

**Subject: *The Danger of Strange Fire***

**Scripture: *Leviticus 10:1-7***

This is one of the most tragic events recorded in Scripture. God sent fire from heaven to consume two priests while they worshiped in the tabernacle. The men who were killed were sons of Aaron and nephews of Moses. What does an Old Testament story like this have to do with Christians today? Let's remember two things that make this story relevant to us:

- God is holy and He has not changed
- Believers are priests unto God

***1 Peter 2:5*** *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

***1 Peter 2:9*** *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

### **THE SACRED FIRE OF GOD (9:22-24)**

- Aaron blessed the people (9:22)

The full form of this blessing is found in ***Numbers 6:24-26*** <sup>24</sup> *The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:* <sup>25</sup> *The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:* <sup>26</sup> *The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

- God's glory appeared to the people (9:23)
- God sent fire to consume the offering (9:24)

### **THE STRANGE FIRE OF THE PRIESTS (10:1)**

Nadab and Abihu offered fire that was not authorized by God. They did something God had not commanded. This was not a sin of ignorance or innocence, but a sin of arrogance.

### **THE SUDDEN FIRE OF JUDGMENT (10:2)**

In 9:24 the fire consumed the offering. In 10:2 the fire of God consumed the offerers. It was a case of sudden death in the tabernacle. ***Hebrews 12:29*** *For our God is a consuming fire.*

### **THE SOBERING FACT OF GOD'S HOLINESS (10:3)**

- God is to be sanctified

He is to be set apart and be treated as holy.

- God is to be glorified

Aaron had nothing to say because he knew that God was holy. He knew that you can't play around with God and treat holy things in a trivial way. This was the same thing that happened in the church of Corinth concerning the irreverent use of the Lord's Supper. Some were killed for treating Communion in an unworthy or trivial way.

Why would these men offer strange fire in the first place? They may have been drinking and under the influence of alcohol. See Leviticus 10:8-11.

### **THE SOLEMN MOURNING FOR THE DEAD (10:4-7)**

This was not your typical funeral. Aaron and his family were not allowed to show signs of personal sorrow because this was God's righteous judgment. They were not even allowed to go with the bodies as they carried them out of the camp. They had to stay in the tabernacle and finish their priestly duties. All the other people mourned because of God's judgment. Their mourning was not only the loss of these men, but mourning for their sin that offended a holy God.

### **APPLYING THIS MESSAGE TO YOUR LIFE:**

- Be wise and always fear God

***Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*

***Psalms 89:7** God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.*

- Know that greater privilege comes with greater accountability
- Beware of treating holy things of God in a casual way

People who come to church often can often take the things of God for granted. We must remember that we are on holy ground.