

## Leviticus 7-10 Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. THE OFFERINGS Chs 1-7

##### F. Laws Of The Offerings Ch 6:8–7:38

The first 7 chapters of Leviticus give us highly detailed instructions on how to offer the 5 main offerings the priests and people of Israel would bring to the Lord.

The Burnt Offering spoke of the *total consecration* to the Lord.

The Grain Offering spoke of the dedication of our *work* to the Lord.

The Peace Offering speaks of *restored fellowship* with God.

The Sin Offering pictures *forgiveness* by God through the sacrifice of a substitute.

As does the Trespass Offering, which represents the *removal of the debt of guilt*.

Then from 6:8 through the end of ch. 7 we have a bunch of various rules for all the offerings.

We ended with the beginning of ch. 7 last week so we'll pick it up there tonight.

### CHAPTER 7

**<sup>1</sup>Likewise this is the law of the trespass offering (it is most holy): <sup>2</sup>In the place where they kill the burnt offering they shall kill the trespass offering. And its blood he shall sprinkle all around on the altar. <sup>3</sup>And he shall offer from it all its fat. The fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails, <sup>4</sup>the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe attached to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; <sup>5</sup>and the priest shall burn them on the altar as an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a trespass offering. <sup>6</sup>Every male among the priests may eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. It is most holy. <sup>7</sup>The trespass offering is like the sin offering; there is one law for them both: the priest who makes atonement with it shall have it.**

The rules for the sin and trespass offerings were the same.

While the fat was burned on the altar, the meat portion of the sacrifices were for the priests.

One can well imagine that with all these offerings, there would have been an awful lot of meat – far more than the priests could consume in their normal diet.

What happened to all the excess meat?

It was sold by the priests to merchants who then resold it to the people.

This sale of meat helped to provide some income for the priests as well.

Since they didn't have other forms of income besides the regular giving of the people to the tabernacle, this sale of meat was one of their primary sources of support.

Not only was this practiced in the worship of God, but the pagan temples also followed this routine with the offerings made there.

And because of this, many early Christians would not eat meat – because they would not partake of that which had been offered to an idol!

Meat-eating became a big deal in some of the early churches – it was an on-going point of contention that threatened to split the church.

And this is why in Romans 14, Paul exhorts that we must not get into contentious debates over gray issues that are about personal conscience and not black & white issues of sin.

You see, some Christians said that meat is just meat; since an idol is nothing but a hunk of wood or stone, eating meat that some unknown pagan had offered to an idol meant nothing.

Other Christians felt that meat offered to an idol was spiritually tainted and could not be used!

This was purely an issue of personal conscience, but the non-meat-eaters were judging the meat-eaters for being *immoral*, while the meat-eaters were judging the non-meat-eaters as *legalists*.

Paul says – “STOP IT! Both of you!”

In these gray issues of conscience, where the Word of God is not *explicit* in calling something forbidden or permissible – live by your own conscience and respect the conscience of others without putting them under your own convictions!

Then he applies this rule to the whole issue of conscience – The Law of Love requires that we never put a cause to stumble in front of another.

That means that those who have liberty to DO a thing must never use that liberty in such a way that it would embolden or encourage a person who does not have that liberty of conscience to do it too.

Because if they did – it would violate their conscience, and so be sin.

Paul’s bottom line is this – our love for and protection of one another must be of a higher priority than our liberty to do or not do some thing.

While the eating of meat sacrificed to idols is not an issue we deal with today, we do have issues that fall under the scope of what Paul writes about in Romans 14; tobacco, alcohol, movies, dancing, & make-up.

These are all things the Church in the US has debated over the last hundred years.

**<sup>8</sup>And the priest who offers anyone’s burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered.**

The one part of the burnt offering that was *not* burned on the altar was the hide of the animal; this went to the officiating priest.

He would then trade or sell this to provide support for his family.

**<sup>9</sup>Also every grain offering that is baked in the oven and all that is prepared in the covered pan, or in a pan, shall be the priest’s who offers it. <sup>10</sup>Every grain offering, *whether* mixed with oil or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron, to one as *much* as the other.**

These offerings of grain would be the main dietary staple of the priest as bread was the foundation of the ancient diet.

