

Holy to the Lord

You and the book of
Leviticus



Lev 6:8-9, 13



What does God tell us about this fire in the alter? (It must always be burning—a perpetual fire.)

Any guesses as to *why* He requires this?

Lev 9:24, 1 Chr 21:26



What made this fire so special? (God lit it. Read Lev 9:24 and 1 Chr 21:26 which is a similar event, but David and a different altar)

The perpetual fire came from the Lord's presence and reveals His glory to the people.

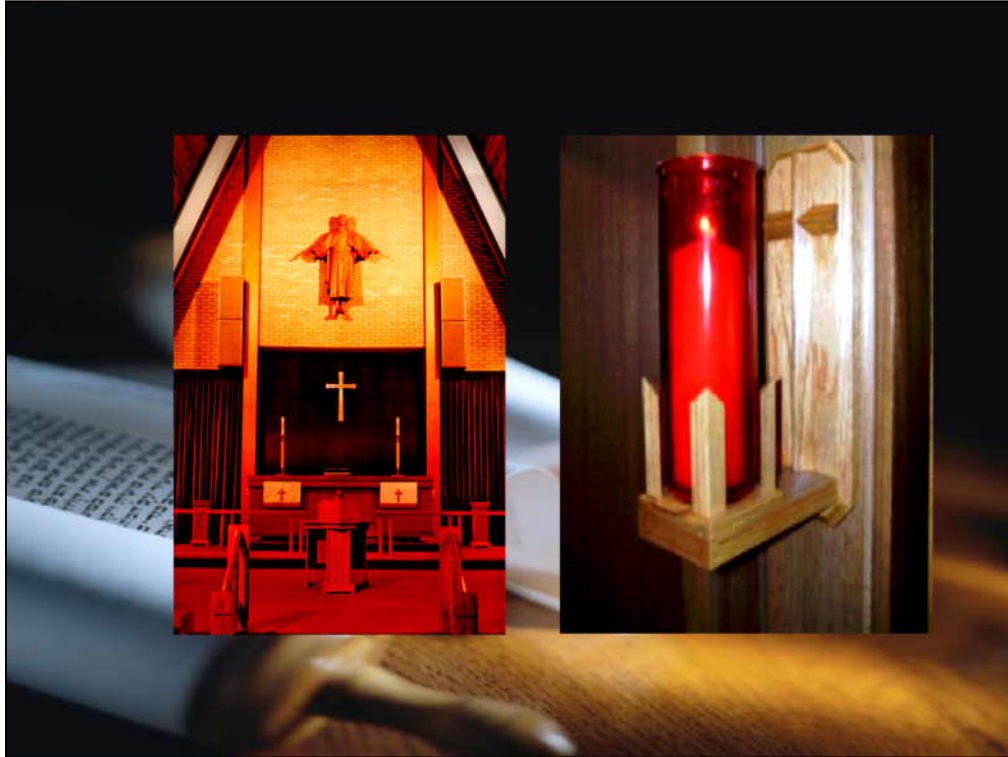
Can you think of other examples where God uses fire to reveal Himself? (Moses and the burning bush, pillar of fire)

Lev 9:24, 1 Chr 21:26

2 Chr 13:10-12

2 Chr 29:6-9

What would happen if the priests neglected the fire and it was allowed to go out?
(God would not give them access to His grace.)

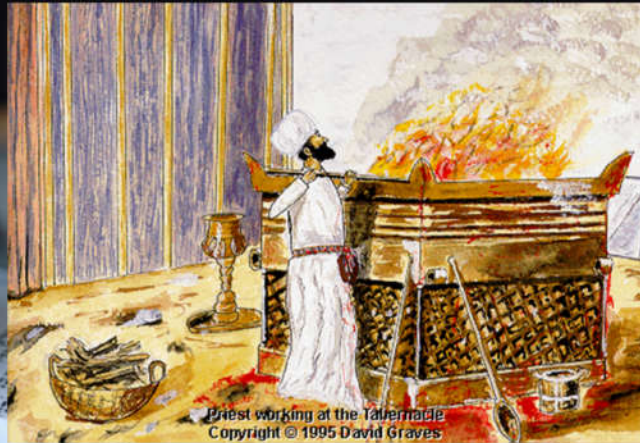


What do we have that compares to this and reminds us of God's presence?

-Sacrificial candles on the altar.

-Eternal lamp (concept is that it never is to go out) Represents God's eternal presence.

Lev 6:10-11



Verse 10 is often translated “the ashes which the fire has reduced the burnt offering,” but literally this is “the fire ate (devoured) the burnt offering.”

How does this wording also demonstrate God’s presence?

“Common”



The meat of the burnt offering was considered “holy,” but the ashes were not considered “holy” but “common.”

Do you remember what that term means? (A neutral place between holy and unclean.)

Since they are no longer holy they are to be removed from the holy altar and placed in a clean designated place.

These ashes were not to be used for any such ritual purpose. That would be an abuse of the ashes.

-Why might someone do this?

