

# Luke 3:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

## Analysis

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The agricultural metaphor—'Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor'—describes Christ's separating work in judgment. The 'fan' (winnowing fork) tosses grain allowing wind to separate wheat from chaff. That the fan is 'in his hand' indicates Christ's active, present work of separation. 'Thoroughly purge' emphasizes complete, exhaustive separation—Christ's judgment is thorough, not partial. The result: 'gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable'—eternal separation of saved (wheat) and lost (chaff). This teaches Christ's dual role: gathering His people to safety while judging the wicked with eternal fire. The unquenchable fire indicates hell's eternity.

## Historical Context

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Winnowing was familiar to agricultural listeners—grain thrown in air, wind blowing away light chaff while heavy wheat fell to the floor. This vivid imagery depicted Christ's separating righteous from wicked. The unquenchable fire warned of eternal judgment, not temporary punishment.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What does the winnowing imagery teach about Christ's thorough judgment?
2. How does Christ simultaneously save His people while judging the wicked?
3. What does 'unquenchable fire' teach about the eternality of hell?

## Interlinear Text

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οὗ	τὸ	πτύον	ἐν	τῇ	χειρὶ	αὐτοῦ	καὶ
Whose	G3588	fan	is in	G3588	hand	his	and
G3739		G4425	G1722		G5495	G846	G2532
διακαθαριεῖ	τὴν	ἄλωνα	αὐτοῦ	καὶ	συναξει	τὸν	
he will thoroughly purge	G3588	floor	his	and	will gather	G3588	
G1245		G257	G846	G2532	G4863		
σῖτον	εἰς	τὴν	ἀποθήκην	αὐτοῦ	τὸ	δὲ	ἄχυρον
the wheat	into	G3588	garner	his	G3588	but	the chaff
G4621	G1519		G596	G846		G1161	G892
κατακαύσει	πυρὶ	ἀσβέστω					
he will burn	with fire	unquenchable					
G2618	G4442	G762					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 13:30** (Parallel theme): Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

**Jeremiah 15:7** (Parallel theme): And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children, I will destroy my people, since they return not from their ways.

**Micah 4:12** (Parallel theme): But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor.

**Psalms 1:4** (Parallel theme): The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

**Isaiah 30:24** (Parallel theme): The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

**Matthew 3:12** (Parallel theme): Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

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