They wouldn't sell this but would consume it themselves, along with their families.

**11** This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the LORD: **12** If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil. **13** Besides the cakes, as his offering he shall offer leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering. **14** And from it he shall offer one cake from each offering as a heave offering to the LORD. It shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering.

There was a *special kind* of peace offering which was called the *thank offering*.

It was the peace offering turned into an *even more* festive affair.

It was performed by the person whose heart was overwhelmed with the goodness of God and just wanted to express their deepest appreciation to Him.

To the offering of the animal was added some grain offerings that constituted a *whole meal*.

The “heave” offering mentioned here in v. 14 refers to the act of *lifting* something to the Lord as an actual giving to Him.

When we lift up our hands to the Lord we are essentially doing the same thing except we are not offering a loaf of bread – we are offering *ourselves*.

**15** The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until morning.

When someone makes this special thanksgiving peace offering, it's to be eaten immediately, not saved for leftovers.

**16** But if the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offers his sacrifice; but on the next day the remainder of it also may be eaten; **17** the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day must be burned with fire. **18** And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, nor shall it be imputed to him; it shall be an abomination to him who offers it, and the person who eats of it shall bear guilt.

A *regular* peace offering ought to be eaten on the same day it's offered as well, but if it was *too much* to consume on one day, then it could be carried over into the next day too. But that was it, none of it could be eaten on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day.

Now – what's the point of this? Why the big deal and why the different rules regarding left-overs?

In Deut. 12 we learn a further detail about the peace offerings – they were to be eaten in a *special place* -- as near the altar as possible.

People would bring their offerings to the tabernacle and offer them up to the

Lord.

The priests would give them back their portion, then they would gather with their family in a little spot just outside the door to the tabernacle and eat the festive meal as an act of fellowship with God.

The sense of immediacy was tied to their presence near the altar.

God wanted the people to realize two things:

1) All fellowship with Him comes through the *altar of sacrifice*.

Our access into God's presence is through Christ.

2) All fellowship with Him is something for *this moment*.

Fellowship with God is not like gas in our tank – we fill up once a week and then go off on our own.

Fellowship with the Lord is like the air in our lungs – you have to keep breathing if you want to stay alive.

The glory of God's presence is for *this moment* – we cannot live on yesterday's glory.

Why then the allowance for a 2<sup>nd</sup> day if there was left-over for the regular peace offering?

This was typically a much bigger affair than the Thanksgiving offering and something a family would plan & save up for.

They would camp out near the tabernacle and enjoy this meal, lasting all night and into the next day.

So God allowed it to be eaten on the next day because their little party could go that long.

But they were never to take home “*doggy bags*” of the peace offering.

It was a special meal they were to thoroughly enjoy *at one sitting*.

These instructions about the peace and thanksgiving offerings teach an important truth - God *encourages* a *joyous* attitude in our worship of Him.

Really – the peace offering was nothing less than a *holy party*!

Now – if the words “holy” & “party” just don't go together in your vocabulary, then you probably have a faulty view of what *holiness* is.

Holiness is not a stuffy prudishness that looks down its long nose at fun and pleasure.

Holiness means to be set apart from sin and to the Lord.

On the side of sin is pain, sorrow, loss, disease, decay, & death.

With God is consummate pleasure, the fullness of joy, eternal gain, health, and abundant life.

The holy man or woman is not the one who goes through life sneering at those who are having fun.

Contrary to popular opinion, the holy person does not look like they've been sucking on lemons.

The one who is truly holy is filled with Joy because he/she is filled with the Spirit.

The peace offering reminds us that our worship of God ought to be celebrative and joyous!

The command to keep no left-overs of the peace offering teaches us the truth that we cannot live today on yesterday's experience of God. It must be

fresh.

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**19** The flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten. It shall be burned with fire. And as for the *clean* flesh, all who are clean may eat of it. **20** But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the LORD, while he is unclean, that person shall be cut off from his people. **21** Moreover the person who touches any unclean thing, *such as* human uncleanness, *an* unclean animal, or any abominable unclean thing, and who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the LORD, that person shall be cut off from his people.”

