

Leviticus 10:1–7

Coming Near God's Inescapable Glory: Only in Christ, Only as Commanded

**Friday, September 15, 2023 • Read Leviticus 10:1–7**

*Questions from the Scripture text: Who act in v1? Whose sons are they? What does this make them? What do they take? What do they put on it? What do they put on it? What does the Holy Spirit call this fire? Before Whom do they offer it? What had He not done? What comes out in v2? From where/Whom? What does it do to Nadab and Abihu? What happens to them? Before Whom? Who speaks in v3? To whom? Whose words does he deliver? Concerning what group of people, or what action, is the Lord speaking? How must those who draw near regard the Lord? Before Whom does He insist upon being glorified? What does this imply that Nadab and Abihu were not doing? How does Aaron respond to Moses's statement? Whom does Moses call in v4? What relation are they to Aaron? Where does Moses tell them to go? And carry what? Where? So where do they go (v5)? How do they carry them? Where? What important qualifier ends v5? To whom does Moses now speak in v6? What does he tell them not to do to themselves? What will happen to them if they do? What will happen to all the people? Who must mourn this new burning? How many of them must do so? Who has kindled it? But where mustn't Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar go? What would happen to them? Why? What does the end of v7 say that they do?*

**What can turn God's glory from a blessing into a curse?** Leviticus 10:1–7 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when we approach the Lord in our own way, His glory becomes a curse to us rather than a blessing.**

It must have seemed like a good idea to Nadab and Abihu. God has just displayed His glory. His people have just worshiped Him. Why not offer some burning incense in front of the tabernacle for all the people to rejoice in before Him?

**Deadly worship.** But in the worship of God, it is never a good idea to do anything that isn't God's idea for us to do that in His worship. v1 calls the fire strange (NKJ "profane") and explains that by saying, "which He had not commanded them."

Here are 40% of the priestly family. On the first day after their ordination had been completed. Seven days' worth of special sin offerings have been made for them. "The anointing oil of YHWH was upon" them (cf. v7). If anyone could ever have been permitted to offer just a little of their own addition to the prescribed worship, it would be they.

But that's part of the point, isn't it? YHWH says that if we come in our own way despises His holiness and denies His glory (v3). And no amount of seeming worshipfulness or sincerity can compensate for that.

**Christless worship.** Indeed, we have been hearing for months, from the beginning of Leviticus, that all that the Lord has given as the way of worship is really coming through Christ. The tabernacle, the priesthood, the sacrifices—all were shadow-pictures of Christ. To come to God in any other way than what He has commanded is to come without Christ!

This explains a shocking detail in v2. The fire comes out from YHWH to devour them. It passes over the mercy seat, out of the holy of holies, past the altar of incense, past the lampstand, past the table of showbread, out the front of the tent, and consumed them. Even the mercy seat could not save them. Without Christ, the glory of God is a curse, not a blessing.

And the supernatural nature of this cursing fire is all-the-more highlighted by an easy-to-miss detail in v5. The fire that consumed Nadab and Abihu was focused so particularly upon them that their holy clothing is so intact that it can carry their corpses out of the camp. This was a display of God's glory like in 9:24. But without Christ, the glory of God is a curse, not a blessing.

**Mournful worship.** What a mercy the end of v3 is: "so Aaron held his peace." Many have responded with indignation at the idea that sincerely offered worship deserves God's wrath and curse if it comes in actions not commanded by God. But God gives Aaron the grace to hold his peace, even when it has cost his sons their lives. He, Eleazar, and Ithamar can't go out mustn't follow ordinary mourning rituals, because their hats and garments are holy (v6). They must all hold their peace.

So the providence of God requires others to do what Aaron and his remaining sons would otherwise do. Aaron's cousins are permitted to come and retrieve the bodies (v4–5). And it leaves the mourning to their "brethren, the whole house of Israel" (v6). In this way, the passage teaches us how we should all respond to manmade worship and God's curse upon it. Not with indifference or complacency. Not with self-righteousness. But with humility and mourning that the Name of God would be defamed in the midst of His people's worship.

**Our patient God.** The Lord is a merciful God. Slow to anger. Longsuffering. One need only to look at the mess of manmade worship that is offered in the church—from the papists and the eastern churches, to the worldly ("relevant?") worship of so many evangelicals, to the liturgies full of supposedly wise "instructive" additions by some who even call themselves Reformed. When God does not incinerate all these worshipers, we do not conclude that they are somehow not committing the same sin as Nadab and Abihu. Rather, we conclude that God is merciful and patient! And therefore, He is all the more worthy of being worshiped only in the way that He has commanded.

