

## Study 23 - IGNITED BY THE FIRE OF GOD

*“He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” (Matthew 3:11)*

### Introduction

God’s glory has many facets, and only He, in His absolute sovereignty, can decide which aspect He will manifest—and when. One aspect of His glory is “a consuming fire” (see, for example, Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29), which can descend to bring judgment on earth. But because God’s glory burns everything that is not holy, His fire also purifies and sanctifies His people who have turned from their wicked ways and who yearn to live in righteousness and justice, filled with the Holy Spirit. In the world today, spiritual darkness is becoming thicker and opposition to the spirit of Christ stronger; challenges are intensifying, and believers must be ready to meet these circumstances. We must walk in the fire of God’s presence so that we will know how to alleviate human suffering and bring people to Christ amid these momentous last days. God’s fire is not for those who do not desire to live holy and pure lives. The people of Israel were afraid of this fire, and the root of that fear was their unwillingness to pay the price demanded by it. This attitude can be seen today among believers in the church of Christ. Many people reject God’s revivals, power, glory, and miracles because they are afraid of His presence and because they do not want to pay the price required to keep His fire burning. In this study, we will explore what is meant by the fact that God is an all-consuming fire. Furthermore, we will learn what it means for us to be full of the Holy Spirit and His fire. We will come to understand the purpose for the fire of His presence, what it produces in us, and how to keep it burning. This will encourage us to go and gather the great and final harvest of souls prepared by the Lord before His coming.

### Study Questions Part I: The Fire of God

- In the previous chapter, we learned that the Lord taught Moses to revere His presence by telling him to take off his sandals in recognition of the holy ground on which he was standing.
  - In what form did Moses initially encounter the manifestation of God’s presence through the “Angel of the LORD”? (Exodus 3:2)

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- From where did the Lord speak to Moses? (Verse 4b)

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***When Moses had the experience with the burning bush, he received the fire of God’s presence.***

- What continual reminder of the fire of God was with the nation of Israel? (Exodus 13:21b)
- In what manner did the glory of the Lord appear to the Israelites at the top of Mount Sinai? (Exodus 24:17)
- What did Moses tell the Israelites after urging them to heed the covenant the Lord had made with them and not to turn to idolatry? (Deuteronomy 4:24)
- In the book of Isaiah, the Lord’s holiness and justice are described as “devouring fire” and “everlasting burnings.” (See Isaiah 30:27, 30; 33:14.) What did Isaiah say about who is able to dwell with this type of fire? Complete the following:

Isaiah 33:15a: “He who \_\_\_\_\_ .”

- What are we taught by the grace of God that brings salvation? (Titus 2:12)

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**Many people want to be holy but do not want to pay the price of being sanctified.**

7. (a) What is a major aspect of God's will for us? Complete the following:

1 Thessalonians 4:3: "For this is the will of God, your \_\_\_\_\_."

(b) What did Paul pray that the God of peace would do in a complete way for the Thessalonians? (1 Thessalonians 5:23a)

(c) List the three aspects of the human makeup, which Paul desired would be preserved blameless in the Thessalonians at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Verse 23b)

(d) Who would accomplish this preservation, and why? (Verse 24)

8. Who is our Advocate with the Father when we sin and fail to live in righteousness and holiness? (1 John 2:1b)

### **Part II: Jesus Came to Bring Power and Fire**

9. In what two ways did John say that Jesus would baptize us? (Matthew 3:11b)

**KEY DEFINITION:** The Greek word for "baptize" in Matthew 3:11 is *baptizo*, which means "to dip" and "to make fully wet." This word was used to describe the event of a boat being covered or submerged by a great wave, and this is essentially what happens when we are baptized in water by immersion. We are completely covered, totally submerged underwater. The same experience occurs when we are baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire. We are submerged in the consuming fire of the presence of God so that it affects our whole being.

10. What did Jesus say He had come to send on the earth? (Luke 12:49)

11. What did Jesus tell His disciples they would be endued with when "the Promise," the Holy Spirit, came upon them? (Luke 24:49b; Acts 1:8a)

**You cannot impart the fire until you have a burning-bush experience.**

12. What would be the result of this enduement? (Acts 1:8b)

**KEY DEFINITION:** The Greek word translated "power" in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8 is *dunamis*, meaning "force" or "miraculous power." This is the word from which we derive the terms *dynamic* and *dynamite*, with the implication of "explosive power."

13. This enduement of power was noticeable in the disciples as they preached the good news of the kingdom and performed healings and miracles in Jesus' name. What did some people in Thessalonica who opposed the disciples say about them? (Acts 17:6b)

14. What does the Holy Spirit do in the world through our witness and the miraculous works we perform in His power? (John 16:8)

**The individual with an experience of God's power is no longer at the mercy of anyone's opinion.**

The burning bush that Moses saw was not consumed because the fire of God never burns out. This manifestation pointed to the eternity of the Lord and to the passion for God that would burn in the heart of Moses. Moses' heart had been transformed forever in his experience with the burning bush. God released in him the same passion He had to deliver the people of Israel, who were being held captive in Egypt. One moment in the fire of God led Moses to deliver a people whom he had not delivered in eighty years, even though he had tried to do so in his own strength as a young man. Moses became a faithful friend of God, a leader of millions, a man zealous to do the will of his Lord— performing miracles, signs, and wonders by God's hand and speaking with Him face-to-face. None of this would have taken place, or would have been even remotely imaginable, without the burning-bush experience. It was only after this encounter that he was able to believe, rise up, and lead an entire nation to receive its inheritance in the Promised Land. This change was caused by the fire of the presence of God!

You can have a similar experience. God is the living God who continues to do miracles among His people. He has a special mission for you to carry out—the reason why you were created—and He will give you His fire to empower you to see it through, a fire that will never burn out. Whatever you have been unable to do up until now, you will do with the fire of God.

### **Prayer of Activation**

Father of glory, thank You for all the students who are learning about Your glory through this Bible study. May those who have never before been filled with power through the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues be filled right now. Release the fire of Your presence to everyone who hungers for it. Submerge and ignite them in it. May they be filled with Your power and fire! We have absolute faith that Your fire is burning within us right now. In the name of Jesus, amen!

### **Action Steps**

- ▽ Whenever you seem to lose your fire and passion for God, ask the Holy Spirit to release that fire and passion within you once again. Use Psalm 139:23–24 as your prayer, and ask the Lord to search your heart for any wrong attitudes so that you can repent and return to Him.
- ▽ When you experience the fire of God's presence, do not be afraid, knowing that it is for your sanctification, not your condemnation. Respond in submission, humility, faith, and obedience.
- ▽ Once the fire of God is ignited in you, go as an instrument of the Lord and be a witness of Jesus. Tell others about the gospel of salvation in Jesus, pray for and lay hands on the sick for healing, and cast out demons. Seek to use the various spiritual gifts and abilities that God has given you, as the Spirit works through you.