While the peace offering was a time for joyous celebration with God, it was also to be recognized as a *reverent thing*.

Those who blatantly defied God’s holiness were to be executed.

**22** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **23** “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep or goat. **24** And the fat of an animal that dies *naturally*, and the fat of what is torn by wild beasts, may be used in any other way; but you shall by no means eat it.

God forbade the consumption of fat by the people – for reasons we saw last week.

The fat of non-offerings could be used to make soap or as lubricating or sealing grease, or in some other use but not eaten.

**25** For whoever eats the fat of the animal of which men offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, the person who eats it shall be cut off from his people. **26** Moreover you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, *whether* of bird or beast. **27** Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people.”

By “cut-off” God means literally cut-off, executed!

This seems like harsh treatment for what appears to us to be merely a religious ritual.

But God is deadly earnest – and for good reason.

He knows that the *beginning* of the slide of humanity into moral filth and unutterable abomination is when they mess with their knowledge of God and His holiness.

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Our nation & culture stands poised on the brink of annihilation for this very reason.

We have turned our back on God.

We have elevated man to the place of God – and armed with the fairy tale that man will improve to the place of perfection because he is innately good, we watch while our legal system falls apart and all morality and virtue disappear.

Just 50 years ago, the biggest problems teachers faced in school were students chewing gum and running in the hallways.

Today metal detectors frame the doors and armed police patrols are on every

high-school and some junior high campuses.

50 years ago people felt no need to lock their doors before going to bed.

Today they have multiple locks, alarms and metal bars on their windows.

50 years ago parents thought nothing of letting their children play in the park unsupervised, or go for a ride on their bike to the store.

Who does that today? No - Today we have *amber alerts*!

We have drive-bys and an STD epidemic that threatens to overwhelm the medical field and bankrupt us.

As long as man lives with no reference point higher than himself, then he is doomed.

Our only hope is a return to God – and not to the watered-down complaint God of so much of the modern church – but a holy God who hates sin!

For humanity to survive, it must have a fixed, unchanging moral reference point – A holy God who calls the shots precisely because He is God!

It's simple, we were made By God - FOR God.

If we reject God, then man has no purpose and will turn to whatever pleasure this present moment can be used for. That is the route to certain ruin!

And that is the path we are on.

This is why God gives such great details and tells the people to observe them carefully.

Those who defy them aren't just breaking them themselves – they are opening a spiritual Pandora's box that will destroy humanity!

There is only one way to deal with those who defy God's holiness – they must immediately experience the ultimate judgment – death!

They are a moral and spiritual threat that is as serious as serious can be.

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**28**Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **29**“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the LORD shall bring his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice of his peace offering. **30**His own hands shall bring the offerings made by fire to the LORD. The fat with the breast he shall bring, that the breast may be waved as a wave offering before the LORD. **31**And the priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast shall be Aaron’s and his sons’. **32**Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest as a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. **33**He among the sons of Aaron, who offers the blood of the peace offering and the fat, shall have the right thigh for *his* part. **34**For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering I have taken from the children of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the children of Israel by a statute forever.’”

**35**This *is* the consecrated portion for Aaron and his sons, from the offerings made by fire to the LORD, on the day when *Moses* presented them to minister to the LORD as priests. **36**The LORD

**commanded this to be given to them by the children of Israel, on the day that He anointed them, by a statute forever throughout their generations.**

**<sup>37</sup>This is the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the consecrations, and the sacrifice of the peace offering, <sup>38</sup>which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, on the day when He commanded the children of Israel to offer their offerings to the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai.**

I realize as we read these things it seems like just a detailed set of rather uninteresting technical instructions.

What may help is to attempt to picture them.

Imagine the worshipper whose brought his animal to the tabernacle and prepared it for offering to the Lord.

He takes a portion of it and lifts it before the Lord, and then hands it over to the priest who takes it and places it in a pot on the altar.

Then the priest, as the representative of the Lord, takes some of that meat out and begins to eat while the worshipper sits at his table not far away and shares some of the same offering with his family.

Communion – fellowship – the mutual sharing of lives; that’s what God wants to get across to the people.

