**TRIED BY FIRE**

Attention Christians! The refining fire of God is coming to the church in America! Initially we find God’s refining fire mentioned in the Old Testament:

Malachi 3:2-3 – *“But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand*

*when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire And like launderers’ soap. He*

*will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And*

*purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord An offering in*

*righteousness.*

The purpose of the refining fire is to purify and purge God’s people of what is not acceptable to Him and what is not permitted in His Kingdom which is soon to come to this earth. This fire is referred to again in the New Testament; specifically to the church in these last days.

Revelation 3:18 – *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

 Since this last of the seven churches in Revelation is representative of the church in the last days we need to hear and understand the Lord’s warning to it as stated above. Note what Jesus says to the Laodicean church is not a command but a “counsel”, as in the advice of an attorney (advocate) of what is needed to be done in order to avoid a judgment.

 Christ’s complaint against this end-time church is obviously about its “materialism” and self-centeredness with success and prosperity that resulted in their spiritual luke-warmness which makes Him want to vomit.

Revelation 3:16-17 – *So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

 The Lord’s counsel is to pay the price of submitting to the fiery trials of God which purge and purify. The end result of the fire of God is that people “seek first the kingdom of God” rather than their material interests. The fire challenges their faith and faithfulness to develop beyond its current level. As faith and faithfulness arise so does their spiritual quality and dependence on Him rather than that which is of the world.

1 Peter 1:6-7 – *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of* ***your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire****, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

 What needs to be burned off and eliminated from the church are the false preachers (prophets) and the effects of believing their false doctrines which bring in the things of the world into the church. The Laodicean church fell prey to the false doctrines of men and demons.

1 Timothy 4:1 – *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons*,

Ephesians 4:14 – *That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in the cunning craftiness whereby they lie in want to deceive,*

Matthew 24:4-5 – *And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,* (an anointed one)*’ and* ***will deceive many****.*

Matthew 7:21-23 – *Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many* (preachers/prophets) *will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not* (preached) *prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice iniquity!’*

 Such false preachers (prophets) bring in damnable heresies that become accepted doctrines in the end time churches causing people to believe and accept as standard many unbiblical teachings and observe ungodly rituals and practices. This includes wrong holidays and festivities while at the same time ignoring God’s Holy days and festivities.

 This writer recently finished a study of the Lord’s warnings to the church as found in the New Testament under the words: “*beware*” and “*take heed*”. The majority of these warnings have to do with false prophets (preachers) and false doctrines, followed by warnings against sin and unrighteousness. Thus we see the definite need for the fire of God to burn away such in the church and believers lives.

 Christ is looking for a church that is clean and spotless, one which looks like Him and adequately represents Him in the earth – before He comes.

Ephesians 5:27 – *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

1 John 3:2 – *beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

 In addition to the fire of God that is to burn off the useless chaff of materialism, false worship, false doctrines and sinful behavior we are also told to be clothed with *white raiment* which represents Christ’s righteousness so that our fleshly carnal nature is no longer visible but we have the appearance of Christ. In addition we are counseled to apply eye salve to our eyes to allow us to see clearly. What we are to see clearly is TRUTH, HIS TRUTH. This is to allow us to recognize what is of God and what is of the world and of Satan. Then we can walk in the fullness of Christ and be led of His Spirit rather than after the lusts of the flesh.

 Yes, the Fire of the Lord is for His church to experience in order to prepare it for His coming. Our God is a consuming fire, and actually you should want this fire to purge and purify you – it will be a trial, but it will not harm you.

Hebrews 12:29 – *For our God is a consuming fire.*

 He wants everything that hinders your walk with Him to be consumed - burned up and burned out; everything that does not belong in you or in His kingdom. Search yourselves! How badly will you be burned? Will there be anything left of you after His fire?

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 – *each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

 If you are where you ought to be in Him and conformed to His image, and if you are being the light of the world and the salt of the earth, if Christ has been formed in you, then the fire will have no effect on you as nothing needs to be burned off. He is desirous of having His whole church prepared for Him.

Revelation 3:19 – *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*

 Why the need for Christians to experience the fire of the Lord? It is due to the failure of the preaching the full Word of God that requires believers to put off the old man, the flesh. If we fail to put it off then the Lord has to burn it off; and it has to be done before His return.

Romans 13:11-14 – *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

Galatians 5:24 – *And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

Ephesians 4:21-24 *– if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

Colossians 3:8-10 – *But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,*

 Note that these verses are written to the churches in these vicinities. If you do need to be purged and are willing to submit to the fire of God, you need not fear for it will not hurt you. That fire is to burn off the outer man of the flesh while the inner man is renewed (born aagain) unto Him by the blood if Jesus. We should welcome this flesh purifying fire.

Isaiah 43:1-2 – *But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He*

*who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you*

*by your name; You are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with*

*you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through*

*the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame kindle upon you.*

1 Peter 4:12 – *Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;*

 Be prepared, the fire is approaching America and its churches. Embrace the fire, do not try to avoid it!