

The Omak Wildfire – and God’s Amazing *Deliverance!*

Tuesday, August 18, residents on Omak flats were warned to prepare for a level 2 evacuation. Wednesday evening about 7:30 p.m. my wife Cappy stepped outside to the back yard to care for our chickens and saw a large water tank plane flying very low, over our home. The air was very heavy with smoke and the sky to the northeast of the house was a deepening pink-orange reflection against the smoke filled sky.

We both got on our knees and began praying. While we were praying, I heard a loud banging on the north patio door to our home, and then a loud banging at the front door of our home, as red car lights flashed on vehicles parked along the road. The man at the door shouted, “Its stage 3 evacuation alert, you’ve got to GO, *NOW* – RIGHT *NOW* – the fire is already on the adjoining lot and coming this way fast!”

“GO, GO, GO!” He and other firemen urgently motioned for us to get in our automobiles and move out – immediately!

Backed with a 40 mph high wind the Concunully fire to the northwest and the Riverside fire had merged, crested the mountain tops behind us, burned rapidly crossing “the flats” toward us with a distance of less than a quarter mile away as we got into our vehicles. It was right across Grey Goose Road, adjoining our property on the north side, as we pulled out of the driveway. It was a level 3 mandatory evacuation order. We had to get in our cars immediately and leave.

Grabbing our luggage, we raced to our cars and headed out of the garage with two firemen at our car windows directing us out the driveway shouting “Move—go, go, go!” Cappy went first and I was right behind. She had put the parking lights on until she finally found the headlights switch about half-way down the road. In the right lane were the firefighters, fire-trucks and their equipment. Turning south, out of the driveway, Cappy noticed 20-30 foot flames which had already reached the row of poplar trees on the south edge our of our empty lot north of us with just a gravel road between the flames and our house.

Each of us drove south on Johnson Creek Road, toward downtown Omak. We were not to stop in Omak, but were told to drive to Okanogan (seven miles south of Omak), because the town of Omak was also in danger and under notice to prepare for evacuation as well.

Many people that were evacuated from the Okanogan Complex Fires areas were at the same Okanogan Motel where we stayed Wednesday and Thursday nights. Late Thursday p.m. we drove back to the flats to survey the damage to our area. It was appalling – devastating. We saw blackened field after field on both sides of Johnson Creek road as we approached our place. Then, in the distance we saw the green leaves of

the poplar trees and our house, orchard, barn and landscaping all intact, looking like a small oasis in the midst of blackened hell. Even our chickens were ok. The lots all along the north side of our property, on Grey Goose Road, were charcoal and cinders. There was no power, water or phone service. The pictures below are scenes of devastation around our home and property in Omak, Washington, due to the wildfires raging in the region in August 2015. The land around our property was scorched and burned to a cinder, but the raging inferno spared our home and trees, and land. Even our chickens survived!



View of the property line. "Thus far and no further," shall thy flames burn.



Behold the scorched and burned acreage to the north of our property. In the background is the Rainbow Trailer Court, which lost three mobile homes burned to the ground.

It looked like a scene from Mars – barren, lifeless landscape. A horror story of frightful and scary consequences.



This picture is looking toward the northwest from our home.



Here is the view from out sundeck looking southward. Even our grape vines and rose garden, in the foreground, and our fruit trees were spared. Even the poplar trees on the fence line survived the onslaught of wildfire.

It is wonderful to know that “The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations” – sore trials and evil circumstances – “and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment” (II Peter 2:9).

Praise God for His grace and mercy, and the legions of angels that protected us, like an oasis in the midst of total devastation and catastrophe.

Lessons Learned

What did we learn from this experience?

Lesson #1 – have faith in God. He loves His people and keeps His promises. He is the Great Deliverer.

Lesson #2 – take nothing for granted. Always be prepared – and ready to evacuate at a moment’s notice when peril threatens.

Lesson #3 – act with urgency. When it comes time to take action, move with speed and efficiency. Don’t dawdle or mope around. Move quickly and expeditiously. Time is of the essence!

Lesson #4 – always be thankful. Even in the midst of crisis, and tribulation, God’s mercy overflows, and we have much to be thankful for!

The day after the wildfire struck, we drove back to survey the damage to our area and saw blackened field after field on both sides of the road up to our place. Then, in the distance we saw the green leaves of the poplar trees and our house still intact. Our property was like a small oasis. Even the chickens were thriving, cackling, and rejoicing!

We drove to the end of Johnson Creek Road, and saw more devastation, with a few homes spared, others burned to the ground. We drove over to the Riverside Cut-off, and saw more devastation. All around us were signs of a fiery and desolate “apocalypse.”

On Friday, the next day, power was restored and we moved back into our home, very thankful to still have a home. We conduct God’s Work from our home, and the office, broadcasting room, libraries, and work areas, and storage areas for books and materials, are all located there. All was spared! Our hearts overflowed with gratitude.

Satan struck – but God delivered! How many angels defended our property lines, I don’t know – I prayed for a legion or whatever was needed – and God sent them. Truly our God is a God who delivers His people.

Halleluia – praise God!