He’s invited all of them to come and made a way for even the most poor to approach and fellowship with Him.

The point is - there *is* a way – it’s a very narrow way, but it’s also *clear*, made so by the details given in these chapters.

All of what we find was fulfilled by Jesus when He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

## **II. CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS    Chs 8–10**

### ***A. Investiture of the Priests by Moses    Ch 8***

**<sup>1</sup>And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, the anointing oil, a bull as the sin offering, two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; <sup>3</sup>and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.”**

The time has come for Aaron to be inaugurated into his role as high priest and his sons in the role of his assistants.

**<sup>4</sup>So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. And the congregation was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. <sup>5</sup>And Moses said to the congregation, “This is what the LORD commanded to be done.”**

**<sup>6</sup>Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water. <sup>7</sup>And he put the tunic on him, girded him with the sash, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him; and he girded him with**

the intricately woven band of the ephod, and with it tied *the ephod* on him. <sup>8</sup>Then he put the breastplate on him, and he put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate. <sup>9</sup>And he put the turban on his head. Also on the turban, on its front, he put the golden plate, the holy crown, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>10</sup>Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them. <sup>11</sup>He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the laver and its base, to consecrate them. <sup>12</sup>And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him.

Six times in ch. 8 we read that Moses “consecrated” something.

The word is *qadash* – it means to *separate* something to a special use.

It's removed from normal use to be used in a manner that is the most important, the most valuable.

We find it rendered in several different ways in our English Bibles: *Sanctified, hallowed, dedicated, prepared, appointed, and consecrated* are some of the ways it's translated.

Linguists have found that the word's origin comes from the same word as “cut.”<sup>[1]</sup>

The idea is *separation*– the cut is a *division* that comes between what is common and what is special.

The word was used almost exclusively in a spiritual sense, referring to those implements and means of worship that were dedicated to God.

God Himself was holy – a *cut above* all else.

Therefore that which was used in the worship of Him had to be holy; set apart from common use & given over completely to Him!

That is what Moses is doing here – he's setting the tabernacle, its implements and furniture, and the priests *apart* to God.

<sup>13</sup>Then Moses brought Aaron's sons and put tunics on them, girded them with sashes, and put hats on them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>14</sup>And he brought the bull for the sin offering. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin offering, <sup>15</sup>and Moses killed *it*. Then he took the blood, and put *some* on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and purified the altar. And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, and consecrated it, to make atonement for it. <sup>16</sup>Then he took all the fat that was on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned *them* on the altar. <sup>17</sup>But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal, he burned with fire outside the camp, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>18</sup>Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering.



The bull in v. 14 was for a sin offering, to atone for the sins of Aaron and his sons and to inaugurate the altar as the place of atonement.

This offering of the ram was the burnt offering, signifying Aaron's complete consecration to the task of high priest.

**And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>19</sup>and Moses killed *it*. Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. <sup>20</sup>And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat. <sup>21</sup>Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water. And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.**

**<sup>22</sup>And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration.**

This second ram is part 2 of the burnt offering of the first ram in v. 18.

That ram was wholly burnt as a symbol of total consecration.

This ram would serve another purpose as we'll see – but it was all part of the same idea of total consecration.

**Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>23</sup>and Moses killed *it*. Also he took *some* of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>24</sup>Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put *some* of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.**

The blood on Aaron's ear, thumb, and toe was another picture of his total consecration as high priest.

The blood on his ear meant that he was now set apart to listen to the voice of God.

His hearing was to be set apart to holiness – not to listening to the counsel and wisdom of man, but the Word of the Lord.

The blood on his thumb meant his hands were now consecrated to a holy work.

All that he did was for the glory of God.

The blood on his toe meant his feet would walk the path of holiness and fellowship with the Lord.

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In 1 Peter 2, we learn that as Christians, we are *all* priests. [Vs. 5 & 9]

And the picture of consecration we find here in Leviticus is meant to frame our understanding of our role.

Our lives are not to be divided up into compartments: with our work life here, our family life here and our church or religious life over here in a little corner called Sunday morning and Wednesday nights.