How do we treat God as holy in the actions of worship? How do we treat Him as holy in the manner in which we do the actions? What place does mourning over worship sins have in your thoughts and prayers for the church?

*Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You that You have made the way to Yourself in Christ. And we thank You that You have given us the actions of worship by which we may know that we are coming through Him. Grant also that Your Spirit would give us true faith in Him to come to You sincerely from our hearts in those actions that You have commanded, which we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

Suggested songs: ARP51B "From My Sins, O Hide Your Face" or TPH274 "Jesus, My Great High Priest"

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Leviticus chapter 10 verse 1 through 7. These are God's words. Then madab and Abby, who? The sons of Aaron each took his sensor. And put fire in it. Put incense on it. And offered profane fire before, yahweh Which he had not commanded them. So far went out from Yahweh and devoured them.

And they died. Before y'all play. And Moses said to Aaron, this is what you always 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. Then moses called mishael and Elle is a fan, the sons of utio.

The uncle of Aaron and said to them, come near. Carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp. So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp. As Moses had said, And Moses said to Aaron, until he had to Elliots are and atomar.

His sons. Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes. Unless you die. And Roth come upon all the people. But let your brethren the whole house of israel, bewail the burning which yawhi has kindled. You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest she died.

The anointing oil of yahweh is upon. And they did, according to the word. Of moses.

This ends this reading of gods inspired and And there it worked.

Was.

Literally glorious display. Of y'all. Hey, the end of chapter 9. The glory of yahai appeared to all the people and fire came out from before yahweh. And consumed. The burnt offering and the fat on the altar. In our passage, we have another display of the glory of yahweh. Fire went out from yahweh and consumed.

It's the same word although it's devoured here. Them. And they died. Before, yahweh It's just two verses apart. And the scripture. And we know that the lord will be glorified. And so, the great Question. Of the manner in which god will glorify him. Our life. In our worship. Is the way in which we come near.

Everyone will be near the lord forever. And you will either be near him. In the way that he has appointed to come. With safety and blessing. And everlasting love. Because his great plan. Where the ultimate display of his glory. There's that. He would be glorified in the display of his son.

Whose glory would be shown forth, as The redeemer. And sanctifier and glorifier. Of his people. And yet, even for those who are not redeemed. The glory of the lord and his presence. Will be magnified upon them. Forever. And so this is what the apostle is, describing. Secret Thessalonians chapter 1.

When he says,

To believers you or counted worthy of the kingdom of god, for which you also suffer. Since it is a righteous thing with god to repay with. Tribulation. Those who trouble you and to give you who are troubled rest. With us, when the lord jesus is revealed from heaven. With his mighty angels.

So, there is that. Glory. Of god verse 12. That the name of our lord, jesus christ may be glorified in you. And you in him. According to the grace of our god and the lord jesus christ. A couple verses earlier in that chapter verse 10. When he comes in that day to be glorified in his saints, Than to be admired among all those who believe So, there is the glory of jesus in his glorified saints.

But then, when he talks about those, He repays, the tribulation. He says, when the lord jesus has revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 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.

These shall be punished. Would everlasting destruction from. The presence of the lord. And from The glory. Of his power. So, the gospel of jesus christ, being presented to men, As the way of coming near. The way of coming near and safety. The way of coming near and blessedness. Where god is delighted to bless us.

For the sake of christ. And for the sake of the love in which he gave us christ, And where we are delighted to praise god. Who will have transformed us into those who love him with all our heart soul, mind, and strength. Have been conformed. To the image. Of our lord.

Jesus christ. And jesus. Glorified in us and ask glorified in him. That is one glory. And that is the glory, then. That we Taste. When we come to God in the way that he has given, When we offer worship, not that man has designed but that god has designed worship.

That has always only ever come through the lord jesus. As we've seen in all of the design of the tabernacle, And all of the design of its furnishings. And all of the design of the sacrifices and all of the design of the priesthood. That it was all to come to god through jesus.

But not all obey the gospel. Of the lord jesus christ. Not all submit to god's way. Of having our sin wiped out. End of being able to draw near to god. Man has always wanted. Well, not always since the fall. Man has always wanted to make his own way.

To come near to god. But that's a dreadful idea. Because to come in our own way, is to come not with the lord jesus, even if we put his name on it, if we put his name on coming in a way that god is not given, Then we not only blaspheme god and coming in our own way.

We blaspheme jesus by putting his name on worship. That is not from him. And so, This amazing saying, From from the lord from yahweh. On the lips of moises in verse 3. By those who come near me. I must be regarded. As holy. As the one who cannot be approached in any other way.

