trial, two hundred soldiers, two hundred spearmen, and seventy horsemen from the Roman army formed his personal escort! He was also chained to a Roman soldier night and day for two whole years.

Yes, Paul knew the life of a soldier. Do you?

*Taken from Precept upon Precept study of II Timothy by Kay Arthur.