Because we are Christians all the time, we are priests all the time.

Our work and family life fall under the blood of Christ as well as our time at church.

We ought to be no less dedicated to the Lord at work than when we are when we are singing praise songs.

We ought to be no less diligent to follow the Lord's direction when we are at the Mall than when we are seeking Him for counsel regarding our vocation or relationships.

Right now – you have sanctified your ears by setting them apart to study the Word of God.

Should they be any less set apart to the Lord when you leave here and turn on the radio? What are the lyrics in the music you listen to about?

At work do you lend your ears to gossip?

Hey wait – there's blood on your ears!

Right now, you have sanctified your hands to hold the Word of God.

Should they be any less set apart to the Lord when you leave here and go home and take hold of the computer mouse?

Look, there's blood on your thumb!

Right now, your feet are sanctified by standing in a holy place.

Should they be any less set apart to the Lord when you leave here and go out into the world?

Look there's blood on your toe!

YOU BELONG TO GOD! Jesus purchased you with His blood and His blood now covers you – setting you apart from all others as the special treasure and possession of God.

LOOK AT THE BLOOD! You are consecrated to God!

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**25**Then he took the fat and the fat tail, all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh; **26**and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread *anointed with* oil, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat and on the right thigh; **27**and he put all *these* in Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them as a wave offering before the LORD. **28**Then Moses took them from their hands and burned *them* on the altar, on the burnt offering. They were consecration offerings for a sweet aroma. That was an offering made by fire to the LORD. **29**And Moses took the breast and waved it as a wave offering before the LORD. It was Moses' part of the ram of consecration, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

These wave offerings were simply a way for them to participate more fully in *identifying with* the offering.

**30**Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which *was* on the altar, and sprinkled *it* on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

The garments of the high priest, described in detail in Exodus, were gorgeous!

It's doubtful if any human being has been arrayed in as great a majestic splendor as the high priest of Israel when he was in his full regalia.

Yet here we read that once Aaron had donned his garments, Moses splattered them with oil and blood from the altar.

It seems inevitable – I buy a new shirt or pair of pants, and the first time I wear them – splotch – I get something spilled on them.

And the whiter the garment, the more quickly and more darkly it gets stained.

I love real light colored pants, but I hate wearing them because it's a rule of physics – such pants are spill magnets.

I have watched spills fall *sideways* just so they can get on my white pants!

It doesn't matter how many times it happens – I still get upset!

The high priest's garments were made of the finest white linen!

This cloth was so bright it would literally dazzle in the noonday sun.

Yet here, while it is brand spanking new, Moses splatters it with oil and blood.

Why? It's a picture of the fact, that no matter how majestic and glorious man is, there is no access to God apart from the blood of atonement.

And as skillful, talented, and obedient a man might be, his work is of no use to God unless he is anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

**31** And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, “Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that is in the basket of consecration offerings, as I commanded, saying, ‘Aaron and his sons shall eat it.’ **32** What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire. **33** And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting for seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended. For seven days he shall consecrate you.

In other words – these sacrifices and this meal were repeated each day for 7 days.

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**34** As he has done this day, so the LORD has commanded to do, to make atonement for you. **35** Therefore you shall stay at the door of the tabernacle of meeting day and night for seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, so that you may not die; for so I have been commanded.” **36** So Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.

### ***B. Offerings Presented by Aaron Ch 9***

**1** It came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. **2** And he said to Aaron, “Take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer *them* before the LORD. **3** And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying, ‘Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, *both* of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering, **4** also a bull and a ram as peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD, and a grain offering mixed with oil; for today the LORD will appear to you.’”

Now that the priests have been inaugurated to their office, it's time for the official worship of the nation to begin.

So the sacrifices spelled out in Chs. 1-7 are brought to be offered up on the altar.

