



*3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,
4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (2 Peter 3:3-7,10)

*26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 **FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.** (Heb 12:26-29)*

Many in our day rest upon their laurels of vanity in the hope Jesus will be as kind to them at His coming as He was to the Woman taken in Adultery and the Woman at the Well; but Jesus came first to save all whose hearts would be opened by the power of the Holy Ghost to an election in Christ as were the hearts of these women. All others will receive a ruthless and merciless judgment at the Last Day. Coming as a gentle Lamb to Bethlehem's Cradle on His first coming, He will return as a Conquering King, leading the Armies of Heaven on His Second Coming, to those who have rejected the very blood that would have saved them in mercy and grace.

God made all that is – both visible and invisible – in Creation. It is His to dispense with as He chooses, and all that He chooses will be right and just regardless our whimpers of unfairness in the face of justice, for all is just that the Lord pleases. Every atom of every element is the handiwork of God. Though we cannot see the elemental atom of GOLD (Au), we can see many millions of them when joined together to form a bar or a coin. Perhaps this is illustrated in Hebrews 11:3: *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen WERE NOT MADE BY THINGS*

WHICH DO APPEAR. (Heb 11:3) We often believe it is only the spiritual Creation our eyes cannot behold, but it is true we cannot see the tiniest elemental particle of which every physical resource in Creation is made. Each atom is very much like a small solar system. God has made every element of its own unique atomic structure. The One who so meticulously joined the atoms of GOLD together to form a valuable metal is also the One who can separate every element, and its atomic composition, from its unity of structure.

The natural and physical Universe was created by God to serve a temporary purpose. Time itself is also a part and parcel of that temporary Creation. The Universe is designed merely as a platform upon which man, and other creatures, may pass a brief period of existence in which the souls of men may be tried as silver in a furnace.

God is the Master Refiner of precious the Gold, Silver, and base metals of the heart of the natural man. *But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.* (Mal 3:2-3) The fire of God is an Eternal Fire. It either purifies or destroys. We are not tried only once in life, but through many refinements of fire. Gold and silver are often found in veins of granite and other worthless stone compositions in the earth. Those worthless elements must be separated by some means from the precious elements of gold or silver. How does God do this? As the Refiner sitting at His fire. *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.* (Psalm 12:5-7) If we have not fortified our hearts with those Words of God (gold and silver), we may find our hearts to be only of chaff and slag without precious metal to commend us to God as a worthy vessel.

The Refiner sits by the fire and heats the ore, possessing gold or silver, to an extreme temperature. When the ore melts as does a heart warmed by the Holy Spirit, the chaff rises to the surface and is scooped away and discarded. But the purity is not yet perfect. The Refiner must heat the ore seven times to gain a sterling and pure precious metal. On the last heating cycle, the Refiner may lean over the surface of the silver or gold and see a perfect likeness of Himself mirrored there. That is the reflection that the Christian must present to the world – a likeness of Christ! We may be tried many times during the sanctification process by our Lord. But the gold and silver never complains to the Refiner for removing the worthless grizzle of chaff from its character, and neither should we.

It is true that God is love to those who respond to His love and calling; but He is a consuming fire to those who do not have kindred hearts to respond. In a sense, He is as different in His character to the sinner as fervent heat differs from cooling waters. To those who are the elect of Christ, He is a Fountain of the Waters of Life.

God as the Fountain of Living Waters

For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jer 2:13) *O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.* (Jer 17:13) *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.* (Rev 21:6)

God is our cooling Fountain of gushing waters of Life. He is an overflowing Fountain to those who thirst after God. He even deigns to invite us to become tributary Fountains of eternal life as well to others. To the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well before

the gates of Sychar, Our Lord said: *Whosoever drinketh of this water* (at the bottom of a fifty foot hole in the ground) *shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him* (the Water of Life) *shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* (John 4:13-14)

God as a Consuming Fire:

The One who joined the atomic elements together to form matter can, as easily, separate them into their constituent particles and destroy them. More than we see in atomic fission, we shall see heat of tremendous and immeasurable intensity as the valence of electrons of every atom is interrupted, and each destroyed along with its central neutron and proton. The violence will not be witnessed by any mortal creature for they shall perish long before the intensity of heat is at its maximum. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.* (2 Peter 3:10)

Man labors interminably to satisfy his desire for the material riches of life, yet, in a moment – in the twinkling of an eye – all such riches shall perish as dust and vaporous smoke; but the essence of the man (his soul) shall not perish. Every soul has a destiny in eternity in either the Presence of God, or in the Eternal Night of Hell. To those who long for and love the appearing of Christ, He shall come as the glorious Sunrise: *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.* (Mal 4:2) What treasures shall the righteous possess in their eternal homes? *Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* (Rev 14:13) The treasures of the righteous shall be the works of love, mercy and grace that they demonstrated in their lives toward others.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matt 6:19-21) Since I desire, above all else, for my heart to rest in Heaven, I must desire my treasures be on deposit there as well. The wicked are not so, but look with fearful foreboding to that which is coming upon the earth: *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand.* (Rev 6:14-17) Our Lord's return will not be a day of namby-pamby cuddling, but severe judgment on the wicked and gracious mercy to the elect. I will prefer the Fountain to the Fire! How about you?