

# Is God Too Strict?

*(Lessons Learned from Nadab and Abihu)*

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

## Introduction:

### A. Nadab and Abihu - Lev. 10:1-11

1. Man presumptuously judges God as too severe.
2. Rom. 11:22 - God is both good and severe.
3. God was good and not just severe in the O.T. - Psalm 136:1-26, 33:5
4. God is severe and not merely good in the N.T.
  - a. 2Cor. 5:11; Heb. 12:29; 2Thes. 1:8

## I. BACKGROUND OF NADAB AND ABIHU

### A. The consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests had just been completed.

1. Lev. 8-9, 9:22-24

### B. 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. Read Lev. 10:1-11

## II. SINS OF NADAB AND ABIHU

### A. While there is one explicit sin, there are other indications of sin in the text.

### B. Offering strange fire (unauthorized)

1. Ex. 30:9, 34-38 - The Avtinas family was given the task of making incense, and they alone were allowed to prepare it.
2. Lev. 16:12 - Fire from the altar of burnt offering was to be used to light this incense.
3. 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.

### C. Other sins Nadab and Abihu may have committed.

1. Lack of reverence - Lev. 10:3
  - a. Immediately following the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, God declares He will be treated as holy and honored.
2. Intoxication - Lev. 10:9-10
  - a. Could explain why they flagrantly violated the commandments.

## III. LESSONS LEARNED FROM NADAB AND ABIHU

### A. We must do only what the Lord commands.

1. 2Sam. 7:7; Col. 3:17
2. "But it doesn't say you can't..." - Heb. 7:14
3. "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."  
(Al Maxey)

4. "...the church need not have either explicit mandate or permission for everything it wishes to do." (Rubel Shelly)
  5. John 4:24
- B. We cannot show reverence to God apart from obedience.
1. John 15:4-6, 14
  2. A show of spirituality is empty apart from obedience.
  3. Isa. 1:13; 1Sam. 15:22; 2Chron. 26:16-21
- C. God must be hallowed in worship - Lev. 10:3
1. In a time when entertainment, triteness, hype, and casualness is making inroads into worship, this reminder is needed.
  2. "There is a sacredness to worship that cannot be sacrificed on the altar of cultural relevancy." (Steve Higginbotham)
  3. "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)
- D. God must come before family and all other things - Lev. 10:4-7
1. 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.
  2. Note Aaron's response: "He held his peace" (10:3) and "did according to the word of Moses" (10:7).
  3. Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:59-60; Matt. 10:34-37

Conclusion:

- A. Nadab and Abihu serve as a demonstration of God's severity, and ought to remind us of the seriousness of serving God.
1. 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.
  2. If God is too strict in our opinion, it is because our opinion is wrong.
  3. 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.
  4. He is entitled to take drastic action in response to our casual disobedience.