



## When You Go Through the Fire

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

August 2014

Dear Friend of Mary Craig Ministries,

One thing I was never told as a new believer in Christ was that I would “go through the fire.” Until I experienced it (and my circumstances would differ from yours because everything with God is tailor-made just for you), many passages in Scripture made little sense. I knew of them, but I didn’t KNOW them. Nevertheless, Scripture is there to prepare us through warnings and admonishments, examples and testimonies, so that when things happen to us, we can trust the Living God when He says, for example:

*But now thus says the LORD that created you, O Jacob, and He that 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; neither shall the flame kindle upon you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, the Savior; ...I have loved you...Isaiah 43:1-4.*

God gave to a redeemed people His fiery Law.

*And he [Moses] said, the LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Param, and He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Deuteronomy 33:2*

The Law’s purpose was/is to show what love looks like; to establish the boundaries of life and death; to protect and preserve the life of the community; to maintain God’s holiness, and to delineate what would violate that and His Person. Pentecost remembers the giving of the Law at Sinai. The Holy Spirit at His great appearing manifested as tongues of fire upon the people in answer to the prophetic word and Jesus’ promise. (Matthew 3:11; John 16:7-11). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Burning and the Spirit of Judgment. God’s holy love sanctifies, consumes,

and surrounds the believer. God is zealous for His righteousness, for His glory; in love He moves against all that He judges to be deadly, destructive to life, darkness, harmful, disastrous to the soul, “in His face,” standing in the way of right relationship with Him. His wrath is a furious anger burning against all that opposes Him, His nature and His ways. John Stott calls the wrath of God “the agony of rejected love.”

In Numbers 21:6, 8 we read of God sending out fiery serpents among the people. The people confessed that they had sinned and spoken against the LORD and against Moses. Only as Moses obeyed the instruction of the LORD to take a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole so that those who looked upon it might live, did a person live, prefiguring Christ. (Numbers 21:6-9; cf John 3:14-16)

God’s intent is to burn out sin. God’s love is a fiery love as His love is as a blazing fire, a mighty flame, the Flame of Yah (Song of Songs 8:6). The Seraphim seen by Isaiah stood above the throne of God saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. (Isaiah 6:2, 3; see also Revelation 4:8) The result of Isaiah’s experience of seeing the LORD high and lifted up was to declare himself a man of unclean lips dwelling in the midst of a people of unclean lips. One of the seraphim flew to him and placed a live coal from off the altar upon Isaiah’s mouth to take from him his iniquity and to purge his sin.

Seraphim (the root word *sarap* means “to burn”) burn with a passion for the God they serve, a God who is holy.

Hebrews tells us that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, that God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 10:31, 12:29) He chastens (makes pure; purifies) His own for we are called to be holy as God is holy. Fire symbolizes judgment; but it also symbolizes God’s favor and Presence. (e.g. Exodus 13:21) Remember, it is through judgment that deliverance comes.

Therefore, we are not to be surprised at the fiery trials/ordeals coming to try or test us as though it were some strange thing happening to us. (1 Peter 4:12-19) Believers move in their Christian walk from suffering the consequences of sin to suffering persecution for their faith in Christ, for doing the right thing. Persecution is a fire; believers can expect it. (Matthew 5:11, 12; 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12; 2 Timothy 3:12) Peter encourages believers with the fact that they are kept by the power of God.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ... 1 Peter 1:3-7*

The fire of true love is unquenchable. God loves without a lie; His is a true love. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to serve the gods of Babylon or worship the golden image of

Nebuchadnezzar. For this they were thrown into a fiery furnace bound; but four men loose were seen walking in the midst of the fire, unharmed, “and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” We can be encouraged by their example in Daniel chapter three.

The Living Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, is the Flame of Yah. Nothing totally extinguishes His love. (Hosea 2:14-23; Exodus 20:5; Exodus 34:14; Deuteronomy 6:15) God is a jealous God, jealous for His people, moving when we give to another something that rightly belongs to Him. God will guard and keep what is His.

