

Stacey Campbell
September, 2009

Days of Fire

1 Gather yourselves together, yes, gather, O nation without shame,

*2 Before the decree takes effect-- The day passes like the chaff--
 Before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger
 comes upon you.*

*3 Seek the LORD,
 All you humble of the earth
 Who have carried out His ordinances; Seek righteousness, seek humility.
 Perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the LORD'S anger.*

Zephaniah 2:1-3

It is very clear that we have entered a new spiritual season. Just as summer turns to fall in the natural, so in the Spirit there are different “times and seasons.” Jesus castigated the Pharisees for being able to forecast the weather, but being completely unable to tell what was going on in the Spirit.

And [Jesus] was also saying to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming,’ and so it turns out. And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, ‘It will be a hot day,’ and it turns out that way. You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?” Luke 12:54-56 NASB)

So the question is, “How should we analyze this present time?” I find myself vacillating between great faith and grave concern from day to day. The global season we are entering will not be fixed quickly, no matter who becomes the next President of the United States. The leader the Americans choose will exacerbate or mitigate the issues that are coming at us in this hour of history, but the leader cannot stop the process that has already begun. It is imperative that we discern what God is doing in North America now, so that as the Church, we are building new wineskins for the a time of fire. It is believers who must give leadership as the days of fire manifest.

When John the Baptist prophesied about Jesus, he foresaw that Jesus would bring two distinct baptisms, which would manifest in different seasons.

Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ, John answered and said to them all. “As for me,

I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Luke 3:15-17 NASB)

If we follow through with when these two baptisms occurred, we will see that they were for two different purposes and were primarily lived out in two different spiritual seasons. Jesus began His ministry when the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form like a dove. This was His baptism in the Holy Spirit. The very first miracle Jesus performed after this, according to John 2:12, was the miracle of changing the water into wine. This is significant because in Acts 2, baptism of the Spirit is compared to being drunk with wine. Jesus’ first miracle saw the shift from water to wine, from the baptism of John to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then Jesus moves into a 3-year season of unprecedented miracles, with large crowds following Him most everywhere He went.

Interestingly, the ministry of the Church also began with the baptism of the Spirit in Acts 2 – a baptism likened unto wine, manifested in the disciples appearing drunk. Peter’s explanation is that they were “filled with the Spirit.” Notably, this baptism of the Spirit was also a season of wine, followed by an incredible outpouring of miracles and salvations.

But both in the life of Jesus and in the life of the New Testament Church, the baptism of the Spirit preceded the baptism of fire. The baptism of the Spirit inaugurated a season of power and miracles. It was a season of wine – of joy and the power of God’s presence. But, as the ‘wine wears off,’ so to speak, Jesus begins to talk about what the baptism of fire will look like:

I have come to cast fire upon the earth and how I wish it were already kindled. But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law. (Luke 12:49-53 NASB)

Again, both in the life of Jesus and in the life of the Early Church, the subsequent baptism of fire did not look anything like what the season of wine looked like.

The days of fire were marked by division, persecution, and great sifting. In the days of fire, Jesus takes out His winnowing fork and begins to “thoroughly clear His threshing floor.” The baptism of fire is when all of the chaff is burned up in unquenchable fire as the Consuming Fire searches the hearts of men. It is a refining time, where He purifies His bride, removing the spots and wrinkles, burning up the wood, the hay and the stubble till only pure gold remains.

In the past few years, the contemporary Church has also experienced a season of wine. A

global outpouring of the Spirit, manifested in laughter, drunkenness, miracles and myriad salvations hit the earth for a lengthy season. But the times are changing. The days of fire are now upon us. In Jesus' life, fire signified a very painful time, but even so, it was the days of fire that Jesus longed for. He wished for this purifying fire to be kindled. He was distressed until the baptism of fire was accomplished. He wanted it to happen and He was not afraid of it. This is the attitude that we must all cultivate in this hour. We must wish for the fire to burn us, to refine and sift the wheat from the chaff in our personal lives, as well as in the Church worldwide. Undoubtedly this sifting will manifest in division, because that is what Jesus said the fire would do. Fire does not bring peace, but division, to even the closest of relationships (Luke 12:52-53).

The season of fire will see a new wineskin emerge that is made to hold fire, not wine. Unquestionably, therefore, the prayer movement will be at the forefront of the next global move of God. Only those who can stay awake in their Gethsemanes will endure this season without faltering. We must enter into the labor of prayer. Even though we may deeply understand intimacy with God, this is no guarantee that we will endure the days of fire. John the Beloved knew intimacy, but he fell asleep at the time of prayer, and as a result even he stumbled along with the other disciples, leaving Jesus and fleeing naked in His hour of fire (Mark 14:50, 51). The only one who stayed awake in the prayer meeting was the only one who "endured to the end" in the season of fire (ie: Jesus Himself). This is a lesson to all of us. The days ahead will not look like the days we have already lived. The season has changed. And we must change with it. We must build wineskins that can "take the heat."

Those who have prepared their hearts so that they burn from the inside out will emerge in this season as burning men. A whole new type of leader is being prepared to be at the forefront of the season of fire.

(Heb 1:7 AMP) Referring to the angels He says, [God] Who makes His angels winds and His ministering servants flames of fire; [Ps. 104:4.]

There are burning men and burning women who have prepared their hearts in prayer to lead in overcoming faith while whole nations are catapulted into fear and chaos. Last year, I prophesied that "the god of Mammon would fall in North America in 2008." God, whose name is Jealous, will ensure that He alone is our source and prove that His grace is sufficient for us all. The ministers of fire will deeply understand this because they are already completely set apart and burning, ready to bring the answer in the middle of the sifting, division and rampant fear in this hour. Those who only know part of God may be confused, especially as things in the natural disintegrate in 2009. Prepare your heart now because terror is about to strike the hearts of men like never before. A convergence of an even greater level of economic crisis, natural disaster and terrorist attacks are set to hit North America. God promised that everything that can be shaken will be shaken. We must remember that the God who baptizes us with His Spirit (wine) is the same God who baptizes us with fire. He is immutable, immortal, and the only wise God. He knows what He is doing. He will never, ever leave us or forsake us. But He will divide us based on what is in our hearts. He will purify us till nothing but gold

remains. Remember, “all things work together for our good.” It will be in the place of prayer that we will find understanding, courage and overcoming power to make sense of this season.

When Jesus sends out his disciples in Matthew 10, three times in 6 verses he says, “Do not fear.” Faith comes from the Word of God, and as we pray the Bible, faith will rise to both endure and overcome in the days of fire. God is good ...all the time. In every season, He is both our example and source. So, fix your eyes on Jesus to prepare to lead others to understand the days of fire. Set yourself apart to prepare a new wineskin in your personal life for this new and very different season. We all have the same invitation and opportunity to give solutions when old structures and disintegrating and natural and man-made disasters are increasing. God will tell you what the solutions are for your spheres of influence. If you prepare your heart, He will give you the overcoming revelation for yourself and all those around you. Get close to God. Look into His eyes of fire. And let your heart burn as you touch His fiery presence.