

**Offering Strange Fire = Death, Even for the Holy**  
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It is possible to have been previously sanctified (set apart for special use and made holy) by and to the Lord, belong to Him, and yet not be protected from the consequences of present and future sin. Disobedience, or failure to keep the commands and protocols specified by God in worship, resulted in death for Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu. They were chosen, sanctified, and authorized by God to lead the people in worship. But they were killed because they broke protocol.

They walked contrary to what God had commanded.

Just because we are a chosen people, made holy, and set apart for God's use, doesn't mean that we can operate in whatever way that we choose. Just because you are a chosen person, made holy, and set apart for God's use, doesn't mean that you can operate in whatever way that you want. There is a certain protocol in regards to the holy things...there were certain parameters that the Lord had instituted...Nadab and Abihu failed to maintain that protocol and abide by those parameters and were killed by the Lord. They were offering burning incense (burning incense had been commanded) but it was an incense that had not been authorized by God. He called their fire a "strange fire".

My personal take (looking at the end of Leviticus 9 and the start of 10) is that Nadab and Abihu wanted to be a part of what was going on – they wanted their share in the glory that was taking place – perhaps they wanted to make a contribution that would make them look special or stand out – something that would make people look and say, "Look what Nadab and Abihu did! Amazing!" – something that would turn the attention towards them – but they did what they did without authorization, and God judged them because He needed to maintain His holiness before the people. If He had let them carry on, He would have failed to be "sanctified before the people". He wants us to approach Him. In the case of the sons of Aaron He commanded it. But the familiarity that breeds contempt was snuffed out in Nadab and Abihu's case because God is holy and needs us to realize/wants us to know that. Many would do well in our day and age to remember the story of Nadab and Abihu. Even in our security in our position in and before the Lord, we must not fail to operate by the protocols and parameters that God has specified for us.