Another fire that cannot be extinguished is the fire of tenderness. Jesus fulfills Isaiah 42, one of the “servant songs,” as of Him it might be said, “A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory.” (Matthew 12:20) God sanctifies, but with tenderness; in this He differs from tyrannical dictators, even though Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Pride and disputing get in the way of the full force of God’s love. Self-glorification; confidence in the flesh (2 Chronicles 26:15, 16); fear of man; the mingling of strange fire upon the altar of God, etc. (Leviticus 10:1ff) dampen the fire of the Holy Spirit and can result in disobedience to the Spirit’s promptings. Fiery darts of the evil one [wicked] (Ephesians 6:16) must be quenched by taking the shield of faith against them. Jesus is that Shield, for it is His faith that prevails. (For more on Jesus as the Shield of Faith see <http://www.marycraig.org/NewsViews/IAmYourShield.htm> .)

The lust of the flesh burns within a soul, making temptation a fire. The Tempter comes in to fuel things up the wrong way; that we might drift, doubt, disobey, and die. (James 1:12-18; James 4:1-10) Then, we might be tempted to quit, to curse God, to resort to things abominable to God, to take matters into our own hands alone, to become bitter, to wallow in self-pity, etc. because of frustration, feelings of being overwhelmed, not knowing what to do. Flee. (2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Cor. 10:14) Know this:

*There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13*

God tests our hearts against the Standard, Jesus Christ, to see how we’re progressing in our sanctification as to the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5). God is for life, that we might live. This benefits us, enabling us to draw close to God, humble ourselves, ask for God to grant repentance, resist the devil, and find grace and favor in our time of need, or in a timely way. (James 4:6-10; 2 Timothy 2:25, 26; Hebrews 4:16)

Believe in Jesus. Believe Jesus. Believe what Jesus believes.

Nothing can totally extinguish the fire of God’s love which is shed abroad in the heart of the believer by the Holy Spirit given to him/her. (Romans 5:5) Christ died for the ungodly. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and so being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. If we have received the atonement, we should be joyful in our salvation.



Today Christians are being persecuted in record numbers for their faith. Some are told to convert to Islam, pay a tax, leave within so many hours, or be executed. Those that leave find themselves robbed of their possessions. Their churches are desecrated and destroyed. Others find laws and changes in tax structures a form of oppression against them and people of faith in general. Freedom of religion is gradually being re-termed freedom of worship.

Sentiment against Christians is growing, and believers need to be ready, watch, pray, and build themselves up in their most holy faith. Be cautioned against great swelling words. Be worshipful, rejoicing always and thankful in every circumstance. Be an overcomer; strive by God's grace, to be a faithful witness to Jesus Christ even unto death. When you go through the fire, come forth as gold. And don't let anyone or anything take your crown!

May God be gracious to you and grant to you perseverance and endurance.

In His Name, for His glory, by His grace,

Mary Craig

Mary Craig, D. Min.

*Now may the God of [the] peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

*Hebrews 13:20, 21*

© 2014 Mary Craig Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved.

P.S. Thank you for giving to MCM! Donate: Mary Craig Ministries, Inc., P. O. Box 4610, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33338-4610 or through PayPal® online at [www.marycraig.org](http://www.marycraig.org). Go to [marycraig.org](http://marycraig.org) for the latest articles and words received. Take a look and see all that God is doing through this ministry, in world missions, in evangelism, the Barnabas Project, Craighthouse® Christian Fellowship, home visitation, Kinetic Koinonia, media, Bible study books available through the [online Catalog](#), and more. Worship with us 4:30 p.m. Sundays. Grow and flourish in small group ministry at Craighthouse® Christian Fellowship, located in the Pompano Plaza at 114 E. Mc Nab Road, Pompano Beach, FL 33060. Log on to [www.craighthouse.org](http://www.craighthouse.org) for a map, current events, and Bible studies. Reach MCM at 954-491-7270. Send in your prayer requests. Follow MCM Bible teachings and Rev. Jim Craig's sermons; go to [www.marycraig.org](http://www.marycraig.org) and click on "Audio Bible Studies" or "Divine Appointment" radio ministry; or go to [www.mcmtffr.org](http://www.mcmtffr.org) for audio sermons and teachings and Friday night handout sheets. Free. Mary Craig Ministries, Inc. is a 501© (3) nonprofit corporation founded in 1993. Federal ID 65-0429517.