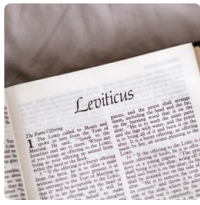


# OpenTheo

## Leviticus 8 - 10



### Leviticus - Steve Gregg

This session delves into the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests, following the five different kinds of offerings previously discussed. The importance of cleansing the mind, thoughts, actions, and walk for a priest to be accepted by God is emphasized, highlighting the role of Jesus in this process. Leviticus details the exclusion of those who do not adhere to the proper procedures, as demonstrated by the actions that led to the death of Aaron's two sons.

## Transcript

In this session, we're going to be looking at the consecration of Aaron and his sons to be the priests. The instructions for this ritual were given back in Exodus, chapters 28 and 29. And the conduct of the ritual has not yet occurred previously, but then not much has.

The temple or the tabernacle, I should say, has been erected and is standing, but nothing has begun to happen there yet. Except that God showed up. That's certainly something, but there's no human activity that has yet occurred.

And that is partly because there's no one to do it. There has to be a priesthood. Now, before setting the priesthood in motion, it was necessary to define and delineate the kinds of sacrifices and the procedures associated with those sacrifices so that they could conduct them on this occasion.

Because, you see, the consecration of the priests and their ordination to office included the offering of sin offerings and burnt offerings and so forth. And if there had not already been instructions about those things, then it would be mysterious to these people exactly what they're supposed to do. So in the first seven chapters of Leviticus, we saw the detailed instructions about these five different kinds of offerings.

And now in chapters eight through ten, we have the actual beginning of the functioning of the priests. First, they have to be cleansed and anointed by sacrifices and by the anointing of oil. And then they have to begin their ministries.

And, of course, because Leviticus does not have very much historical information, but is

mostly laws. This is one of only two sections that contain actual stories. And there's not an awful lot of excitement in the story until you get to chapter ten.

But it is nonetheless historical narrative. And it says in chapter eight, verse one. Then Yahweh spoke to Moses saying, take Aaron and his sons with him and the garments, the anointing oil, a bowl as a sin offering to Rams and a basket of unleavened bread and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

So Moses did as Yahweh commanded him, and the assembly was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And Moses said to the congregation, this is what Yahweh commanded to be done. So this was done in the presence of the entire congregation, that'd be millions of people.

So they perhaps because Mount Sinai was there and was probably no longer off bounds since God had moved down into the tabernacle. The mountainside could probably serve as something of a terraced amphitheater, you know, seating arrangement for, you know, like grandstands. And so these hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people would be arranged on the mountain watching this ceremony.

And it was necessary for them to watch it because Aaron was going to be Aaron and his sons were going to be serving as their representatives before God. And it was important for the people to see how the ritual had been performed according to God's instructions to qualify them for this. After all, there would be people in the future who would question Aaron's qualifications and Moses's too.

People like Cora would question whether people really ought to be recognizing Aaron and Moses as their leaders in this way. And so it was a public thing that everyone could see the ordination of Aaron and his sons. And no one could then say they missed it or didn't know if it happened or anything like that.

And so it says in verse six, then Moses and Aaron and his sons. I'm sorry, Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water. And he put the tunic on him and girded him with the sash, clothed him with the robe, put the ephod on him and girded him with the intricately woven band of the ephod.

And with it, he tied the ephod on him. And he put the breastplate on him or that bag with the twelve stones on it. And he put the urn and the thumam in the breastplate.

And he put the turban on his head also on the turban on its front. He put the gold in place, the gold, the holy crown as Yahweh had commanded Moses. So we've got the holy garments on Aaron at this point.

The dressing of his sons will come later. Aaron has got to be anointed and consecrated first. Then it will come to his sons.

First they washed him and then they put all of the special vestments on him. Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it and sanctified them. He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointed the altar and all its utensils and the labor and its base to sanctify them.

That would probably be the altar outside in the courtyard, the bronze altar as opposed to the golden altar. Not that the golden altar would not be anointed, but because he mentions the labor is probably talking about the courtyard at this point. And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to sanctify him.

Now remember when it says he sanctified things like at the end of verse 10, he sanctified the articles or the furniture and stuff in the tabernacle. And then it's sanctified, he sanctified Aaron by putting the oil on his head. Sanctified just means setting him apart.

