

Old Testament Reading:
Jeremiah 28:5–9

⁵Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Hananiah the prophet in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD, ⁶and the prophet Jeremiah said, “Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD make the words that you have prophesied come true, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. ⁷Yet hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. ⁸The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. ⁹As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet.”

Epistle: Romans 7:1–13

¹Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? ²Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. ³Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

⁴Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

⁷What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin.

I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law, sin lies dead. ⁹I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹²So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

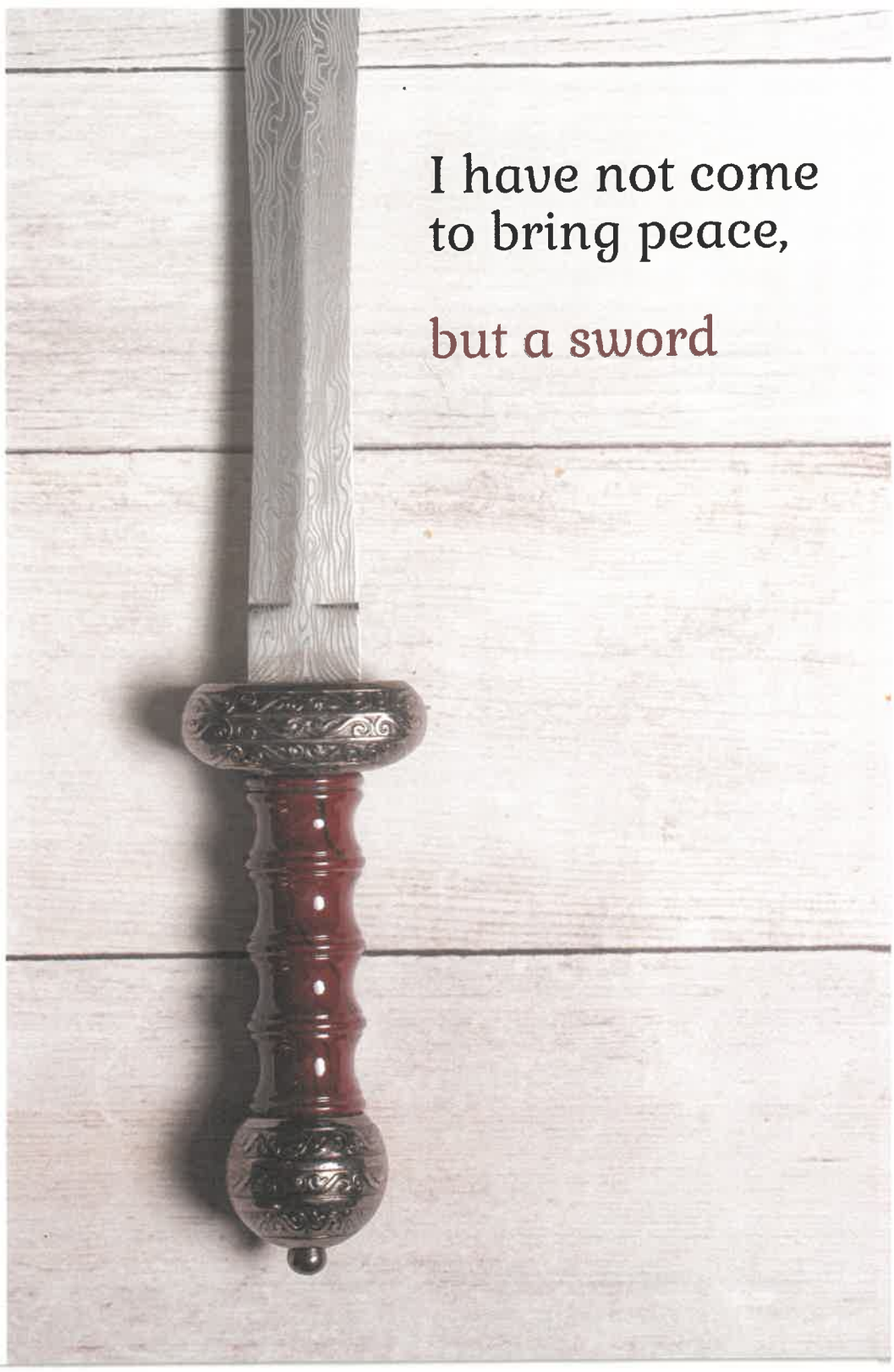
¹³Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 10:34–42

³⁴[Jesus said:] “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. ⁴¹The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. ⁴²And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

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About the Cover: We are easily astonished by Jesus’ words of sword instead of peace. The apparent severity of Jesus’ words reveals the dividing line that cuts through earthly bonds of this life, even that of family. Peace with God will mean enmity with the world. But this shows us the importance of what He has come to bring to all who believe in Him. He alone brings forgiveness, life, and salvation. In Him, we are members of the eternal family of God.