

# The Baptism Of Fire

In Matthew 3:1-12, John the Baptist talks about judgment. He said to the Jews that if they did not repent, there was a great Judge (Jesus Christ) coming who would baptize them with fire. John also revealed the power of this mighty One by stating that He would also baptize with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:4-5, we know how the baptism of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled.

But back to the baptism of fire. The "*winnowing fan*" was a flat shovel used to toss the wheat into the air so that the chaff would be blown away. "*Baptize*" means "immerse." Hence, Christ would immerse those who would not repent in fire. The thoughts of vs. 10 are used elsewhere for the punishment of evil doers (cf. Matthew 7:19). Vs. 12 uses the expression "*unquenchable fire*" which refers to eternal punishment. Thus, the "*baptism of fire*" is the eternal fire.

Remember, John is encouraging an evil people (the Jews) to repent. His words are a strong warning to all those who remain in their stubborn course of sin. Those who continue in sin will be immersed in fire by the mighty Judge. He tells them not only to repent, but to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. "*Fire*" is only one way to describe the eternal judgment. It is also referred to as "*outer darkness,*" "*torment,*" etc. We should seek to avoid this at all cost. If you are subject, will you not repent? There is a great Judge coming who will immerse in fire all those who do not bear fruits worthy of repentance. Hence, "... *repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance*" (Acts 26:19-20). If you would like to know more, please contact us for further study.

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