

MOVEMENT 6 — FIRE FALLS ON ALTARS

“Surrender Before Power”

Foundation Scriptures

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” — Romans 12:1

“Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice...” — 1 Kings 18:38

“Then the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.” — 2 Chronicles 7:1

INTRODUCTION

Heaven’s Fire Always Searches for an Altar

Throughout Scripture, fire falls on altars.

That pattern repeats again and again:

- Abel built an altar.
- Noah built an altar.
- Abraham built altars.
- Moses built altars.
- Elijah rebuilt the altar.
- Solomon dedicated the altar.
- Pentecost itself became an altar of surrendered men waiting before God.

The pattern is unmistakable:

No altar.

No surrender.

No fire.

Many men want:

- authority without surrender,
- influence without humility,
- leadership without obedience,
- power without discipline,
- respect without transformation.

But heaven’s fire never falls on pride. God’s fire falls where surrender exists.

That is one of the deepest revelations in spiritual formation:
The altar always comes before the fire.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE ALTAR

Altars Are Places of Exchange

Theologically, altars represent meeting places between God and man.

An altar is where:

- surrender meets mercy,
- sacrifice meets presence,
- yielding meets transformation.

Altars are deeply covenantal. Something is always exchanged at an altar.

Throughout Scripture:

- animals were exchanged for covenant,
- offerings were exchanged for worship,
- pride was exchanged for obedience,
- Self-rule was exchanged for divine rule.

By the New Testament, the altar becomes ontological. Paul writes: “Present your bodies a living sacrifice...”

Now the altar is no longer merely external. The man becomes the altar. That changes everything.

The Flame must understand:

God is not merely asking for behavior modification.

God is asking for the surrender of the inner man.

THE SEMIOTICS OF ALTARS

What Altars Communicate

Semiotically, altars communicate:

- surrender,
- death to self,
- yielding,
- worship,
- covenant,

- submission,
- alignment with God.

Altars are visible signs of invisible surrender. When Elijah rebuilt the altar on Mount Carmel, he was not merely stacking stones. He was restoring covenant order. Because broken altars represent broken worship. A culture without altars becomes a culture ruled by ego.

That is true spiritually.

That is true socially.

That is true in prison culture.

Gang culture rejects altars because gang culture worships self-preservation, dominance, reputation, intimidation, and pride.

The Kingdom reverses all of that.

The Kingdom teaches:

- humility before exaltation,
- surrender before authority,
- servanthood before leadership,
- obedience before influence.

THE ONTOLOGY OF SURRENDER

What Rules the Inner Man

Ontologically, surrender answers one question: Who sits on the throne of the inner man?

Every man serves something:

- ego,
- fear,
- pride,
- lust,
- anger,
- gangs,
- self-preservation,
- bitterness,
- Christ.

The altar is where false rulers die. This is why surrender feels threatening to fallen humanity.

Surrender feels like death because something truly is dying:

- pride dies,
- ego dies,
- self-rule dies,
- false identity dies.

Jesus said: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily...”
— Luke 9:23

Christianity is not self-improvement. It is surrender. Surrender is the only thing we have to give to God that is truly ours and ours alone. Even Jesus surrendered to the will of the Father when He said from the garden, “Nevertheless not my will but Yours be done.”

FIRE AND ACCEPTANCE

Why Fire Fell on Sacrifices

In the Old Testament, fire often signified divine acceptance.

When fire fell, it meant heaven had received the sacrifice.

At Mount Carmel: “Then the fire of the Lord fell...”

At Solomon’s Temple: “Then the fire came down from heaven...”

The fire revealed:

- God had accepted the offering,
- covenant had been acknowledged,
- Heaven had responded.

This is profoundly theological. The altar did not manipulate God. The altar aligned men with God.

ELIJAH AND THE BROKEN ALTAR

Rebuilding What Was Neglected

One of the most important altar narratives occurs in 1 Kings 18.

Israel had become spiritually divided. Baal worship spread. Corruption increased. False prophets multiplied. What did Elijah do first? Before praying for fire...he rebuilt the altar.

“And Elijah took twelve stones... and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.”
— 1 Kings 18:31–32

That is deeply semiotic. Broken altars produce spiritual confusion. Before fire returned, covenant alignment had to return. This is why many men want power but avoid surrender. They want fire without an altar. But heaven's fire does not fall upon rebellion.

QUICK BEDS AND THE ALTAR PRINCIPLE

Quick Beds are filled with men fighting for control:

- control of image,
- control of reputation,
- control through intimidation,
- control through gang affiliation,
- control through fear.

