Lev. 10:3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

Ex 19:22 And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them.

Rev. 14:7*—Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

God’s Judgments on man are with Mercy and are for the purpose to cause true repentance not destruction.

The judgments of God become more and more severe as man refuses to repent.

1Ch 16:25 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods.

Ps 96:4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

Ps 145:3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

1. **The Judgment of God upon False Worship by Two Priests, Nadab and Abihu: This Shows the Fate of All Who Approach God in a Wrong Way,** [**10:1-20**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A1-20)

**Introduction**: the judgment of God is a forgotten subject. There is little fear of God in the world today. Most people deny, reject, and ignore the judgment of God. The thoughts of judgment and fear of God are considered by some to be unhealthy,

(The cause of some phobia and obsession among sensitive-natured people)

There is the feeling that what needs to be stressed among society is only the love and forgiveness of God, not the judgment of God.

In many parts of the Church the biblical view of divine judgment is forgotten

'God will forgive me. That's his job,'

This chapter covers a horrible tragedy, a tragedy that exposes man's long history of pride and self-righteousness in approaching God. Remember what had just happened. The glory of God's holy presence had just been revealed to the people. The glorious day of dedication—the dedication of the people and the Tabernacle—had just occurred. But then all of a sudden, two of Aaron's sons who had just been ordained as priests rejected God's clear commandment. They disobeyed God. They approached God in their own way, as they wished instead of as God said. They rejected the way of approach appointed by God and determined their own way. Consequently, the judgment of God struck out against them. This is the subject of this passage: *The Judgment of God upon The False Worship of Two Priests, Nadab and Abihu: The Fate of All Who Approach God in a Wrong Way*,

**1. JUDGMENT** False Fire **False Worship,— False Ministry,**: the sin and judgment of false worshippers.

Note what Aaron's two sons did. They took their censors and put the hot coals of some convenient fire in them. They then laid incense on the coals and went into the Tabernacle, placing the burning incense on the Altar of Incense.

1. They offered strange, fire to the Lord.

They took the fiery coals from some fire burning nearby, some convenient fire. This was wrong, for God had insisted that the fiery coals come from the altar of Burnt Offering, never from any other source.

**"And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail:" (**[**Leviticus 16:12**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+16%3A12)**).**

 The live coals that were to be used to start the Alter of Incense were to come from the altar of Burnt Offering.

The Alter of Burnt Offering symbolized atonement or reconciliation with God; whereas the Altar of Incense symbolized prayer.

The sweet incense ascending up toward heaven pictured the prayers of God's people ascending up to God. But prayer is based upon the atonement, upon a person's being reconciled with God through the atoning sacrifice of the Burnt Offering. If a person is not reconciled with God, his prayers are obviously not answered.

**"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (**[**Psalm 66:18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+66%3A18)**).**

A person has to be cleansed from sin through the atonement in order for God to answer his prayers.

Prayer is based upon the atoning sacrifice of the Burnt Offering (a symbol of Christ).

In light of this, the two sons of Aaron committed a serious, fatal sin.

They approached God in a wrong way, contrary to His direct command.

They confused the very meaning of worship.

They twisted and distorted worship.

They approached God as they desired not as God commanded.

They offered a false worship to God: a will worship, a self-made worship, a worship made and created in their own minds, a worship of self-righteousness.

The holy presence of God was manifested, His glory. No person was allowed to enter this hallowed and holy room except the High Priest and he only once a year.

Le 16:2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.

2.   Fire from God's glory shot out from the presence of the Lord and burned them ([Leviticus 10:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A2)). They died before the Lord.

We must always remember that the true worship and religion of God are a *revealed worship* and a *revealed religion*.

God has revealed through His Son and the Holy Scriptures exactly how His people are to worship Him. But these two priests ignored and rejected God's way.

They created and developed their own way to approach God.

How like so many today who approach God as they think and as they wish, ignoring God's way and His clear instructions.

**"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way,  the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (**[**John 14:6**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+14%3A6)**).**

**"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth" (**[**John 4:22-24**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+4%3A22-24)**).**

**"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (**[**Acts 4:12**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+4%3A12)**).**

**2. Judgment— False Worship**: there is the reason why God judges false worshippers.

1.  False worshippers fail to approach God exactly as He says and commands ([Leviticus 10:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A3)). God had been very clear about how the Altar of Incense was to be approached. Keep in mind that the Altar of Incense pictured exactly how God was to be approached in prayer. Prayer is based upon the atoning sacrifice.

