



Purifying Fire

A New Beginning

My Journey through January 2022

January 29, 2022; revisited January 28, 2024

“In this you greatly rejoice even though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in various trials, so that the proof of your faith which is more precious than gold which perishes though refined by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Yeshua the Messiah.”
(1 Peter 1:6-7)

On January 29, 2022, I read an article in *American Essence* magazine about the Giant Sequoias, “the world’s largest trees by volume found only on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains in California.” (The largest sequoia has a 36-foot-diameter base!) A certain portion of the article resonated deeply in my spirit. I will share the portion here and then expound:

Everyone who stands at the base of a mighty sequoia for the first time is changed by the experience. These gigantic trees, thousands of years in the making, command a feeling of great reverence. Their presence is felt in the stillness and peace of their groves. While recent fires have threatened and taken the lives of many sequoias, others have survived through many flames long since extinguished. Sequoias are some of nature’s best survivors. They have a very thick skin, so to speak, with bark that can be up to 1.5 feet thick, shielding the living tissue underneath.

Fire plays an essential role in the growth of sequoias and the health of the forest. Through fire comes renewal and the opportunity for new sequoias to plant and have the sunlight to grow. Fire clears out the natural buildup of the forest floor, making way for new life. Fire severity increases in potential when small fires are prevented from doing this necessary work. Native Americans managed the forest with fire, and the National Park Service has learned to do the same with controlled, “prescribed” burns. Sequoia seeds successfully grow into seedlings thanks to the mineral soil cleared, and enriched, by fire.
(Written by Jeff Perkin, Pages 122-123)

This quote reflects the result of trial in our lives. *“Through fire comes renewal and the opportunity for new sequoias to plant and have the sunlight to grow. Fire clears out the natural buildup of the forest floor, making way for new life.”*

On December 29, 2021, I became sick with the virus we all became familiar with. My friends who were also sick at the same time had a rough time but were well in a week or two. I wasn’t. It started with a week and a half I didn’t think I could bear. But this *fire “cleared out the natural buildup and made way for new life.”* I saw new seedlings growing in the *“mineral soil cleared and enriched by fire.”*

My first reprieve finally came on January 10th with medicine prescribed by our beloved doctor. (The only thing I had been able to read was my pocket calendar, so I remember the dates.) The next morning my appetite returned! In my weakness as I lay on my bed, I saw a large mountain rumbling. It wasn’t a vision or a dream. It was just a visual in my mind’s eye that came to me vividly and tangibly. This rumbling was accompanied by a determination to get rid of everything that was not relevant to my purpose. I took a few minutes each day to fill bags with books and other items for my husband to cart away – 16 large bags and 4 large boxes!

My friends know me as an organized, simple person. So, this unexpected purging reflected a deeper resolve for more simplicity, more focus, and less distraction. It was part of the “clearing out the natural buildup and making way for new life.” Words from Scripture came to mind – “wood, hay, and straw.” I found the entire verse:

If any man builds on the foundation [of Yeshua Messiah] with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man’s work will become evident for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. (1 Corinthians 3:12f)

Gold, silver, precious stones left after the fire – and room for new seedlings.

Made Ready

In the December before I became ill, I wrote several Scripture Studies about the Bridegroom and the Bride, including *Readiness for Yeshua’s Return*, so, I had already been soaking in the truth of our union with Yeshua. On the morning of January 18 as I lay on my bed still unable to sit up and read, I searched through the Scripture in my mind for a positive passage. Revelation 19, 20, and 21. I began to read one verse at a time, close my eyes to think about it, and move on to the next. I made it to Revelation 19:6.

Then, I received a text from Tara, a dear friend. She had just had a dream that morning. She has never shared a dream with me, so this was unusual. Here is the dream she shared in her text:

I dreamed a beautiful dream. A wedding was taking place. Every person in attendance was wearing a lavish wedding gown, each as special as the next. Dancing and singing. They all had a special part to sing in the same song while they waited. It was a grand ball, a most spectacular sight. Lace and pearls, blitz, and lighting. I’ve never seen anything like it. Each bride was from a different country.

It seemed the venue was full. Everybody was there. It was time to get the celebration started, an opening celebration. Each bride made her way down through the brides, and she had her turn to sing, and everybody listened and cherished her part. Some did not sound as “lovely” as the next, but it was heart that everybody listened to! Then they would sing together on point, then another bride maybe in a group or maybe coming down through the circle of brides would sing. Everyone would listen or hum softly as she sang. It was a spectacular union of voices, dancing, and celebration. No one was the main attraction. They were there for love, setting the stage for the best wedding ever!

I wept over the beauty of the dream and thanked her. Then, I continued to rest and read. The next verse was Revelation 19:7 – “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” Wow! How is that for timing!? The Lord had directed me to these chapters. Immediately I knew, “That’s it!” – Through everything, He is making us ready until that glorious wedding day when all will be better than new! Until then, He asks us to be faithful and trust Him. I love You, O Yahweh, my Strength! Blessing and honor and glory and power be to You Who sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb!

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” (Paul, Romans 8:28)

“The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn that shines brighter and brighter until the full day!” (Proverbs 4:18)

“Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Yeshua, Revelation 2:10d)

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; and now there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness that the Master, the Righteous Judge, will give to me in that Day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (Paul, 2 Timothy 4:6-8)