

Fire is evident throughout the entire Bible, Genesis to Revelation...it is everywhere. You can't avoid it, nor should you try. We absolutely need the fire of God in our lives. Even science recognizes that we have fire in our bodies. We say we are "burning up" or we "burn calories" throughout the day as a human like a car burns fuel as it runs. We can sing, pray, and speak of being "on fire," "send the fire," "fire fall on us," "burn in me"...but do we have the slightest idea what we are asking for and why? We won't get it until we desire it and ask for it. Desire for it won't come until we discover why we need it.

Deuteronomy 4:24

The Lord your God is a consuming fire; He is a jealous God.

I. GOD IS A GOD OF FIRE. Fire is not God, but God **IS** fire.

A. When God created light, it came out of His fire. Our very lives depend on the biggest fire near the earth...the sun, just like our very spiritual lives depend on the fire of God.

II. GOD MANIFESTED HIMSELF IN VARIOUS FORMS OF FIRE.

A. The making of the Covenant with Abraham

Genesis 15:17

After the sun went down and darkness fell, Abram saw a smoking firepot and a flaming torch pass between the halves of the carcasses.

B. Moses and the burning bush

Exodus 3:2

There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up.

C. Pillar of fire

Exodus 13:21,22

The Lord went ahead of them. He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire. This allowed them to travel by day or by night. And the Lord did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from its place in front of the people.

D. On Sinai

Exodus 19:18

All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord had descended on it in the form of fire.

E. God answering by fire...Elijah and the prophets of Baal

I Kings 18:24,38

Then call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by setting fire to the wood is the true God!.....Immediately the fire of the Lord flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust, It even licked up all the water in the trench!

F. Sacrificial fire came from God

Leviticus 9:24

Fire blazed forth from the Lord's presence and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When the people saw this, they shouted with joy and fell face down on the ground.

G. The fire was not to ever go out. God has promised to never leave us nor forsake us, but man has the ability to neglect the fire and choose to extinguish its effect in our lives.

Leviticus 6:13

Remember, the fire must be kept burning on the altar at all times. It must never go out.

H. Many times the manifestation in fire was used as correction or destruction of evil.

Genesis 19:24

Then the Lord rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah.

I. His protection of His people

Zechariah 2:5

Then I, myself, will be a protective wall of fire around Jerusalem, says the Lord. And I will be the glory inside the city!

J. His jealousy for His sole worship

Hebrews 12:28,29

Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe. For our God is a devouring fire.

K. Trials and suffering

1 Peter 4:12

Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.

L. Jesus in His glory

Revelation 1:14

His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire.

III. WHAT IS FIRE?

A. Fire isn't anything at all. It isn't matter or its own unique matter. It's something that matter can do. Fire is the outward sign that something inside is happening....a chemical reaction. In our spiritual lives, the demonstration of fiery zeal or joy indicates something is happening inside...in the soul.

B. Friction, oxygen, and some kind of fuel (candle wax, wood, gasoline) are what makes a fire burn. When the molecules of the fuel combine with oxygen, energy is released as heat and light. When the right substances are present, and when the temperature reaches an ignition point, a fire starts. So our surrendered self, the breath of the Holy Spirit and the friction of the press of God make fire.

C. Fire takes dense matter composed of atoms and breaks them apart into simpler elements. Fire has played one of the biggest roles in our society. No manufacturing would exist without fire to break down materials and shape them into something new.

1 Peter 1:6,7

So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while.

These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

Revelation 3:17-19

17 You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. 18 So I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. Also buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness, and ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see. 19 I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference.

D. Fire purifies, sterilizes. To refine gold, you have to remove the impurities. The rock is put in a crucible. As it is heated, the rock of gold sinks to the bottom, and a man sits there with a sieve taking the scum and impurities off the top and throwing it out. He knows it is done when he can see his reflection in it.

E. Trees refer to man. The burning of wood from trees is the fuel necessary to have a fire. We are the fuel necessary to have a fire and to keep the fire stoked. We are consumed by the fire of God and just as the wood is changed to ash, we are changed.

Isaiah 61:3

To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

E. Fire changes whatever it burns into a different substance. You cannot experience the one true and living God without a change. Fire always produces change. It will force one to act, to respond.

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

F. Fire produces exposing **light** and burning **heat**. It is HOT and it burns! Not always a pleasant process, but necessary.

G. Fire is usually started by friction causing a spark to fly. With fires of anger, sparks fly and agitate or ignite others until a conflict (fire) happens. However, burning love and compassion will, in the same way, spread God's flames of kindness, melting the hearts of those around them. Both are fire and both stir emotions resulting in action. One brings death; one brings life!

H. Fires are usually noticed. They draw attention. You never have to advertise a fire. Fire gives off smoke which can be seen from far away. Fire has an aroma...so does our burning!

I. Fire spreads. Its catching! This is true whether it be the hateful fire of man's anger or the passion to bring healing, joy, and love to those around them.

J. Fire brings focus. "Fiery" trials test our faith and cause us to focus on the Lord.

K. Fire divides. Fire doesn't really permanently destroy or annihilate anything. It just stirs up the molecules until they reach a point of agitation great enough for atoms within a molecule to be released from one another.

IV. GOD'S PLAN

A. **Consuming fire** communed with man in the garden. God's plan was to get us back to Eden. Fire was always pointing to something else – dispensations of fire appearing to man (Abrahamic) and with man (Mosaic). In the New Covenant, he fashioned a body of sinless flesh, all the while purposing to send His Spirit to inhabit His people with presence and power....God in us!..**consuming fire** communing with us once again.

Ezekiel 36:24-27

"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them."

B. In the Old Testament, the sacrifice of animal flesh was consumed with fire. Now we present our bodies a living sacrifice that is acceptable because Jesus became the perfect sacrifice to end all sacrifices...a living sacrifice consumed once again by God from the inside out. The fire on the outside can now become the fire on the inside.

Jeremiah 20:9

But if I say I'll never mention the Lord or speak in his name, his word burns in my heart like a fire. Its like a fire in my bones! (shut up in my bones) I am worn out trying to hold it in! I can't do it!

Matthew 3:11

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

C. John the Baptist comes along, baptizing in water unto repentance. We have known the Holy Spirit as living water. Now we need to know him as the fire of God as well. The original Greek doesn't say with the Holy Spirit and with fire. It was "Holy Spirit fire."

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling

people about me everywhere- in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 2:1-4

On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

D. There is the fire! It sat upon each of them. When the Holy Ghost makes his entrance, there is not only a rush of wind, there is a rush of power! It's the fire that didn't consume the bush. It's the fire inside the cloud. It's the fire shut up in your bones.

James 3:6

6 And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.

L. A spark can set a forest on fire....our tongue is a flame that can set our whole world on fire...and has many times over throughout history. It has been the tongues of men and their angry words that has brought our civilization to war over and over again. And it all started with the tongue of the serpent in the garden and our mouths have been getting us in trouble ever since. It is the demonic realm that simply presents a lie to us that we buy as the truth that holds us captive to strongholds and sin. (Father of lies)

Acts 2:41

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day – about 3,000 in all.

VI. WE NEED THE FIRE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!!!!

Revelation 19:6-8

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; 8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

We, as the bride, need to make ourselves ready....surrender to the process...we need to be purified by fire.....fire of God...fire of the Holy Spirit.