Lev 6:10-11



Read Lev. 6:10-11 again. What does it say about the priests garments? (Note: these are not the High Priest)

If one were to see a priest they would visually see a linen skull cap, a linen tunic, and a linen embroidered sash.

What does the Bible say about these garments? Read Exodus 29:21 “Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments with him. **He and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.**”

These holy vestments were to be worn by the priests when they officiated at the altar in the sanctuary. Why then do they remove them after taking the ashes off of the altar? (The altar is holy, not the ashes [they are common]. When the priest is in contact with the altar, he is to wear holy garments. When he is carrying the ashes from away from the tabernacle he is wearing common garments.

Why would God make them do this “extra work.” (To be an ongoing reminder to them of the holiness of their job.)



Are there any similarities with the vestments our clergy wear today?

- only worn to do holy functions.
- reminds the pastor that he *is* carrying out holy duties.
- reminds the people to look at the office the man holds not the person.

Holy Underpants



Read Exodus 28:42-43 “You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs; [43] and they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place, lest they bear guilt and die. This shall be a statute forever for him and for his offspring after him.”

Why did the priests have “holy underpants?”

In his commentary on Leviticus, Dr. Kleinig states, (and I quote) “The underclothes were to prevent exposure of the priest’s privy members when the priest ascended the steps of the altar.” (p. 142)

The idea was that he wouldn’t inadvertently flash people as he is attending the fire on top of the altar which was raised up. This would certainly be distracting to those who were trying to contemplate the mercy of God given in the burnt offering.

Note also that Ex 28:40 speaks of the uniform as giving the priests “dignity and honour.”

It’s hard to find a modern day comparison to holy underpants, but we have had a slightly less offensive issue at the communion rail. In the summer months we have had a few people complain about receiving communion from someone wearing sandals. Why is this a problem? (Could possibly distract people from the grace of God.)



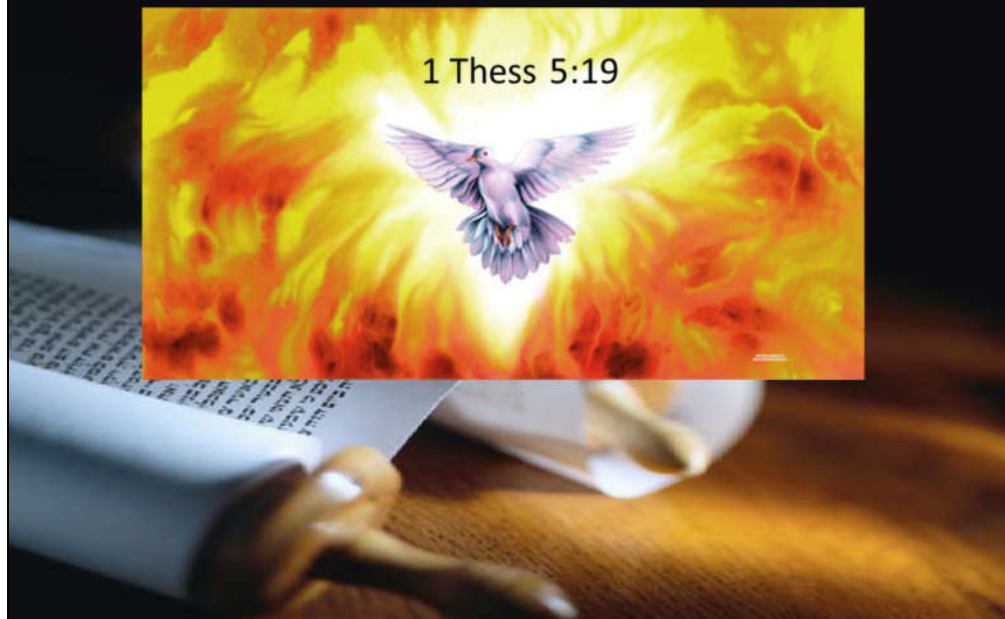
Jesus, who came from heaven to earth says He came to cast fire on the earth. Here Jesus is speaking words of judgement, but in another way that “fire from heaven” did become a reality. When? (At Pentecost.)

Read Acts 2:1-4 What similarities are there between the fire on the tabernacle altar and this fire? (God supplied it)

How would the recipients of this Pentecost fire (symbolically) keep it burning, keep it stoked? (By feeding it through Word and Sacrament)

Is it accurate to say that the Holy Spirit is the heavenly fire that must be kept alive in the church?

Rom 12:11



What does St. Paul say about this?

Read Rom 12:11 "Fervent" is sometimes translated "To glow in the spirit." It has the concept of being heated, even boiling with enthusiasm.

Read 1 Thes. 5:19 "Do not *quench* the Spirit. " In the Greek this word quite literally means to extinguish a fire.

How about us?



How about us? You weren't there at Pentecost. Do you have the presence of the "fire from heaven?" (Yes, in your baptism you received the Holy Spirit)
How do you stoke that fire and keep it going?

Next Week:

Enough instructions!
Let's git 'er done!

