

“THROUGH THE BIBLE”
Union Chapel M. B. Church
Dr. O. Wendell Davis, Pastor/Teacher/Servant Leader

LEVITICUS
OUTLINE 4
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“Strange Fire” (Leviticus 10:1)

- **What is strange Fire?**

In order to understand the phrase “strange fire,” we must review the story in Leviticus in which it appears.

The first tabernacle had been erected, and Aaron was doing a lot of sacrificing per God’s instructions (Lev. 10:8-9). One day, two of Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu came along and offered incense with “strange fire.”

The Hebrew word translated “strange” means “unauthorized, foreign, or profane.” God not only rejected their sacrifice; He found it so offensive that He consumed the two men with fire.

After Nadab and Abihu were killed, Moses explained why God had done such a harsh thing: “This is what the LORD spoke of when he said: ‘Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.’” (Lev. 20:3).

- **What Was Sinful About The Fire?**

The exact nature of the profane fire isn’t known, but, since it was the fire that was unauthorized, it could be that Nadab and Abihu were burning the incense with fire of their own making rather than taking fire from the altar, as specified in Lev. 16:12. Or it could have been that the two men came into the tabernacle drunk, and therefore could not remember what was a violation and what was not (Lev. 10:8-9).

Their carelessness and irreverence were their downfall.

- **Why Did The Lord Allow Nadab And Abihu To Die?**

In judging Nadab and Abihu for their strange fire, God was making a point to all the other priests who would serve in His tabernacle - and later, in His temple - and to us, as well.

“Strange Fire” (Leviticus 10:1)

Since this was the first time sacrifices were being offered on the altar and Israel was getting to know the living God better, when Aaron’s sons were disobedient and profane, God displayed His displeasure in no uncertain terms.

God was not going to allow the disobedience of Aaron’s sons to set a precedent for future disregard of His Law. And that we make a difference between holy and unholy, and clean and unclean (Lev. 10:10-11).

The Same Principle Outcome In The New Testament.

A similar story occurs in Acts 5:1-11, during the time of the early church. A husband and wife lie to Peter about some land given to the church, and they are judged with physical death because of their lie. As Peter puts it, “You have not lied just to human beings but to God” (Acts 5:4).

God knows our hearts. He knows what we truly believe and our attitude toward Him. We cannot offer to Him proud “sacrifices” that are unworthy of Him. He seeks those who come to Him in humility, ready to sacrifice their pride and lay before Him humble and contrite hearts grieving for sin (Psalm 51:17).

Certainly, there is grace and forgiveness and plenty of “second chances” for those who belong to Him. But God wants us to know that He is serious when it comes to His honor and glory. If there is willful disobedience in the life of a believer, then God disciplines us out of His great love for us (Heb. 12:7-11).

If such disobedience continues, God will take harsher measures until we understand how we are disappointing Him. If we continue in our disobedience even after that, then God has every right to remove us from this earth (1 Cor. 11:29-30).

Conclusion: How Did Aaron Respond?

Lev. 10:3 says, “...And Aaron held his peace.” In other words, he didn’t say a word. Amen, “and Aaron held his peace.”

15 most popular Bible verses from Leviticus

Leviticus 11:44-45 KJV

For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Leviticus 17:11 KJV

For the life of the flesh is in the blood : and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Leviticus 18:4 KJV

Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 18:5 KJV

Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 19:4 KJV

Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 19:11 KJV

Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

Leviticus 19:12 KJV

And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shall thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 19:18 KJV

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 20:26 KJV

And ye shall be holy unto me: for the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

Leviticus 22:29 KJV

And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, offer it at your own will.

Leviticus 22:31 KJV

Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and to them: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 25:17 KJV

Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 25:18 KJV

Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them: and ye shall dwell in the land safely.

Leviticus 26:34 KJV

If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

Leviticus 26:12 KJV

And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.