

# The Sword of God

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | May 17, 2008



*Within the introduction to the sermon, I got a pretty clear picture of what the pastor was going to be presenting to us today. I felt he presented the information he wanted to very effectively and thoroughly, but it left my mind VERY unsettled. It almost seemed as if he was maybe not necessarily attacking (something a little less harsh, maybe), but strongly addressing/ challenging the idea of a Loving God, the God that you have shown me and the God I have come to know over the past year during my own studies. I am struggling with many of the texts he used and how he used them. They are in the Bible, therefore I believe they are valid. But they definitely present God as One who will destroy and pour out His wrath and anger on those who sin. In fact, to be honest, I was rather disturbed with the whole passage of Jeremiah 25. Verse 33 really troubled me though, when it refers to “those **slain** by God”. Slain is a brutal word in my opinion. In what context should we read Jeremiah 25? What is the **sword** God will send to them?*

*The other passages he presented that troubled me were these:*

*Isaiah 26:21,22 See, the LORD is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her; she will conceal her slain no longer. In that day, the LORD will punish with his sword, his fierce, great and powerful sword.*

*Rev 20:9,10 ...fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur...they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."*

*I don't know....I'm confused, Tim. I know and firmly believe in the view of a Loving God who chooses love over force and might. because that is His character-Love. Yet, I know He has used might and force in circumstances throughout the OT due to the situation at hand.*

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When studying the Bible we must ask not just what does it say but what does it mean. The Bible can be broken into two general types of evidences, the claims statements like "God is love" and the revelation of action, "what actually transpired" the stories, like the life of Jesus lived out revealing God's love in action. What gives the statement "God is love" meaning and power is the evidence of His actions in dealing with man culminating in the life of Christ. This general principle is powerful to utilize when forming beliefs based on "claims" texts.

In the sermon today was cited many scriptures, some from Revelation about fire, including fire coming out from God and consuming the wicked. But it seemed these were "claims" texts without the "evidence" texts as they were not a recounting of history but a claim of what will happen in the future. Now, I believe it to be inspired. I believe it will transpire, but I also believe that we can't understand what that "claim" means without looking at "revelation evidence" or "acted out evidence" and ensure they are both in harmony.

Sometimes it is suggested that the fire that comes from God is a fire of combustion, a fire that is "inflicted" upon the wicked. While it is true that we can site examples of God putting many people to rest in the graves throughout the Bible, (Flood, Sodom, Korah, first born of Egypt, 185,000 Assyrians, platoons to arrest Elijah, Uzzah etc.) as was pointed out in the sermon, everyone of these people are coming out of the grave at one of two resurrections. In other words, none of these examples are examples of the "second death" but only the "first death." Therefore, none have bearing on what happens to the wicked in the end, or how God will treat the wicked in the end, which is the critical question.

For questions on the "fire" which destroys the wicked please click [The Question of Punishment Part III](#) to read my blog. We will explore God's wrath in a future blog. In this blog will focus on answering the question about the sword of God which slays the wicked.

Consider the following verse:

**Revelation 19:19-21** Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Notice the sword is coming out of the rider's mouth – the Rider is Christ, do you think He will have a large piece of metal sticking out of His mouth when He returns? No, what comes out of a person's

mouth? Words and what kind of words does Christ always speak? Truth! Therefore, the sword is symbolic of the truth. "The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

The wicked are destroyed "because they did not love the truth and thus be saved." 2 Thes 2:10. In other words the wicked have hardened their minds in lies, solidified their characters in falsehood, warped their selves in deception and the sword of God is the truth that cuts through their lies right to their inner self.

When people sin they are convicted with guilt, this is the work of the Holy Spirit. No one likes guilt and we all want it to go away. There are only two ways to resolve appropriate guilt, God's way - repentance and restoration and reconciliation. And Satan's way, lies, denial, distortion, externalization. Adam said after his sin, "It wasn't me. It was that woman you gave me. If she had not brought me the fruit I would have never ate it. Don't blame me, blame her."

This is the hardened condition of all those who have not opened their hearts and minds to the Spirit of Truth here. What will it be like for those who have lived in the darkness of lies to come face to face with infinite truth, truth which can not be denied, truth that cannot be avoided, truth which sears through to their souls? Their minds cannot take it and they die. Do we have an example of this demonstrated in Scripture where someone was living in lies and was confronted by truth and were slain by the sword of truth?

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. Acts 5:1-5.

Thus we see the sword is the truth which destroys lies and the fires are the fires of love which consume selfishness and the wicked will be slain by truth and love because they have clung to lies and selfishness. In other words their own condition results in their death when God simply shows up as Himself, the source of all truth and love.