

NOTES:

In Genesis we see the beginning of sin and death entering into the world. Death and evil begin on the inside and work their way out through our lives. God separated Adam and Eve away from the Garden of Eden so that they wouldn't find the tree of life and live forever in their corrupt state. The sword of God is a protector and defender. We have no understanding of the sacredness and holiness of the pure presence of God. Sin and evil cannot stand in the presence of God.

We see this sword again in the hand of the captain of the Lord's army in Joshua 5 & 6. When we see God before us, the question isn't "whose side is God on?", the question is "are we on God's side?". God is in charge and we must come under His kingdom leadership—He doesn't bless our will, He blesses His own will. We must approach the scriptures with the humility of Joshua to ask God what He wants to say. The Sword of the Lord always leads us to ask "what do You want us to do?" or "what do You want me to change?" God does work in us before He does new work through us.

Jesus brings His Kingdom with the power of truth and love, not sword and violence. He isn't condemning, instead He speaks healing and life into us. Jesus uses His sword to cut away the doubts and sins from our lives so that we can be re-united with the Father through the power of His word.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

How has God used the Bible to speak into your life?

Why was it important for God to separate Adam and Eve from the tree of life?

How have you seen God protect you from places that would have been harmful to you—even if you didn't understand it at the time?

Why doesn't God take sides in our lives and disputes?

What is the difference between God blessing our will and His own will?

Why is it important to approach the Bible with humility?

VERSES:

Hebrews 4:12

For 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.

Genesis 3:21-24

21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

22 And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Joshua 5:13-6:5

13 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

14 "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?"

15 The commander of the Lord's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

6:1 Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

2 Then the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. 3 March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. 4 Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. 5 When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in."

Revelation 1:16

In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.