It doesn't mean that there was some kind of special magic associated with it. It's just that by doing this, the ritual itself identified Aaron and identified the tabernacle as separate, separated things for God. Set apart only for God and for nothing, for no other purpose.

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. Now they start offering these animals. There are three animals.

There's a bull. There's two rams. The bull is going to be a sin offering for Aaron and for his sons.

And that was, of course, prescribed back in the first seven chapters when a sin offering is offered for the priests or for the people. It's going to be a bull. And then there were two rams.

One of the rams was to be a burnt offering. That was, of course, an offering that where all the parts were consumed in the fire after the washing of the inward parts and the leg. And then the other ram is called the ram of consecration.

And it'll be treated specially, as we shall see. But in verses 14 through 17, the bull of the sin offering is offered. He brought the bull for the sin offering.

And then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin offering. 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 poured the blood at the base of the altar and sanctified it to make atonement for it.

Now, this is an ordinary sin offering. He would take the blood and put on the horns of the golden altar inside the tabernacle and also sprinkle it seven times toward the curtain,

the veil. And then he would pour out the blood at the foot of the bronze altar.

Here it just says he put some on the horns of the altar and poured out the blood at the base of the altar. It does not identify which altar one could get the impression is the same altar in both cases. If it was, then this is a slight modification of the ordinary ceremony of the sin offering because he was putting the blood on the horns of the bronze altar where the blood was also poured out.

It's not clear. Perhaps we're supposed to understand from what we read in the ritual earlier that the first altar here is the golden altar and that the second one is the bronze altar. Verse 16, 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.

But the bull, its hide, its flesh and its offal, the stuff that was in its intestines, he burned with fire outside the camp as the Lord had commanded Moses. Then he brought the ram as a burnt offering and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram and Moses killed it and he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar and he cut the ram into pieces and Moses burned the head, the pieces and the fat. 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 and an offering made by fire to Yahweh as Yahweh had commanded Moses. So these are pretty standard rituals for the sin offering and for the burnt offering. In a sense, these offerings might be offered any day, not just during the consecration of the priest.

They might be offered any day for a priest who had sinned or for, frankly, any other person in the congregation. But now we come to the ram of consecration and that's where some unique things are done. That's where, now that they've done kind of the basic sacrificial thing they would do on any occasion, they have come to the special aspects of this ritual.

Verse 22, And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram and Moses killed it and 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. 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, on the big toes of their right feet and Moses sprinkled the blood all around the altar.

Then he took the fat and the fat tail and 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. 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. Now this right thigh was usually a thigh presented to the priests.

The other things that were put on it here were usually burned on the altar. But before any of these things are done, something different is done that's not usually done. That's put in the hands of the priests, which is a manner of saying they're being given their responsibilities.

These things are being put into their hands. And he put all these in Aaron's hands and in his son's hands and waved them as a way of offering before the Lord. So apparently this waving motion was done by Aaron and his sons as they held these pieces, which was a way of, of course, signifying that this is offered to the Lord.

It's just a motion to give that to communicate that message. Then Moses took them from their hands and burned them on the altar on on the burnt offering. They were consecration offerings for a sweet aroma.

That was an offering made by fire for the Lord. And Moses took the breast and waved it as a way of offering before the Lord. It was Moses part of the ram of consecration as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Now, things were done a little differently here than they were normally done with the peace offerings. Because, as I said, with the peace offerings, the breast of the animal and the thigh, the right thigh, would be eaten by the priests. In this case, the thigh was burned with the other parts that were that weren't always burned.

And then the breast was not given to the priest. But this time it was Moses. This is the only time we ever read of Moses getting any meat out of these rituals.

And that became his to eat later. Verse 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 sanctified Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him. And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. That is, the rest of the flesh of the animal that was not burned up.

Only certain organs were burned up in a couple of, and the shoulder, well, the shoulder was burned up, the thigh, I should say. The breast was kept. The rest of it was to be boiled 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.

What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire. Whatever they couldn't eat, they should eat as much of the remainder of the ram as they could. But, of course, they might get full and if they got full and couldn't finish it, they should just incinerate the remainder so it wouldn't be used for anything else.

