

“The Flame of Life”

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We have talked together a good deal lately about fire, and what it is. But there is something we have not spoken of in connection with it,—something so necessary to it that without it no fire can burn,—that is, air.

You know that you cannot make the fire burn if all the air is shut away from it. There must be a draught, a current of air, to keep it burning. How rapidly a fire burns out in the open air, especially if the wind is blowing on it. And perhaps you have seen the old-fashioned bellows that need to be in every household for blowing air into the fire to make it burn brightly.



It is the oxygen in the air that makes the fire burn. Perhaps you are already learning something about this how this oxygen gas that is in the air unites with the gases that are in the fuel, and the light and heat that the fuel has absorbed from the sun's rays are set free again into the air. We see the bright flame and feel the heat of this compressed sunshine.

When this takes place, and these things are turned back into what they were made up of, we can see just what formed them,—gas and sunbeams! or, in other and truer words, God's breath and His glory. Can you not see then, children, that all things in the earth are only different forms of the wonderful life of God?

The air, without which no fire can burn, is the breath of God. So the fire, besides being, as we have found it to be, the gleaming of God's glory, and all its light and heat coming from Him, can burn only in His breath which kindles it.

An ancient wise man once said: "Know ye that the fire in your huts and the life in your bodies are one and the same thing." It will perhaps surprise you very much that he should think so; but I want to show you that there is truth in what he said. For the fire in the stove and the life in your body are both sparks from the Divine fire of God's own life.

The fire is kept burning only by the air blowing upon it. You too are kept alive, as you know, by breathing in the breath of God, or rather by the breathing it into you every moment.

But have you ever thought what is the work that this breath does for you? It is the same that it does for the fuel in your stoves, it keeps the flame of life burning within you. Your life is a fire, for it is the life of God, and His Word tells us that "Our God is a consuming fire."

The food that we eat is the fuel that we need to burn to keep up this life, but like the fire it must have air to make it burn. It is the oxygen in the air that comes into us that burns this fuel, and so keeps life and heat in our bodies. When one stops breathing, the fire of life dies out, and the body becomes quite cold.

The oxygen burns up all the waste matter that is in our bodies; those things that are no good or that are harmful to us. Like the fuel in the fire, they are turned again into gas, which our blood carries to the lungs, and this poisonous gas is then breathed out into the air, and we take in a fresh supply of oxygen. How marvellous is the breath of God, which, like a consuming fire, is cleansing our bodies in this way every moment.

Then if you want pure, clean bodies, dear children, you must be sure to get plenty of fresh air; for air that has been breathed over and over again has much poisonous gas in it, and very little oxygen. So the poisons are not burned up and carried out of our bodies.

Then you must be careful too about the fuel,—the food,—that you put into your bodies. You know that if you put too much fuel into the stove, or things that do not burn well, you get a dull, smoky fire. Too much food, or things that are not good, taken into our bodies, have just the same effect upon our lives. Instead of bright, clear minds, and free happy lives, we become languid and slow, and have dull brains, and seem only half alive.

Exercise is another thing very necessary to keep a good clear fire in our bodies. How warm you get when you run, play, or work hard, do you not? This is because you are breathing quicker, and so taking in more air, and your blood is moving quicker and carrying the air through every part of your body. You can feel it tingling all over you. Then the waste water is all quickly burned up and carried away, and your body is kept pure and healthy as God wants it to be.

“God make my life a little light
Within this world to glow,
A little flame that burneth bright
Wherever I may go.”