

Lev. 10:1-3 (LD 47) “Hallowed Be”

For the Children: Your parents probably have things in the house they don't want you to touch – in case you break them. They may be things that are valuable, or things that are important to them. God had things in the Tabernacle that were very important to Him – things that would help His people to know that there is no one else like Him; and that sinners can only come close to Him and serve Him through His Son. Nadab and Abihu were punished for ignoring His rules about those things. When we pray “Hallowed be Thy Name,” we are asking God to help us take God seriously - His character, works, Word and His rules. **Questions:** What did Nadab and Abihu do wrong? What is God's “holiness”? In what ways can we show that we wish to treat His Name as holy?

Introduction:

First Point: Treating God as Common

- 1) **The Problem with Nadab and Abihu:** These priests were called to be “holy men” (Ex. 22:31) who came “near” to the Lord in the Tabernacle (Lev. 10:3). Sinners who come near to the infinitely holy God, deserve to die (Ex. 19). They can only draw near through a sacrifice. To stress the utter seriousness of these truths, they were required to follow the rules of consecration and sacrifice very strictly. See Ex. 30, Lev. 1-9. In some detail, these 2 men tried to change the rules. They did what was “not commanded.” The incense they burned became “strange fire” – foreign to the Lord and His Law – contrary to Ex. 30:9.
- 2) **A Severe Penalty:** The penalty was severe because they were supposed to be showing Israel how sinners can worship and serve a holy God; they were also showing the nature of God's saving mercy, through the great sacrifice of His Son. These things can only take place on God's terms, not according to man's imagination or opinion.
- 3) **The Essence of Profanity:** By acting in this way, the men were treating God as if He were a creature who could be disobeyed, His Word as if it were common – something to be treated lightly. To treat Him and His Word and His way of salvation as if these were common is “profanity” – the opposite to treating Him as “holy.”
- 4) **Dishonoured before the People:** The men were also punished because of the effect their breaking of the 2nd commandment could have had on all Israel. God was to be “honoured” before all the people (v. 3). As LD 47 says, our prayer is that God's Name be *hallowed*, not blasphemed because of us.

Second Point: Treating God as Holy

- 1) **A Definition of Terms:** To “hallow” God's Name means to recognize, acknowledge and treat God as holy. We have this duty because we are now priests who come near to Him, through our Great High Priest. God's “holiness” means that He is absolutely pure and unique. This, in turn, implies that we treat His Person (seen in His attributes), His works and His Word as holy – pure and unique.
- 2) **In Praise and Thanksgiving:** We demonstrate this “hallowing” in public and private worship, when we offer praise to God for who He is and what He has done; and thank Him for blessing us so richly in Christ.
- 3) **In the Regulation of Worship:** We also “hallow” His Name when we worship as He instructs us in His Word, rather than according to our own imagination – the point of the 2nd commandment. Note that Lev. 10:2 establishes the language of the “Puritan and Reformed Regulative Principle” – that we only do in worship that which God has *commanded*. Innovative worship that ignores this is not respectful of God's holiness.
- 4) **The Way We Live:** We must also “hallow” God's Name by living in obedience to His Word – in thought, word and deed. All our living should be directed to His honour and praise (LD 47). This cannot be done without genuine faith in the Lord. Therefore, when we pray that He will enable us to hallow His Name, we are praying that He will enable us to know Him truly.

Conclusion: