

# PENTECOST- THE GOD WHO ANSWERS BY FIRE!!

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

## Famous showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal!!

**1 Kings 18:20-39** <sup>20</sup> So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. <sup>21</sup> And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word. <sup>22</sup> Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. <sup>23</sup> Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. <sup>24</sup> Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God." So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken." <sup>25</sup> Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it." <sup>26</sup> So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made. <sup>27</sup> And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened." <sup>28</sup> So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. <sup>29</sup> And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention. <sup>30</sup> Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. <sup>31</sup> And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." <sup>32</sup> Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. <sup>33</sup> And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, "Fill four water pots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood." <sup>34</sup> Then he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time; and he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. <sup>35</sup> So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water. <sup>36</sup> And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. <sup>37</sup> Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again." <sup>38</sup> Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. <sup>39</sup> Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!"

I want you to know:

- Our God is alive
- He sits on the throne and is exalted above every other God!
- He still answers prayer, and He answers with Fire

Think about it:

- Other religions make their gods and feed their gods and protect their gods
- Our God made us, watches over us, feeds us and protects us!
- Other religions don't ask their gods for anything because they are dead .... Can't answer

**Psalms 115:2-11** <sup>2</sup> Why should the Gentiles say, "So where is their God?" <sup>3</sup> But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. <sup>4</sup> Their idols are silver and gold, The work of men's hands. <sup>5</sup> They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; <sup>6</sup> They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell; <sup>7</sup> They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat. <sup>8</sup> Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them. <sup>9</sup> O Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. <sup>10</sup> O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. <sup>11</sup> You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield.

Our God is alive!

In the first passage we see:

- A whole nation undecided
- An entire nation gripped by idol worship
- A generation too afraid to stand for their God!
- Until Elijah challenges them

:21<sup>21</sup> And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word.

:24<sup>24</sup> Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God." So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."

- This is not the time to sit on the fence, double minded with one foot in the world and the other in the church
- This is not the time to be silent
- This is not the time to become lukewarm, returning to former things
  
- There are too many silent reserved Christians around who practice the doctrine of apologetics
  
- To many weak Christians that have gone back to former things ... the very things God saved them from, because they are not living in the fire of the Holy Spirit

For many:

- Old junk is back
- Old man is back
  - Old racist
  - Stingy person
  - Critical person
  - Depressed man
  - The old victim mindset
  - Feeling sorry for yourself
  - Gossiper
  - Inferiority complex
  - Angry man – weakness in the flesh

The old man is back because they are no longer living at the altar of surrender where the fire burns!

There is no substitute for the fire of God in your life!

Need to stay on the Altar!!!

**Romans 12 : 1 - 2**<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The problem with many Christians is that they are too much of a living sacrifice ... jumps of altar before the fire falls!!

- Family we are living in an urgent hour
- We cannot afford to play church
- Our world is going to hell .... Literally
- Our world is in turmoil
- We are living in a sick world

It is a sign of the end times – Matt 24

**Isaiah 59: 19b** When the enemy comes in like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

- The church on fire is God's standard
- He is raising up to push back the tide of darkness
- Therefore we are the hope of the world, but if we lose our flavor how will it be seasoned?

**Matthew 5: 13 – 16** <sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. <sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup>Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

In Matt 3 Jesus promised a baptism of fire

**Matthew 3:11-12** <sup>11</sup> I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

- God's fire in your life will burn out the works of the flesh

In Acts 2, on the day the church is birthed in fire!

**Acts 2: 1 - 4, 12 – 21** <sup>1</sup> When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

<sup>3</sup> Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

<sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**:12 - 21** <sup>12</sup> So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?” <sup>13</sup> Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.” <sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. <sup>15</sup> For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. <sup>16</sup> But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: <sup>17</sup> ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. <sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. <sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. <sup>21</sup> And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved.’

After the fire falls, again a dividing line people had to choose!

**Acts 2: 3 - 19** <sup>3</sup> Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup> And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and was confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup> Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?

<sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?

<sup>9</sup> Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues

the wonderful works of God.”<sup>12</sup> So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”<sup>13</sup> Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.<sup>15</sup> For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.<sup>16</sup> But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:<sup>17</sup> ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.<sup>18</sup> And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.<sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

When the fire of God fell, these men and women were forever changed

- Fueled by the love of God for their world
- Passionate about the kingdom of God unstoppable in their purpose
- Committed to their mission “To make disciples”

They were true followers to the end – not just fans for a moment  
Not only were they changed, they also changed their world  
They became an unstoppable force in the hand of God and they turned their world upside down

When the Holy Spirit fell on these first 120 believers

- They were changed forever
- They were instantly turned into powerful witnesses for Jesus

**Acts 1:8**<sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

**Two words:**

- Power (Greek) – “Dunamis”, miracle working power
- Witness (Greek) – “Martus” Martyr - A person who sacrifices something of great value and especially life itself for the sake of others or a principle!!

After Peter was baptized in the Holy Spirit he was totally transformed into a bold witness for Jesus  
Having been a coward, he now transformed into a courageous man  
An uneducated man now boldly turning the world upside down for Jesus

We need reformers and not conformers in:

- Government
- Business
- Economy
- Mining Industry
- Education

We need a moral transformation among you're your people and not condomns!

- Abstinence and not protection

We need men and woman that:

- Carry the fire of God
- Who will not bow to the system of this world
- Not yield to peek pressure

Too many Christians want to water down the significance and importance of Pentecost and the baptism of fire!

- Satan does not mind weak, powerless, self-centered Christianity that changes nothing
- He doesn't mind lukewarm Christians, cause they are no threat to him

**2 Timothy 3:5**<sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

The world out there do not need a dead, religious church, they need a church full of the Holy Spirit and Power!

The early church was birthed in power.  
They were all baptized in the Holy Spirit

- Fire sat on each of them
- They all spoke with other tongues
- They started preaching and prophesying

What are speaking in tongues all about?

- It is about the infilling of the Holy Spirit
- It is about being baptized in the power of the Holy Spirit
- It enables you to remain filled with the Spirit

**Acts 10: 44 – 48**<sup>44</sup> While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.<sup>45</sup> And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.<sup>46</sup> For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,<sup>47</sup> “Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?”<sup>48</sup> And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

**Acts 19: 1 – 6**<sup>1</sup> And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples<sup>2</sup> he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”<sup>3</sup> And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.”<sup>4</sup> Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”<sup>5</sup> When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>6</sup> And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

**Mark 16 : 15 – 20**<sup>15</sup> And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.<sup>16</sup> He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.<sup>17</sup> And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;<sup>18</sup> they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”<sup>19</sup> So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.<sup>20</sup> And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

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