

Scorched Earth ~ by Jim Bailey

Everywhere we looked as we drove through the once beautiful area around Canyon City, Colorado we saw near total destruction. Everything was burned to the ground including homes, vehicles and trees. We had seen the effects of a forest fire up close on a hike near Estes Park, Colorado, but this time people as well as nature were at risk. It was eerie to see only metal rims from wheels of former mobile homes and blackened tree stumps where before families were going about their normal tasks. Truly a scorched earth scenario. We did return to the burned out hiking trail a few years later and saw the beginning of reforestation. We have not returned to the Canyon City area but assume that people have returned and rebuilt their residences and tried to regain some semblance of normalcy.

Other destructive forces of nature such as tornadoes, floods and earthquakes can also cause this type of devastation, but a fire leaves little to salvage. It is almost unthinkable to know that in some cases the fire was deliberately set by humans.

In the spiritual realm isn't this the way Satan destroys all that is beautiful and pure and turns it into a scorched earth type situation? He has always delighted in twisting truth to destroy a close fellowship between God and mankind. He started with Adam and Eve and has followed his devious blueprint down through human history. He has driven a wedge between people of different races, religions and economic statuses. He is overjoyed to see the scorched earth that remains after riots and wars. He is no less cruel when attacking individual lives. Where once people were happy and serving God and others he has spread doubt and fear and estrangement. He is a master at ruining good marriages and friendships with lies and innuendoes. He is a roaring lion seeking his prey (1 Pe 5:8). Truly he is a powerful enemy who leaves a spiritual scorched earth in his wake.

However, he is not unbeatable as Peter says in the next verse (1 Pe 5:9). Resisting with faith, knowledge and the power of the Holy Spirit will allow Christians to rebuild the destruction in one's personal faith journey (Jas 4:7) (Eph 3:16-20). It is

a wonderful thing to witness a congregation rebuild a fellowship that a split has caused. To see individuals heal and reunite in love after an argument or a nation return to God must infuriate Satan (Php 4:3) (Phi 17-21) (Rom 13: 1-5). If the victims of a fire can rebuild their lives, surely Christians can rebuild the scorched earth in their own lives caused by Satan.