



Malvern Mashal Number 8

Insights from the Hills



In *Sparkling Gems from the Greek*, (February 22nd) Rick Renner reminds us of the sharp two-edged sword that is seen coming out of the mouth of the risen and glorified Lord. (Rev. 1:16) This must be one of the strangest phrases in the New Testament. We can understand the idea of the Lord both wounding and healing, but surely the sword should have been in His *hand* rather than in His *mouth*? The NIV Study Bible suggests various helpful interpretations of the sword being a symbol of God's judgement, but I am going to follow Rick Renner's line in this article.

The phrase is made up of two words: *di* which means two, and *stomos*, which means *mouth*. Stranger and stranger. Why would the Bible refer to the word of God as a 'two-mouthed' sword? In Ephesians 6:17 Paul calls the word of God "the sword of the Spirit." The word here is *rhema*, which carries the idea of a 'quickened' word – God giving us some clear insight or understanding through something He has dropped into our spirit, or which we have come to a clear understanding about. When God shares one of his *rhema* words with us, it not only gives us direction for the next phase of our lives, but also the authority to *attempt* certain things for Him.

The *rhema* word has the seeds of real power within it. It is not enough to keep this word within us, however. Sooner or later we need to act on it – and before that we need to declare it out loud.

Mind you, we "say" all sorts of odd things to ourselves, only to find our hearts not matching our declarations, let alone fulfilling God's desires. But faith comes by hearing – and what can build our faith more than to speak out the truth of God's word? Even if we only start with the faith of a mustard seed, the life that is in the word is released as it is spoken. An acorn dropped onto the ground may look small and insignificant, but packed into that seed is all that is needed to make a magnificent oak. So it is when God's word is spoken out.

I do hope you can see the difference here between the leading of the Lord and the whole "name it and claim it" way of thinking. As Rick Renner puts it,

When you declare the word out loud, those powerful words are sent forth like a mighty blade to drive back the forces that have been marshalled against you, your family, your business your ministry, your finances, your relationships or your body. First, that word came out of the mouth of God. When it comes out of our mouth, too, it becomes a short two-edged (or "two-mouthed") sword.

In the Ephesians 6:17 passage, Paul uses the word *machaira*. Of all the swords used by Roman soldiers, this is by far the most deadly: a short razor sharp weapon that was used at close quarters and that could shred the insides of a victim.

Has the Lord shown you things that you have allowed to lie dormant in your heart, instead of being released by the two-edged sword? Something happens in the realm of the Spirit when we rise up and begin to speak forth that word.

Nothing is more powerful than a word that comes first from God's mouth and then from your mouth. You have come into agreement with the Lord, and that agreement releases His mighty power into the situation at hand. As that quickened *rhema* word from God begins first to fill your heart and mind and then come out of your mouth, it becomes a "two-mouthed sword" – and the demons start to tremble in terror.

If you have been hit hard and often by the fiery darts of the enemy, you may be more conscious of them than of the razor sharp sword of the Spirit that the Lord has placed within your grasp. Sometimes the Lord allows these "hits" because they actually serve His purposes by making us attend to certain matters. As surely as the Lord's presence so often brings peace and settledness, there are times when He makes us uneasy and restless until we respond to whatever it is that He is prompting us to do. It may mean going the extra mile to initiate something new, or to get in touch with someone, or to ask someone's forgiveness, or to refrain from doing something you had it in mind to do. One such prompting from God can release so much!

As you can appreciate, the vast majority of the work I do from day to day in prayer and mentoring is confidential to the people concerned. I can, however, share a couple of stories which show that the "sword" need not always be literal Scripture quotations but can also include words from God that are based on Scriptural principles.

A wise counsellor and I were praying with a minister's wife, who found herself completely unable to function after six pm. She did not feel up to taking or making phone calls in the evenings, let alone attending meetings. All she really wanted to do was to bury her head under a duvet. We sensed that this was not primarily a question of physical stamina, so we dug a bit deeper and discovered that it had been at six o'clock that she had first heard the news that her mother had died. Traumatically, she had been unable to be present at her death. We prayed and used the sword of the Spirit to break the link – and to everyone's great joy, she immediately began to "do" evenings!

I had been concerned for some time that a friend of ours always feels the need to drink at least one glass of wine before going to bed. It just didn't feel right. When a close friend prayed for her about this, the Lord revealed the cause. She had once been married to a man who always drank last thing at night – and the drink made him tetchy. Partly to keep him company, but more to "protect" herself against his behaviour, she began to drink too. Once the Lord revealed this root, her friend was able to wield the sword and set her free from a pattern that had become a stronghold. Now she feels no need at all for that late night glass of wine!

The more surrendered we are to God, and the stronger our desire to do His will, the more we will experience insights and leadings that lead to breakthroughs. Are there promises and directions that the Lord has given you that have been waiting for you to appropriate them more fully and to release by your declaration? May His sharp two-edged sword be released through your mouth – and may many people be released and godly plans and leadings be established as a result!