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. And as he has done this day, so Yahweh has commanded to do to make atonement for you.

Therefore, you shall abide at the door of the tabernacle of the 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. So Aaron and his sons did all the things that the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses.

Now, this was their consecration. They really hadn't begun to do any ministry yet. This was all part of what they did for themselves, offering sacrifices for themselves.

And actually, Moses did the offering. Moses officiated as if he was the high priest on this occasion because the high priest had to be brought into office on this occasion. Now, Aaron would be the high priest after this point and would do, he and his sons would do all the ministry.

But this was done, the anointing with both blood and oil upon them. I don't think we have much trouble seeing the symbolism of that. The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin and the oil, no doubt, the anointing is the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

The anointing is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. As when John said in 1 John chapter 2 that we have no need that anyone should teach us, but as that anointing that dwells in us teaches us all things. He means the Holy Spirit.

And so the minister has to be personally cleansed from his sins, has got to be saved. He also needs to be anointed. He also has to be filled with Holy Spirit.

And in particular, the blood was applied to the man's ear, his thumb and his big toe on the right side of his body in every case. Both the high priest and the other priests had this ritual. And it's not difficult to see the symbolism of that either.

The ear obviously represents hearing. No doubt, hearing God is what is suggested. The thumb is the hand.

That's that part of the body with which work is done. Service is performed. The toe represents the foot, which obviously represents the way a person walks.

The Bible says in 1 John chapter 2 in verse 6, if anyone says he abides in Christ, let him walk even as he walked. As Christ walked. In Ephesians 4, 1, Paul said that we should walk worthy of the calling that we've been called to.

The way we walk, the way we live, in other words, is signified by the feet. That has to be cleansed. Our hands have to be cleansed.

The Bible says that we must have clean hands and a pure heart in order to dwell in God's

sanctuary, says in Psalm 24. So we have this symbolism. The priest must be a man who can hear from God, or at least is listening for God's voice.

And whose hands and feet, his works and his life, his walk, are cleansed and are therefore separated from the way the world is. The men are assumed to be sinners and therefore they need a sin offering offered on their behalf. All men are sinners.

And if someone is going to be acceptable to God and useful to God, used by God, there needs to be a cleansing of the sinfulness of their mind. Perhaps the ear and the hearing would represent what goes into the mind. That's where we receive thoughts and so forth.

In many cases from the hearing people say things and even hearing God, even hearing temptations from the devil. It's like the ear could represent what goes into the mind. The mind and the thoughts, the actions, the walk.

These things have got to be cleansed because we can't walk acceptably before God or serve God acceptably in our own sinful merits or demerits. But rather in the merits of Christ. And then there's the anointing of oil, which of course speaks of the Holy Spirit.

A similar ritual to this in some ways is offered in the case of a leper who is cleansed because a sacrifice in that case is offered in the blood is put on his right ear and his right thumb and his right toe. But also in the case of the leper, the anointing oil is put on his right ear and his right thumb and his right toe. So these three things are anointed with blood and then with oil in the case of a leper.

In this case, the blood anoints those parts, but the anointing seems to be over the whole head, over the whole person, which may mean that the priest. Must be completely, you know, saturated, as it were, with the Holy Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit. Anyway, they then have to be in the tabernacle, apparently indoors for seven days.

Now we pass over that rather quickly between one verse and the next for them. That would seem rather tedious. I mean, just to sit around in the tabernacle.

I don't know if they were offering sacrifices or doing anything or just waiting for the time of consecration to pass so that they could begin. I don't think they offered anything during that time, except possibly that which they ate. But they would begin their ministry on the eighth day.

In fact, the only date given in the book is in chapter nine, verse one. It came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. He said to Aaron, take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

That was as they did before on the day of consecration. But also to the people 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. Also a bull and a ram as a

peace offering to sacrifice before the Lord and a grain offering mixed with oil for today.

Yahweh will appear to you. So the first actions of the priests, having been completely consecrated now when they enter upon their ministry, is to again offer sin offering on their own behalf, a bull again and a burnt offering, a ram. But then also to do similar things for the people.

They have to do it for themselves first. And the writer of Hebrews brings that out, that the high priest chosen among men had to offer sacrifices first for himself and then for the people. Unlike Christ, of course, who did not have to offer any offering for himself.