**<sup>5</sup>So they brought what Moses commanded before the tabernacle of meeting. And all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD. <sup>6</sup>Then Moses said, “This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded you to do, and the glory of the LORD will appear to you.”**

**<sup>7</sup>And Moses said to Aaron, “Go to the altar, offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people. Offer the offering of the people, and make atonement for them, as the LORD commanded.”**

**<sup>8</sup>Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. <sup>9</sup>Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him. And he dipped his finger in the blood, put *it* on the horns of the altar, and poured the blood at the base of the altar. <sup>10</sup>But the fat, the kidneys, and the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offering he burned on the altar, as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>11</sup>The flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp.**

**<sup>12</sup>And he killed the burnt offering; and Aaron’s sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar. <sup>13</sup>Then they presented the burnt offering to him, with its pieces and head, and he burned *them* on the altar. <sup>14</sup>And he washed the entrails and the legs, and burned *them* with the burnt offering on the altar.**

**<sup>15</sup>Then he brought the people’s offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and killed it and offered it for sin, like the first one. <sup>16</sup>And he brought the burnt offering and offered it according to the prescribed manner. <sup>17</sup>Then he brought the grain offering, took a handful of it, and burned *it* on the altar, besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning.**

**<sup>18</sup>He also killed the bull and the ram as sacrifices of peace offerings, which were for the people. And Aaron’s sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar, <sup>19</sup>and the fat from the bull and the ram—the fatty tail, what covers *the entrails* and the kidneys, and the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver; <sup>20</sup>and they put the fat on the breasts. Then he burned the fat on the altar; <sup>21</sup>but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved as a wave offering before the LORD, as Moses had commanded.**

**<sup>22</sup>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.**

Two blessings are mentioned here:

One Aaron gave by himself after he made the sacrifices for the people.

The other, he and Moses gave together after coming out of the tabernacle.

The first reminds us that blessing can only come *after* sacrifice.

Ephesians 1 is an incredible list of the abundant blessings we have in Christ.

But that's just the point – they are all found IN Christ!

Apart from His sacrifice on our behalf, we have no standing in favor before a holy God.

The second blessing of Moses and Aaron when they exited the tabernacle teaches us that we must be in fellowship with God and one another if we're to be a blessing to others.

**23b Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, <sup>24</sup>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.**

The closing verses of Exodus tells us how the glory of the Lord had already descended on the tabernacle to rest on top of the mercy seat, between the cherubim above the ark of the covenant.

Now that the priesthood is installed, and the initial sacrifices have been made, there's nothing barring the emergence of the presence of God.

The whole point of the tabernacle, the priesthood, and the sacrifices was so that the people could enjoy fellowship with God.

So God now shows them this is the purpose of the whole thing by showing up visibly.

Fire flashes forth from inside the holy of holies all the way into the courtyard of the tabernacle and ignites the offerings laid on the altar.

Since the whole nation is gathered round to watch when they see this, they throw themselves on the ground with a shout of awe & surprise.

### **C. Nadab and Abihu's Sacrilege Ch 10**

**<sup>1</sup>Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. <sup>2</sup>So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. <sup>3</sup>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.**

Just as the fire had come out to consume the sacrifices on the altar, so now it shot forth and consumed the two eldest sons of Aaron.

Everything these two men did was wrong. [\[2\]](#)

To begin with, they were *the wrong people* to be handling the incense and presenting it to the Lord.

This was the task of their father, the high priest (Ex. 30:7–10).

They also used *the wrong instruments*, their own censers instead of the censer of the high priest, sanctified by the special anointing oil (40:9).

They acted at *the wrong time*, for it was only on the annual Day of Atonement that the high priest was permitted to take incense into the holy of holies, and even then he had to submit to a special ritual (Lev. 16:1ff).

They acted under *the wrong authority*.

They didn't consult with Moses or their father about what they did, they just did it, despite the fact they knew how very particular God was about the details of worshiping Him.

In burning the incense, they used *the wrong fire*, called here "strange fire."

The high priest was commanded to burn the incense on coals taken from the brazen altar (16:12), but Nadab and Abihu supplied their own fire, probably from a torch that lit the courtyard.

They acted from *the wrong motive* and didn't seek to glorify God alone.

V. 3 makes it clear that their desire wasn't to sanctify & glorify the Lord but to promote themselves and appear important.

They were *glory hounds* – but they were turned into *hot dogs*.

Nadab & Abihu have much to tell us about how God feels about those who seek to enrich or promote themselves off Him.