Before all the people i must be glorified. And he will be glorified. One way or the other. And so, Native in a buy who. From the right priestly family. They've gone through the right procedure. They've had their seven-day ordination with all of those sacrifices. Displays. The, the work of christ.

They as it were profess faith in god's provided, sacrifice and atonement. They still have the stains on their earlobes, and their thumbs. And their big toes. They are using. The right pans. He takes each takes his sensor. And, They are using we presume. Even the right incense, the sort.

Which, There was the death penalty for making anything like it. But they put Strange fire. There's just one thing that's out of place. Rather than the fire from the altar, that god has come They kindle their own.

And they offer profane fire before, yahweh? And, It's weird. Well, it's not that weird. The flesh. Resists, the truth of scripture. They're all sorts of bible commentators who want to come with come up with all kinds of explanations. For what made it strange? That they harbored in their. Hearts thoughts of connectonite gods or Egyptian gods.

And that made it four and fire because the word strange is the same as the word for foreigners. Or they look further down to Verse eight and nine. You always spoke to Aaron saying do not drink wine or intoxicating. Drink you nor your sons with you when you go into the table of meat tabernacle of meeting and they say Oh, somehow.

Nadab and Abby who must have gotten drunk and the sin was drunkenness. But you don't have to be creative with exegesis any more than you should be creative with worship. If god tells you in the exact verse, What makes it strange? They put incense on it and offered profane fire before y'all way.

Which he had not commanded them. Of course, it's wrong. To harbor the thoughts or names. Of foreign gods. In the worship of god, if that was what they had done, it would be wrong. Of course, it's wrong. To come to the worship of god drunk. Or even worse as many do.

To achieve a state of sort of drunkenness, upon the so-called worship of god. Which is the opposite of what being filled with the spirit looks like Not the loss of control and the overwhelming of feelings to the negation of thought. But self-control by the word of god. Not drunk with wine, but full of the holy spirit admonishing one another with scripture and the singing.

The words of christ. Dwelling in us richly. Of course, those things would be wrong. But those are not the things that were wrong. In this case, In this case, the only thing That was wrong. Was it was not what the lord had commanded. That's what verse 2 says. Sorry, that's what verse one says.

And so, we must realize. That everyone will be near God. And there is only one way of coming near god that regards him as holy. And that is to come through the lord jesus christ. And that if we presume to come in any actions in worship, that God himself has not commanded.

Then however much. We put the name of jesus upon it ourselves. God has not put in the name of jesus on that worship. And we come without him. And we blaspheme, and he will be glorified. You'll either be glorified. As the consuming fire. That was satisfied at the cross in jesus christ for us.

Or the consuming fire that will never finish being satisfied. Upon us ourselves. So, we want to come near to god in the Leviticus 9 way. With blessing. Blessing of god being pronounced at the altar of the blessing of god. Being pronounced, the conclusion of the worship. But if we ever come, In our own way.

Then we'll come. And he will be glorified. And cursing us and destroying us. And rightly will he be? So So, let us learn. Not to sympathize. With false worship. For which, if Aaron and his sons. Sympathized. With the false worship, they would perish. That's what verse 6 says. And in part, because God had literally dressed them up.

In such a way that if they uncovered their heads, Like one would do in morning, though. They were they had the holy Hats. Or if they tore their clothes, they were wearing their holy Priestly garments. Or if they abandoned the post of their anointing. And so, the lord By not permitting by putting air in his sons, in a place where they could not grieve.

Their son and their brother, their sons and their brothers. Who had perished? He placed upon the entire congregation. The responsibility of grieving over the false worship. That brought the curse of god.

So, let us not. Sympathize with false worship, or Excuse anything based upon. It's sincerity or It's proximity. Um, to actual worship. Let us learn to come near to god only. And the way that he has commanded, Because we may come near to god only in and through jesus christ.

And let us grieve when the church comes in any other way. As those who understand. That to come, according to the ideas of men. Is to come without jesus. No matter how much we might put his name on it.

Father, we tremble. For how often? We have measured your worship by. Whether it felt worshipful to us.

Which was not to hallow you. As we drew near. And we tremble how much this is done in your church's generally.

For we see that to do so comes without the lord jesus.

And we cannot wrap our minds. Around how dreadful it is to come near your glory. Without the lord jesus. And indeed that this will be. What hell is forever?

So we pray that by your grace. You would forgive us by your grace, you would sanctify us. That you're worship, would be a foretaste of heaven. That you would display your glory particularly in the lord jesus. As you bring us through him. Until the day that you display, the glory of the lord jesus even in us.

When you have finished, conforming us to him. Help us o lord, to sympathize with you. And to grown for the day. When your people will worship you arrived, That's these things in jesus name.