



Judeo-Christian Clarion

Pentecost: The Feast of Fire



We want to look at the Feast of Pentecost in a different way today. I am sure that everyone knows about what happened on the day of Pentecost. **Acts 2:1-4** tells us,

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

Tongues of fire that did not burn; fire that was dividing and distributing itself upon the heads of those who were in this place on this Pentecost day: today we want to look at what I am calling "Holy Fire."

When we think of fire we usually think of the destruction fire causes, and yet we see that there is a fire that does not bring about destruction. Let's look at a few scriptures.

Exodus 3:2 tells us about Moses who, when tending his father-in-law's sheep, came across a certain bush. "The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a fire blazing from the middle of a bush. He looked and saw that although the bush was flaming with fire, yet the bush was not being burned up." Moses was witnessing Holy Fire. In fact, God tells him this in **verse 5**: "Don't come any closer! Take your sandals off your feet, because the place where you are standing is holy ground." Holy Fire is the very presence of God.

Exodus 13:21 tells us this about how God separated his people from the Egyptians that first night: "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead

them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night." Just a pillar of fire that never spread: this can only be Holy Fire.

Let's look at the first Pentecost day, which was 50 days after the first Passover when the Israelites left Egypt.

Exodus 19:16-18 tells us this:

On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.

When God descended, that mountain became holy, and the people had been warned not to touch the mountain. Once again we see that the fire did not destroy the mountain. The fire was Holy Fire.

We can not forget Elijah who was taken up in a chariot of fire. **1 Kings 2:11-12** says,

As they were walking along and talking, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. As Elisha was watching, he was crying out, "Avi! Avi! The chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" Then he saw him no more. So he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

How can you have a chariot and horses of fire? It can only be the Holy Fire of God.

Let's look at one more scripture, **Daniel 3:13-27**.

Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; then these men were brought before the king. Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, very well. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. He commanded certain valiant warriors who were in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in order to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire. Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their other clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire. For this reason, because the king's command was urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire still tied up. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king." He said, "Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!" Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, come out, you

servants of the Most High God, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the midst of the fire. The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them.

So why were those Hebrew children not consumed by the fire? Because when God entered into that furnace with them, that fire now became holy fire. We see one interesting detail in this account. According to the King James Version, it speaks of the appearance of the fourth man as having the appearance of one like the Son of God. We are going to take a closer look at this.

Ezekiel 1:22-28 tells us,

Now over the heads of the living beings there was something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, spread out over their heads. Under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward the other; each one also had two wings covering its body on the one side and on the other. I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings. And there came a voice from above the expanse that was over their heads; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings. Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, *was a figure with the appearance of a man. Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him.* As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such

was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

Ezekiel gives us here a description of God having a figure and an appearance of a man. Yet we know that God is spirit as we are told in **John 4:24**, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." So how can all of this be? How can God have a figure of a man and be total fire and yet be a spirit? There is so much that we do not know about the spiritual realm, and yet there is so much that we do know from the Scriptures.

Hebrews 8:5 tells us this regarding the Tabernacle: "They (the priests) serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the Tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'" We see here that there is an identical, eternal Tabernacle in heaven.

Isaiah tells us what he saw.

I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

(Isaiah 6:1-4)

This sounds like it could be on earth, doorposts and thresholds and smoke, and yet this is in the spiritual realm.

Let's explain all of this. God is fire: a spiritual fire, a holy fire. When man connects with God, his eyes can see into the spiritual realm so that he can see God. So God gave us spiritual eyes to see and spiritual ears to hear so that we can look into the spiritual realm because we, too, have a spirit; but when God comes down to man, then God has to have a physical element, such as fire and smoke and peals of lightning and thunder, so we can see Him with our physical eyes, and yet we do not actually see Him.

This is what happened on Mount Sinai. The people heard the sound of God, but they only saw the smoke. **Deuteronomy 4:12-13** tells us, "You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, a mountain blazing with fire to the heavens, with black clouds and deep darkness. And the LORD spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; there was only a voice." Later, when the Ten Commandments were given to Moses, Moses asked God to allow Him to see His face as recorded in **Exodus 33:18-23**.

Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory." And the Lord said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But," He said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live." Then the Lord said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

Hebrews 12:26-29 says this:

At that time his voice shook the earth, but now He has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a

kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."

As we have seen, God is fire, but His Holy Fire does not consume His people. But God has a side of Him that will consume the wicked as He did when He consumed Sodom and Gomorrah. But we, God's people, must desire God's Holy Fire. That is what the people received on the day of Pentecost at Mt Sinai. You may ask, "How"? They received God's Holy Fire when they received God's Torah (His teachings). The Hasidic Jews believe that when God spoke the Ten Commandments, He spoke it in all 70 known languages, and that His words created sparks of fire; and when we speak God's words, they also create spiritual sparks of fire.

God's Word is light. The Menorah was the only light in the temple, and it was a seven-branched candelabra. The Menorah represented the Messiah. **Isaiah 11:1-2** says this about Messiah, who is the Light of Life: "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." So these seven flames or sparks from the Menorah (which was called the Light of the World) also tell us about that day in Jerusalem when those tongues of fire appeared upon the 120 people that had been praying for the Holy Spirit, the Counselor, in the upper room for those ten days. When they received the Holy Spirit with those tongues of fire upon them, they spoke in those 70 languages so all could understand. **Acts 2:5-12** tells us,

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and

Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

Peter’s words on the day of Pentecost created those sparks of fire that resulted in 3,000 people accepting Messiah that day, as it tells us in **Acts 2:14-41**.

How about you? Are you praying that God uses you to create those sparks of fire? Today on Pentecost, ask God for His Holy Fire and go out to all the world and set the world on fire speaking God’s truth, His Word.

Happy Pentecost!