Whenever God is at work in a dramatic way, there will always be those who see it as a platform to promote themselves.

They will angle to insert themselves between the demonstration of God's glory and the sight of the people so that they appear to be connected to that glory.

J. Edwin Orr was the modern ages foremost authority on revival.

Orr was not only a great scholar in the study of revival from an historical perspective – in his younger years he was a revivalist preacher and teacher who was blessed by the Lord to see several revivals begin through his ministry.

It was his conclusion that what keeps revival from breaking out is the prayerlessness of God's people, and what kills it once it's begun are the Nadabs and Abihus who try to make merchandise of it and use it for their own glory.

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In the early days of the Jesus movement, one of its most distinctive marks was the music.

It was simple – but it was glorious.

Then the Nadab of the record industry came along.

Several decades ago, Charles Sheldon wrote a classic called *In His Steps*.

It was a work of fiction that presented the story of several people who were faced with tough moral challenges and who navigated them by asking the question, "What would Jesus do?"

For decades that little book provided wonderful insight for millions of Christians in how to live faithfully in the midst of a confusing moral landscape.

Then some slick Abihu turned “WWJD” into a slogan, dropped it into his censer, and began offering it up as strange fire for the mass-market in just about every form of product imaginable.

And now, almost no one reads Sheldon’s book anymore because the fad of “What Would Jesus Do” has passed and the book appears rather *kitschy* now.

A couple years ago, Bruce Wilkinson wrote a wonderful little book about how to simply enjoy God, and it was so used of the Lord, the Nadab & Abihu marketers got a hold of it and turned it into a cash cow of key-chains, bumper stickers & T-shirts.

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**<sup>4</sup>Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, “Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.” <sup>5</sup>So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had said.**

**<sup>6</sup>And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, “Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD has kindled. <sup>7</sup>You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die, for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you.” And they did according to the word of Moses.**

It would be Aaron’s and his other son’s natural inclination to mourn the death of his sons – but Moses warned them – not now!

The whole reason the boys were smoked was because they attempted to distract from God’s glory.

If Aaron left his post now to mourn his sons, it would draw the attention off God, and it would appear to the people to be a sign that what God had done was somehow wrong.

As grievous as the loss of his sons was – Aaron must not allow his emotions to carry him away into thoughts or conclusion about God that were unwarranted or wrong.

Listen – what God did with Nadab & Abihu was totally just! The boys had erred grievously!

If God had not judged them in this way, it would have sent the wrong message to them, to the rest of the priests, and to the people.

The glory and holiness of God would have been defamed, and they would be right back to the problem we talked about earlier.

**<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, saying: <sup>9</sup>“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,* <sup>10</sup>that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, <sup>11</sup>and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.”**

Along with all the other Nadab & Abihu had done wrong was the fact that they had depended on *the wrong energy*.

These vs. imply they were under the influence of alcohol.

Alcohol impairs one's ability to make wise choices. It acts as a depressant that stifles the moral faculties.

Anyone whose felt the effects of alcohol or been around those who are under it's influence knows that there is a much greater willingness to do things they would never think about doing while sober.

God forbade the priests from drinking when they served in their function as priests because it impaired their moral faculties.

In Ephesians 5:18 we read, "And be not drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the Spirit."

Our service of the Lord and one another is to be empowered by the Spirit of God, not the spirits of Jack Daniels or Jim Beam.

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**12**And Moses spoke to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons who were left: "Take the grain offering that remains of the offerings made by fire to the LORD, and eat it without leaven beside the altar; for it *is* most holy. **13**You shall eat it in a holy place, because it *is* your due and your sons' due, of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD; for so I have been commanded. **14**The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place, you, your sons, and your daughters with you; for *they are* your due and your sons' due, *which* are given from the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel. **15**The thigh of the heave offering and the breast of the wave offering they shall bring with the offerings of fat made by fire, to offer as a wave offering before the LORD. And it shall be yours and your sons' with you, by a statute forever, as the LORD has commanded."

