

# Deuteronomy 32:41

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

## Analysis

**If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment** (אֲחַמֵּשׁ יָדִי בִרְכֹךְ חֶרְבִי וְתֹאחֲזֵ בְמִשְׁפָּט יָדִי)—the conditional "if" (im) introduces divine judgment as certain future action. Shannoti (whet/sharpen) describes preparing a blade; beraq charbi (my lightning/glittering sword) evokes the flash of polished metal—a terrifying image of readied divine vengeance. Mishpat (judgment) shows this isn't arbitrary rage but judicial execution. God's hand takes hold of judgment like a warrior grips his weapon.

**I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me** (אֶשְׁלֵם וְאֶשְׁכֵּם לְצָרֵי וְלֹמְשָׁנָאִי אֶשְׁלֵם)—ashiv naqam (render/return vengeance) and ashallem (reward/repay) are judicial terms indicating proportional retribution. God's tzarai (enemies/adversaries) and mesan'ai (haters) are those who oppose His people and purposes. This prepares for the final day when God vindicates His elect and judges those who persecuted them (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).

## Historical Context

Divine warrior imagery permeates ancient Near Eastern literature, but Israel's God fights for justice, not territorial conquest or honor. This verse describes God's future judgment on Israel's oppressors after disciplining Israel for covenant violation. The imagery recurs in prophetic literature (Isaiah 27:1; 34:5-6; Jeremiah

46:10; Ezekiel 21:9-11) and Revelation's apocalyptic battle scenes (Revelation 19:11-21), where Christ wields the sword of divine judgment.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does the certainty of God's future judgment affect your response to present injustice?
2. What does it mean that God's vengeance is always coupled with His justice and judgment, never arbitrary?

## Interlinear Text

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אֲנִי	שִׁנּוֹתַי	בְּכֶקֶד	חֶרֶב י	וְתָאֲחִז	בְּמִשְׁפַּטִּי	וְיָד י
H518	If I whet	my glittering	sword	take hold	on judgment	and mine hand
	H8150	H1300	H2719	H270	H4941	H3027
אֲשֶׁר יִב	נָקָם	לְצַח י	וְלִמְשָׁנָה י	אֲשֶׁלָּם:		
I will render	vengeance	to mine enemies	them that hate	and will reward		
H7725	H5359	H6862	H8130	H7999		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 66:16** (Word): For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

**Isaiah 27:1** (Word): In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

**Psalms 7:12** (Word): If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

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