

“Incandescence” Sermon for December 31, 2017,
Job 42:1-6, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:25-40
Revelation 2:18 and 29

18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze: ²⁹ Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

“Incandescence”

Hear the description of Jesus Christ, as He appeared to the Apostle John on the island of Patmos in a vision (**Revelation 1:14**):

His hair was like wool, and as white as snow; and His EYES were as a FLAME OF FIRE.

A flame of fire is the same as saying a blazing or incandescent fire. The glorified Christ’s eyes were full of fiery intensity. Eyes full of fire,” incandescent eyes, can be comforting or frightening, depending on who sees them and what they are focused on. John

fainted when he saw Christ's incandescence.

(**Revelation 1:17**) When Christ appears as the glorified, eternally existence personification of the divine Word or anthropomorphic expression of God, he appears as God's son and therefore our brother. God's incandescent fire symbolizes judgment Genesis 19:24. That incandescence brings judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah. In Exodus 9:24, judgment fell upon Egypt as hail which mingled with FIRE. In Ezekiel 21:31, the anger of the Lord is described as incandescence (a fire penetrating but also giving new insight), incandescence: "I will blow against you in the fire of my anger."

But remember, the righteousness of God in bringing judgment through Christ's incandescence is a feature of the Christian as well as the Hebrew Bible. Grace was demonstrated to Abraham, Noah, Moses, King David--a long list of saints storied in the

Hebrew Bible. These saints lived with faith in the promise that God would send an incandescent, radiating fire of truth and joy and hope for the gentiles and the Jews, the wicked and rebellious as well as the faithful and believing.

Without seeing the incarnation of the Christ that we know as Jesus--His life, ministry, death and resurrection--these people lived lives that demonstrated belief in God's promise. They did not live perfect lives. They did not live sinless lives. They did not live error-free lives, but they lived faithful lives. Through acceptance of God's promise, in faith, they would receive the vision of a new world, a new human family, new social relationships between the world's diverse population.

In the earliest days of the young church (Acts 5:1-11), judgment fell immediately upon Ananias and Sapphira, because they conspired to lie to the Holy

Spirit. When confronted about their lies, they fell dead on the spot! Great fear came upon all the church. We learned from this that even we, who have joyfully received God's grace in Christ can experience consequences for misusing and misrepresenting God-for failing to live freely in grace.

God's anger never falls upon His redeemed people. Instead, God's anger and judgments, God's incandescence purifies, purges and renews God's people, and ultimately all of creation. The incandescence of Christ seeks to illumine our minds, Remember the words of the prophet Habbakuk (1:13):

Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

God in brilliant incandescence replies to this charge in Habbakuk 2:2-3:

Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that it whoever reads it may run with it. For the revelation waits the appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though he linger, wait for him; for he will certainly come and will not delay.

Amen.