But the Flame must become different. The Flame is not a power seeker. The Flame is a surrendered man. That is critical. Because prison culture often mistakes aggression for strength.

The Kingdom teaches: controlled strength is true strength.

Anybody can explode. Few men can remain steady. Anybody can intimidate. Few men can stabilize atmospheres. Anybody can spread fear. Few men can spread peace.

PEACEKEEPERS, NOT POWER SEEKERS

Jesus declared: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." — Matthew 5:9

Peacemaking is not a weakness.

Peacemaking requires:

- emotional control,
- spiritual maturity,
- restraint,
- discernment,
- inner stability.

A Flame is not assigned to dominate rooms. He is assigned to stabilize atmospheres. This is why surrender matters. Unyielding men seek power to protect their ego. Surrendered men carry authority without needing domination.

THE FIRE OF PENTECOST

Fire Falls on Surrendered Men

Acts 2 is another altar moment.

The disciples were waiting:

- together,
- surrendered,
- obedient,
- unified,
- yielded.

Then: “There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire...” — Acts 2:3

The fire fell on the surrendered people. Pentecost was not merely emotional excitement. It was heaven responding to yielded vessels.

The Flame must understand: holy fire is attracted to surrender.

WHAT THE ALTAR KILLS

The altar destroys:

- ego,
- arrogance,
- false bravado,
- manipulation,
- rebellion,
- self-worship,
- pride.

Many men fear surrender because they think surrender weakens them. But biblically, surrender purifies strength.

Jesus—the strongest man who ever lived—was also the most surrendered.

“Not my will, but thine, be done.” — Luke 22:42

THE PARADOX OF KINGDOM POWER

This becomes one of the great paradoxes of the Kingdom:

- The way up is down.
- The way to authority is surrender.

- The way to greatness is servanthood.
- The way to spiritual power is yielding.

That completely contradicts worldly systems.

Gang systems say: “Take power.”

The Kingdom says: “Yield yourself to God.”

THE ALTAR AND THE INNER WAR

Every Flame fights an internal war:

- ego versus surrender,
- anger versus peace,
- pride versus humility,
- domination versus servanthood.

The altar is where the war is settled daily.

Paul said, “I die daily.” — 1 Corinthians 15:31

That is altar language. Surrender is not a one-time event. It is continual yielding.

THE FIRE REVEALS THE SACRIFICE

When fire fell on sacrifices, everything hidden became visible.

Fire exposed:

- what was genuine,
- what was surrendered,
- what belonged to God.

This becomes ontological again. The fire reveals what governs a man internally.

Pressure reveals:

- whether ego rules him,
- whether fear rules him,
- whether anger rules him,
- or whether Christ rules him.

THE ALTAR AS TRANSFORMATION

The altar is not merely where things die. It is where transformation begins.

- Abraham found covenant there.
- Moses found encounter there.
- Elijah found fire there.
- Isaiah found cleansing there.
- The disciples found Pentecost there.

The altar is where God transforms men.

THE FLAME AS A LIVING ALTAR

The Flame eventually becomes:

- a living altar,
- a surrendered vessel,
- a carrier of holy fire,
- a stabilizer of atmosphere,
- a peacemaker in dark places.

His very presence begins communicating:

- peace,
- restraint,
- order,
- humility,
- spiritual authority.

Not because he controls others—but because he has learned to surrender himself.

KEY PRINCIPLE

“God’s fire falls where surrender exists.”

FINAL CHARGE

Many men spend their lives trying to gain power over others while remaining unsundered themselves.

But heaven’s fire does not rest upon pride. It rests upon yielded vessels.

The altar is where:

- ego dies,
- false identity burns,
- pride breaks,
- peace emerges,
- authority becomes holy,
- and the fire of God descends.

The Flame must never forget: Before there was fire...there was surrender. Before there was power...there was an altar. And wherever men truly yield themselves to God, holy fire still falls.

Review & Reflection Questions

1. Why does fire in Scripture often fall on altars?
2. What does an altar represent spiritually?
3. Why must surrender come before authority?
4. What does it mean to become a “living sacrifice”?
5. Why does pride resist surrender?
6. How does prison culture often oppose humility?
7. What did Elijah do before the fire fell on Mount Carmel?
8. Why is peacemaking a sign of strength?
9. What areas of self-rule must a man surrender to God?
10. How can surrender bring spiritual freedom?

