

# Fire on the Altar

by Rabbi Shefa Gold

אֵשׁ תָּמִיד תּוֹקֵד עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא תִכָּבֵה

Aish tamid tukad al hamizbayach; lo tichbeh (Leviticus 6:6)

Fire always shall be kept burning on the altar; it shall not go out.

Inside our hearts is a flame that must be kept burning. That fire is our passion for Life, our yearning for God, our curiosity about the mysteries, our sparkle of humor, our enthusiasm for the Work. We keep that fire burning by engaging in spiritual practice, by surrounding ourselves with beauty, by giving and receiving love and support, and by fully connecting with what (and whom) we love.

It is crucial to bring attention to that flame on the altar of the heart – to feed that fire and to guard it with loving vigilance.

(I composed this chant during the last days of Chanukah as I lit the candles and took their flames inside me.)