**The *Sword of Truth***

**I. Introduction**

I do not believe that Jesus’ intended to *hide* or *conceal* truth from anyone, though some seem to see such a purpose in Matt.13:11. But if you look more closely at the context, a few pertinent details derail that conclusion:

* The purpose and nature of parables was *reveal* rather than *conceal* truth by proceeding from the *known* to manifest the yet as *unknown.* If it was Jesus desire to keep or *hide* the truth from anyone, why deploy a method which makes it easier to *see* and *perceive,* vv.13-14?
* Instead, His *purpose* and *desire* was to enable *hearing, seeing, understanding,* and *healing,* v.15.
* Therefore, He said, *“He who has ears, let him hear,”* v.9.

**II. The *External Divisions* of the Sword, Matt.10:24-39**

To those same ends and purposes, I’d like us to consider a statement He made in Matt.10:34, particularly, *“I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”* Again, context is critical. Jesus is speaking to His closest disciples regarding the nature of their *roles* and *work* in His kingdom:

* As *disciples,* they should expect no better treatment than their *Master* receives, vv.24-25;
* But should nonetheless understand their purpose to *reveal to the world* what has been/would be *manifested to them,* vv.26-27;
* And do so *without fear,* v.28;
* Because of God’s *concern* and *watchcare* over them, vv.29-31;
* Knowing the ultimate aim of the gospel is to provide the *means* both of *salvation* and *condemnation,* vv.32-33; (“yes,” the gospel *saves,* Rom.1:16-17; but by the same process it also *condemns,* 2Thess.2:8-12);
* Thus, their *primary tool/weapon* for this mission would be *the sword-* in this case, an implement of *division,* v.34;

Note Luke’s account in Luke 12:49-51; the implement of *fire* is used instead of a *sword,* but the result is the same, vv.52-53.

This *sword* would *divide families/households,* vv.35-36;

By *testing/determining* and *manifesting* true *affections* and *loyalties,* v.37 (see also Luke 9:57-62; Matt.8:18-22); and,

By *testing/determining* and *revealing* true *commitment,* vv.38-39.

**III. The *Internal Divisions* of the Sword, Heb.4:4-12**

Again, the *sword of truth* divides *externally* and *generally/collectively,* vv.4-11;

But it also divides *internally* and *specifically/individually,* v.12…

* It is *living and active* (thus continues to *perform its work* for current and future generations; *active* is from the Greek word *energes- effectual, powerful*);
* It is *sharp* and *two-edged* (to *pierce* and *cut* both ways) to perform its work *effectively;*
* It *separates/divides* between the *soul* (*psyche-* inner self) and *spirit* (*pneuma-* wind, breath); thus between our *spiritual/inner* and *physical/outer* selves; this explains how the *joints* (*outer* connections of bones) and *marrow* (*inner* tissues of the bones) illustrate the point;
* It *judges* (*kritikos-* able to judge, determine)our *thoughts* and *intentions;* note that it says *“thoughts* ***and*** *intentions”* rather than *“thoughts* ***from*** *intentions”-* the meaning of which seems to be that the *sword* is able to *cut away* everything that might obstruct vision or inspection and allow us to see our own *true affections/motivations;*  and obviously,
* It also *lays us bare* to the *eyes of God,* v.13.

**IV. Conclusion: *Benefits* of this *Sharp Sword***

* It allows us (and God) to *see* us as we are *externally* by separating us from family and friends who refuse to *hear, listen,* and *obey;*
* It allows us (and God) to *see* us as we are *internally* by manifesting our true *thoughts and intentions* in and through life; but it also,
* It cuts out the *tumors/disease* of *sin,* enabling *salvation* and *life;*
* It excises *doubt* that *assurance* and *confidence* can flourish;
* It slices away *self* that the *Savior* can shine in and through us.

**So, when we allow the *sword* its proper purpose, and use it as God intended, it an implement of *destruction, instruction,* and *construction!***