



# The Fire & the Sword

by Karen Holland

**Psalm 149:6** *May the high praises of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands...*

**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.*

**Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16** *I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*

The Sword

Cold, hard metal,  
dull,  
lifeless...

Holy fire breathe  
fan the flame, stir us until,  
hearts are filled,  
and we glory in Your praise.

Holy fire burn  
let the flame consume,  
cleanse, purify, refine, set apart,  
pure and holy make our hearts.

Holy fire blaze  
radiate, brilliant, brighter still,  
fan the flame,  
as high praises rise to Your holy name.

The Sword

Cold, hard metal, no longer cold, dull,  
no longer lifeless,  
but brilliant, white hot...  
powerful.....

**Jeremiah 20:9** *...His word is in my heart like a fire ...*

A sword is cold, hard steel—lifeless; this is its nature. But if the sword is placed in a fire, and the flame is stirred or fanned, in time the nature of the sword will change. It soon becomes glowing, white hot, just like the fire. The sword doesn't become the fire; it takes on the nature of the fire.

**Fire...**

**gives warmth...**

**gives light...**

**burns, consumes...**

**cleanses, refines, purifies...**

**gives energy...**

**gives protection.**

**A fanned fire radiates more heat, burns brighter and longer, reaches farther and deeper than an unfanned, unstirred flame.**

This image of the sword together with the blazing fire is very powerful; much like God's word when the fire of the Holy Spirit breathes on it. The hotter the fire the more powerful the sword placed in the fire becomes. Look at the verses from Jeremiah and Matthew again. By accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and claiming the promises of baptism by water and fire, the Holy Spirit dwells within and ignites our hearts. Combine this with God's word, and the fire will burn—a flaming sword. "Fan into flame the gift of God which is in you." Paul told his spiritual son Timothy (2 Timothy 1:6-7). How can we do this? How can we fan our gifts into flame, into a blazing fire?

Psalms 149:6 gives us a clue. Look how it links the high praises of God in the mouth and a double-edged sword in the hands. I believe this links high praise with battle. David and the commanders of the army also linked high praise with battle; they set aside musicians and singers specifically for this purpose (1 Chronicles 23:1-5, 25:1-7).

Why would the commanders of the army set aside musicians and singers? Consider this passage.

**Isaiah 55:10-12** *As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.*

Through worship, music, and singing, the immediate, alive, in the moment word of the Lord can be sent forth. This word never goes forth without accomplishing the purpose for which it was sent by the Lord. The genuine word of the Lord accomplishes things. It plucks up and breaks down, destroys and overthrows, builds and plants. This singing, this sending forth God's word through worship, fans the flame, and releases the flaming sword.

Sometimes worship and singing drives the sword of the word even deeper into hearts than the spoken or written word. Music and singing can cut to the heart, motivate the soul, make us feel and captivate our spirit. At times the fire of the flaming sword is fanned brighter and reaches farther through music and singing. This is very much like the action of the wind as it blows on a fire causing it to blaze bright.

Could this be why we are instructed to speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; to sing and make music in our hearts (Eph 5:18-20)? Could it be that this allows Christ to dwell in and among us more richly (Col 3:16) to accomplish His purposes?

Holy fire breathe  
fan the flame, stir us until,  
hearts are filled,  
and we glory in Your praise.

Let Your flaming sword be sent forth by us  
powerful, brilliant, white hot.  
Let Your glory reign, and Your purposes be accomplished,  
as we proclaim to all the name of Jesus.

**Colossians 3:16** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*

**Ephesians 5:18-20** *...Be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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