Approaching God through the atoning sacrifice is the only way God can accept a person and answer his prayers. This truth has to be taught to the people of the earth. This task belongs primarily to the priests, the ministers of God. Above everyone else, the priests were to teach people how to approach God. The two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, failed to approach God as He commanded.

God tells man exactly how to approach Him. God has revealed the way, the truth, and the life to us. God has revealed...

•  the way of worship to us

•  the truth of worship to us

•  the life of worship to us

God has given us His *revealed worship*, His revealed religion. We are to worship God *exactly* as He has shown us. We are to approach God exactly as He has revealed.

**"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (**[**John 4:22-24**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+4%3A22-24)**).**

**"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way,  the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (**[**John 14:6**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+14%3A6)**).**

**"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (**[**Acts 4:12**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+4%3A12)**).**

**"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (**[**1 Cor. 3:11**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+3%3A11)**).**

2.  False worshippers fail to acknowledge God's holiness and fail to honor Him

God is so holy—so full of light, righteousness, purity, and perfection—that no person can ever stand in His presence. The blazing light of His holiness would do just what it did to Nadab and Abihu: strike them dead.

The point: any person who ever approaches God must acknowledge God's holiness and his own unworthiness. He must acknowledge how great God is in all His holy nature and being, and how sinful and short man is. When a person does this, he willingly listens to God. He willingly approaches God through the atoning sacrifice. He confesses that he is a sinner, that he has no access into God's presence—no right whatsoever to approach God—except as God dictates. The person is led by God's holiness to seek God just as God says—through the atoning sacrifice. He knows that his prayers are answered because of the atoning sacrifice.

Note how this honors God. A person honors God when he obeys God, approaches God as God commands. When a person obeys God, approaches God exactly as He says, God hears and answers the person's prayers.

The point: God judges false worshippers, any persons who fail to acknowledge God's holiness and who fail to honor Him.

The judgment of God is to fall upon...

•  all false worshippers

•  all who approach God in a wrong way

•  all who ignore and disobey the clear instructions of God's Holy Word

**"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (**[**Matthew 5:20**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+5%3A20)**).**

**"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (**[**Mark 8:38**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mk+8%3A38)**).**

**"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (**[**John 3:19**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A19)**).**

**"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (**[**1 Cor. 15:34**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+15%3A34)**).**

**"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,  In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (**[**2 Thes. 1:7-8**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Th+1%3A7-8)**).**

**"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (**[**Isaiah 64:6**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+64%3A6)**).**

**"I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (**[**Jeremiah 17:10**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jer+17%3A10)**).**

How to prevent the judgment of God

There are five key essentials to prevent the judgment of God.

All five essentials

make absolutely sure that we approach and serve God exactly as He says

1.  The way to prevent the judgment of God is to guard against defilement ([Leviticus 10:4-5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A4-5)). Note that Aaron was not allowed to take care of his two dead sons. Priests were forbidden to touch or go near a corpse. Why? Because death symbolized defilement and uncleanness, corruption and decay. Defilement and corruption disqualified a priest from performing his service for God. For this reason, Aaron was forbidden to touch the two dead bodies despite the fact that they were his sons. Note that Moses had the two nephews of Aaron remove the dead bodies (the defilement) outside the camp ([Leviticus 10:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A5)).

2.  The way to prevent the judgment of God is to show total devotion to God ([Leviticus 10:6-7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A6-7)). Note that Aaron and his two surviving sons were not even allowed to share in the rites of mourning. They had to leave the mourning and the taking care of the bodies in the hands of their relatives ([Leviticus 10:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A6)). Why? Because the priests had to show that they fully agreed with God's judgment against sin: they did not condone sin. The priests had to show that they were totally devoted to God, and the people had to understand their total devotion. Note that Aaron and his sons were to remain in the Tabernacle and complete their service for the Lord ([Leviticus 10:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A7)). They were to be steadfast, unmovable in their service for God. Note that this is exactly what Aaron and his two surviving sons did. They obeyed God: they showed that they were totally devoted to God. Think of the devotion of Aaron. His two sons had just been struck dead by the holiness of God because of a terrible sin they had committed. Yet Aaron, though gripped with a deep sense of grief and sorrow, continued on, completing his service for God. What devotion!

