

**April 14**

**Scriptures:** Read Leviticus 10

**Key Verse:** “...By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified...” (Leviticus 10:3)

## **Overview**

Immediately following the people’s awestruck response, as they prostrated themselves and worshipped God in fear and reverence because of the divine manifestation of God’s glory by the miraculous fall of fire (10:2), we read of the tragic incident with Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu. The same fire from God, which signified His acceptance and pleasure in the sacrificial offerings, became a weapon of His wrath and justice against something which very much displeased Him.

What had Nadab and Abihu done to provoke God to such a dramatic measure? (1) The most obvious reason we find stated in the Bible is that they offered profane or strange fire before the Lord which was in disobedience to Him (10:1). It was not the holy fire taken from the bronze altar of burnt offering, which the Lord Himself had kindled. (2) Then they each brought their own censers, not the one, which had been sanctified and especially made for use in the Tabernacle. Only things consecrated for holy service were allowed inside the Holy Place. (3) Also both, men offered the incense together, whereas only one was to do this, and that was the high priest. By doing this, they deliberately and disobediently took upon themselves the duty reserved for the high priest. They may have done this because of pride or arrogance in their new privileged position. They should have been all the more humble before God since, on one special occasion, they had been permitted to ascend Mt. Sinai and, from a distance, see God’s glory (Ex.24: 1).

(4) Another possible reason contributing to their death is that they may have been intoxicated (drunk), for immediately after this incident, the Lord gave a strong warning against any priest drinking alcohol when it is his time to go into the Tabernacle, “lest you die” (10:9). The Lord’s instructions are to be carried out properly and thoughtfully which drunkenness would prevent, along with this is the reason: “that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean” (10:10), They were also not to drink so that they may fulfill their important role of teaching their children (both natural) and spiritual children) all the ways of the Lord, as well as being a good example and living above reproach. Does this passage not have significance for believers today, those who are the Lord’s “royal priesthood” (1 Pet. 2:9), who are continually in His presence?

This event serves as a warning to all who are dedicated to God’s service. The things of the Lord and His holiness are not to be taken lightly. Certainly Aaron and his remaining two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, were greatly affected by this tragedy. They could speak no words of complaint, and Aaron was submissive because the Lord’s judgments are just – “So Aaron held his peace; God is holy and must be regarded as such when approached (see key verse, 10:3). It could have been out of fear that Aaron and his sons did not eat from the sin offering, thus angering Moses (10:16). It is possible that they were afraid to eat the holy food, in case they, too, were unworthy or unclean, and being sorrowful at the loss of their brothers, they must have had no appetite and may have

felt they were not in the right attitude to partake of the holy offering (10:19). Rather than letting it remain and see corruption, they burnt it totally. With Aaron's explanation. Moses' anger was appeased. Though Aaron and his two sons were disobedient, this time God was merciful, compassionate, and understanding, for it appears they were not punished.

### **Prayer**

Grant us, O Lord, Your favor because of our Lord Jesus. "Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne." We spend time in Your holy presence.