

TWO BIG QUESTIONS

The Fire of God



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Our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:29 (ESV)

Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

Jeremiah 23:29 (ESV)

1. FIRE REVEALS

Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him.

1 Kings 16:30 (NIV)

"Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

"I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals. Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mt Carmel. And bring the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

So, Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mt Carmel.

Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, then follow Him; but if Baal is God, then follow him."

But the people said nothing.

Then Elijah said to them... "Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire - he is God."

1 Kings 18:16-24 (NIV)

They called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "Baal answer us!" they shouted.

But there was no response; no one answered....

At noon Elijah began to taunt them.

"Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened."

So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.

Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

1 Kings 18:26-29 (NIV)

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Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

1 Kings 18:36-38 (NIV)

2. FIRE DESTROYS

Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.

Romans 6:5 (NLT)

3. FIRE REFINES

Turn eastward and hide in the Kerith ravine, east of the Jordan. You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.

So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

1 Kings 17:3-6 (NIV)

The day is coming when you will have it all - life healed and whole.

I know how great this makes you feel, even though you have to put up with every kind of aggravation in the meantime.

Pure gold put in the fire comes out of it proved pure.

Genuine faith put through this suffering comes out proved genuine. When Jesus wraps this all up, it's your faith, not your gold, that God will have on display as evidence of His victory.

1 Peter 1:5-7 (MSG)