

Is God Too Strict?

Lessons Learned from Nadab and Abihu

Leviticus 10:1-11

Is God Too Strict?

- Man presumptuously judges God as too severe.
- God is both good and severe.
 - Rom. 11:22 - “Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.”

Is God Too Strict?

- God was good and not just severe in the O.T.
 - Psalm 136:1-26
 - Psalm 33:5 - “He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.”

Is God Too Strict?

- God is severe and not merely good in the N.T.
 - 2Cor. 5:11 - “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men”
 - Heb. 12:29 - “For our God is a consuming fire.”
 - 2Thes. 1:8 - “In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Background Of Nadab And Abihu

- The consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests had just been completed.
 - Lev. 8-9
 - Lev. 9:22-24 - “Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. 23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, 24 and fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

Background Of Nadab And Abihu

- No one expected the fire that just came from the Lord Who was pleased to consume the burnt offering, would also come down in displeasure and consume the two sons of Aaron.
- Lev. 10:1-11

Sins Of Nadab And Abihu

- Offering strange fire (unauthorized)
 - Ex. 30:8-9, 34-38
 - The Avtinas family was given the task of making incense; they alone were allowed to prepare it.
 - Fire from the altar of burnt offering was to be used to light this incense.
 - Lev. 16:12 - “Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil.”

Sins Of Nadab And Abihu

- Simply put, Nadab and Abihu offered fire or incense or both from a place that God had not authorized, and in doing so they sinned.

Sins Of Nadab And Abihu

- Other sins Nadab and Abihu may have committed:
 - Lack of reverence - Immediately following the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, God declares He will be treated as holy and honored.
 - Lev. 10:3 - “And Moses said to Aaron, This is what the LORD spoke, saying: ‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.’ So Aaron held his peace.”

Sins Of Nadab And Abihu

- Other sins Nadab and Abihu may have committed.
 - Intoxication - Could explain why they so flagrantly violated the commandments.
 - Lev. 10:9-10 - “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, 10 that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- We must do only what the Lord commands.
 - 2Sam. 7:7 - “Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’”
 - Col. 3:17 - “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- “But it doesn’t say you can’t...”
 - Heb. 7:14 - “For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- “It would be a dispensation of grace in which regulations of divine worship would be made obsolete. No longer would one’s expressions of worship be judged worthy or unworthy by specifics of a systemized religion or the tedious tenets of traditionalism; under the new order of the new covenant, all worshipful expressions of the devotion of men’s hearts would be spiritually, not legally, rendered and received.” (Alm. 1:27)

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- “The church need not have either explicit mandate or permission for everything it wishes to do.” *(Rube Shelly)*
- John 4:24 - “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- We cannot show reverence to God apart from obedience.
 - John 15:4-6, 14 - “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned... 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- A show of spirituality is empty apart from obedience.
 - Isa. 1:13 - “Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies. I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.”
 - 1Sam. 15:22 - “Then Samuel said: Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.”
 - 2Chron. 26:16-21

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- God must be hallowed in worship.
 - Lev. 10:3 - “And Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the LORD spoke, saying: ‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.’” So Aaron held his peace.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- “There is a sacredness to worship that cannot be sacrificed on the altar of cultural relevancy.”
(Steve Higganbotham)
- “One of my biggest childhood disappointments came one day when I saw a huge tent in a field and thought a circus was in town. I excitedly walked in the tent only to discover it was a revival meeting. One of the biggest disappointments of my adult life came one day when I went to church expecting a revival and discovered it was just a circus.” *(Bob Russell)*

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- God must come before family and all other matters.
 - Lev. 10:4-7
 - Aaron was not to mourn. He could not even bury his sons, as he was already consecrated for service to God and could not defile himself.
 - Note Aaron's response: "He held his peace" (10:3) and "did according to the word of Moses" (10:7).

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- Matt. 6:33 - “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”
- Luke 9:59-60 - “Then He said to another, Follow Me. But he said, Lord, let me first go and bury my father. 60 Jesus said to him, Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- Matt. 10:34-37 - “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; 36 and ‘a man's enemies will be those of his own household.’ 37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- Nadab and Abihu serve as a demonstration of God's severity and ought to remind us of the seriousness of serving God.
- We are not playing church here; don't let our affectionate atmosphere and sympathetic nature lull you into thinking that worship services and Bible study are the optional activities of a social club.

Lessons Learned From Nadab & Abihu

- If God is too strict in our opinion, it is because our opinion is mistaken.
- The salvation of our souls and the souls of others is something God has been planning since before the world began, and cost Him His Son.
- He is entitled to take drastic action in response to our casual disobedience.