**16**Then Moses made careful inquiry about the goat of the sin offering, and there it was—burned up. And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron *who were left*, saying, **17**"Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place, since it *is* most holy, and God has given it to you to bear the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD? **18**See! Its blood was not brought inside the holy *place*; indeed you should have eaten it in a holy *place*, as I commanded."

**19**And Aaron said to Moses, "Look, this day they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and such things have befallen me! *If* I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?" **20**So when Moses heard *that*, he was content.

In light of what happened with Aaron's sons, Moses was concerned lest any other



commandment be disobeyed and God's judgment fall again. [3]

So when he discovered that the sin offering hadn't been presented & eaten properly he was angry.

But Aaron's explanation satisfied him.

Aaron said he couldn't eat the offering with a good conscience because of sorrow over his sons' deaths.

He knew the Lord could see his heart, and he wasn't going to attempt to fool God by playing the hypocrite and eating the sacrifice as if everything was hunky-dory.

Aaron knew that a mere mechanical observance of the ritual wouldn't have pleased God.

Because the anointing oil was still on him and he was still charged with his duties as high priest, he couldn't express his grief in the usual way.

But he *could* fast because nothing in the law forbade this expression of his sorrow.

Moses understood that Aaron's heart was to be open and honest before the Lord and to honor Him in all things and knew this would be acceptable to God.

## CONCLUSION

As we end tonight, let consider why God didn't just *warn* Nadab & Abihu? Why kill them?

As we look at Scripture, we find that *at the beginning* of a new era of redemptive history, God often deals harshly with sin among His people.

We see it here with Nadab and Abihu as the formal worship of the nation of Israel begins at the foot of Mount Sinai – remember – this is the very first days of the nation.

Some time later, Korah and some fellows conspirators decided to challenge Moses' leadership; suggesting that God hadn't really called him to lead the nation.

This was a crisis God settled by causing the ground to open up and swallow them!

We see it when Israel entered the promised land and Achan stole some of the forbidden loot from Jericho.

This was a crucial moment in Israel's history because one of the main imperatives of the Conquest of Canaan was to have nothing whatever to do with the pagans who lived there.

By taking of Jericho's wealth – Achan was infecting the nation with greed and moral pollution.

This isn't just an OT thing either – Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead in the days of the early church when they lied to the Apostles.

The church was marked by a purity and love that was astounding, but A & S were driven by unholy ambition and greed.

The point God was making crystal clear to His people is that while He's a merciful, loving and gracious God who keeps His word, He is also a holy God who must judge sin.

They must never presume upon His mercy and grace and think they can get

away with anything.  
 When fire comes forth and toasts Aaron's sons -  
 When the ground opens up and swallows Korah and his fellow rebels –  
 When Ananias and Sapphira keel over dead –  
 All those who see it are reminded that God *is* HOLY and not to be trifled  
 with!

Following Nadab & Abihu's death, the people were united in their determination to  
 serve and worship God.  
 Following Achan's & Korah's judgments, the people renewed their  
 commitments to the Lord  
 A revival broke out upon the death of Ananias and Sapphira in the early  
 church.

Listen to me – J. Edwin Orr's last message before he died was titled, "Revival Is  
 Like Judgment Day." [Summarize]  
 We say we want revival – and truly, without revival, our nation is doomed!  
 But do we realize the cost of revival?  
 It will not come while we are prayerless.  
 And it will not come while we refuse to get serious about the call to  
 holiness!  
 Are we willing to shrink in numbers before we grow in revival?  
 What will we do if some modern day Nadab's, Abihus', Achan's, Korah's,  
 Ananias's & Sapphiras keel over dead in our midst?  
 We long to see the power of God in healings, miracles, and the raising of  
 people from the dead; do we realize the route there may lie through some  
 deaths first?

You see – God has NOT CHANGED! He is still HOLY!  
 That may very well be a lesson we can only learn the hard way.

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[1] TWOT - #1990

[2] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1994). *Be holy*. "Becoming 'set apart' for God"--Cover.;  
 "An Old Testament study--Leviticus"--Cover. (Le 10:1). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor  
 Books.

[3] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1994). *Be holy*. "Becoming 'set apart' for God"--Cover.;  
 "An Old Testament study--Leviticus"--Cover. (Le 10:1). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor  
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