3.  The way to prevent the judgment of God is no drinking wine or strong drink ([Leviticus 10:8-9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A8-9)). Note this is a very special commandment from God to the priest, Aaron. In fact, this is the only time in Leviticus that God speaks directly to Aaron. Up to this time, God had instructed Aaron through his mediator, Moses. The fact that God Himself gave this commandment to Aaron shows the importance of the commandment. But note this fact as well: the commandment is to be a permanent commandment for all generations.

4.  The way to prevent the judgment of God is to live totally for God ([Leviticus 10:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A10)). Within the Tabernacle, there was both holy food and common food. In fact, most of the items and functions in the Tabernacle were counted holy by God. For example, the fire in the Tabernacle was counted as holy fire; whereas, all other fire was counted as common fire.

All were discern between the holy and the common, between the clean and the unclean.

•  between right and wrong

•  between what God has said to do and said not to do

•  between how to approach God and how not to approach God

•  between what is allowed and what is not allowed

•  between how to serve God and how not to serve God

•  between what is holy and pure and what is unholy and impure

5.  The way to prevent the judgment of God is to teach the people all the laws or commandments of God ([Leviticus 10:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+10%3A11)).

Once they know the commandments of God, they can escape the judgment of God.

 The lesson to us is clear: All must do all they can to prevent the judgment of God, prevent His judgment from falling upon them or upon any other believer. The way to escape the judgment of God is the same for us is as it was for Aaron and the Israelites.

1)  We must guard against defilement and guard against all sin if we wish to escape the judgment of God.

**"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak" (**[**Matthew 26:41**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+26%3A41)**).**

**"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you,* and thereby many be defiled" (**[**Hebrews 12:12**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A12)**).**

**"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (**[**1 Peter 5:8**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+5%3A8)**).**

2)  We must show total devotion to God if we wish to escape the judgment of God.

**"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (**[**Deut. 6:5**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+6%3A5)**).**

**"Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, *and that* seek him with the whole heart" (**[**Psalm 119:2**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+119%3A2)**).**

**"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (**[**Proverbs 3:5**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Pr+3%3A5)**).**

**"And ye shall seek me, and find *me,* when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (**[**Jeremiah 29:13**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jer+29%3A13)**).**

**"Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning" (**[**Joel 2:12**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Joel+2%3A12)**).**

3)  We must have no wine or strong drink if we wish to escape the judgment of God.

**"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (**[**Luke 21:34**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lk+21%3A34)**)**

**"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" (**[**Romans 13:13**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+13%3A13)**).**

**"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (**[**1 Cor. 6:9-10**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+6%3A9-10)**).**

4)  We must live totally for God: learn to discern between the holy and common, between the clean and unclean if we wish to escape the judgment of God.

**"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them,* because they are spiritually discerned" (**[**1 Cor. 2:14**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+2%3A14)**).**

**"But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (**[**Hebrews 5:14**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+5%3A14)**).**

**"Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" (**[**1 Kings 3:9**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ki+3%3A9)**).**

**"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth" (**[**Isaiah 11:2-4**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+11%3A2-4)**).**

5)  We must teach the people all the laws or commandments of God if we wish to escape the judgment of God.

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen" (**[**Matthew 28:19-20**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+28%3A19-20)**).**

**"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (**[**Acts 5:20**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+5%3A20)**).**

**"For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. These things command and teach" (**[**1 Tim. 4:10-11**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ti+4%3A10-11)**).**

**"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (**[**2 Tim. 2:1-2**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ti+2%3A1-2)**).**

**"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men,* apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (**[**2 Tim. 2:24-26**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ti+2%3A24-26)**).**

**"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (**[**Titus 2:15**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Tit+2%3A15)**).**

 MERCY **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (**[**Ephes. 2:4-5**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eph+2%3A4-5)**).**

**"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (**[**Titus 3:4-7**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Tit+3%3A4-7)**).**

**"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (**[**2 Peter 3:9**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Pe+3%3A9)**).**

**"*It is of* the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" (**[**Lament. 3:22**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=La+3%3A22)**).**

**"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (**[**Joel 2:13**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Joel+2%3A13)**).Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy" (**[**Micah 7:18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mic+7%3A18)**).**