He was not a sinner, but the high priest, all high priests taken from among men are sinners. And therefore, there had to be this preliminary offering of sin offering for themselves. You might think, well, that was already done eight days earlier.

Why is that done again? The first time it was a part of a ritual of consecration. They were not yet priests until the end of that ritual. Now they are priests.

So this is their first action of worship as officiating priests. And then a kid of the goats for the people's sin offering. But there'd also be burnt offerings, peace offerings and a grain offering offered to the people.

A calf and a lamb were going to be a burnt offering for the people. A bull and a ram for peace offerings. And then there were grain offerings to be offered along with them.

It says in verses three and four. Verse five. So they brought what Moses commanded before the tabernacle of meeting and all the congregation drew near and stood before Yahweh.

Then Moses said, this is the thing which Yahweh commanded you to do and the glory of the Lord will appear to you. And so first we have Aaron offering the sin offering. And then he's going to offer the ram for a burnt offering.

These are for himself and the other priests. And then we're going to have him offering for the people's sacrifices. Moses said to Aaron, go to the altar, offer your sin offerings 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. So Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. Then his sons, 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 on the base of the altar.

But the fat, the kidneys and the fatty lobe of the liver of the sin offering, he burned on the altar as the Lord had commanded. The flesh in the hide, he burned with fire outside



the camp. OK, then there's the burnt offering, which is a ram versus 12 through 14.

He killed the burnt offering and Aaron's sons presented him the blood, which he sprinkled all around the altar. Then he presented the burnt offering to him with its pieces and head and he burned them on the altar and he washed the entrails of the legs and burned them and with the burnt offering on the altar. So now he's offered the sin offering in the burnt offering for himself and now for the people in verses 15 through 21.

He brought the people's offering and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, killed it and offered it for sin like the first one. And he brought the burnt offering. They kind of skip over the details here, which is not very common to do.

And he brought the burnt offering and offered it according to the prescribed manner. Then he brought the grain offering, took a handful of it and burned it on the altar besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning. 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 the altar. 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. And they put the fat on the breasts and burned the fat on the altar, but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved as a way of offering before the Lord as Moses had commanded.

And then there's nothing left for them to do but just bless the people. That is pronounced a blessing over the people. Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering and burnt offering and peace offerings.

It says he came down. Apparently there was a ramp that went up to the brazen altar that would cause the priest. The altar was high enough that the priest needed to be a little bit higher than ground level in order to comfortably do the services.

And so he came down from there. And he blessed the people with his hand raised toward them. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting and came out and blessed the people.

Then the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people. Now this is the exciting part. Verse 24.

And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces. Now here we had not actually been told this specifically, but there had been no fire on the altar.

Or if there had, it had now, maybe had burned earlier sacrifices on the altar, but it was either out. Apparently fire was out because God now ignited the fire on the altar. And in chapter 6, verse 13, it was made clear that they were to never allow this fire to go out.

So as long as they kept feeding wood to this fire, this is chapter 6, verse 13. It says it's a perpetual fire. Fire shall burn on the altar.

It shall never go out. As long as they kept feeding wood to this fire, it would be the same fire that God had supernaturally ignited on this occasion out of the presence of the Lord. Now we're going to see fire out of the presence of the Lord coming in chapter 10, too.

And it's not clear how this is visually perceived. I mean, it could be from heaven because actually the Lord obviously is in heaven. And that's like what Elijah called upon the prophets of Baal to try to duplicate, try to make fire come from heaven to consume this sacrifice from Baal.

And then Elijah called on God to do the same thing. And God did bring fire from heaven in the case of Elijah. This fire could have come from heaven, but it seems that the emphasis has been all along the fire that the Lord is in the Holy of Holies.

The Lord is in the tabernacle. So it may be that some kind of fire came out from the Holy of Holies passing through the veil without burning it, I suppose, and consumed this sacrifice. And then the altar by this was ignited and was a holy fire.

It was a fire from God as opposed to a fire from man. The fact that God ignited the fire of the altar indicates that he requires in the worship of himself that the fire be provided by himself. The zeal, the boldness, the confidence, the faith, the whatever, whenever we bring to God is something that he himself by his Holy Spirit has to have provided in us.

If we offer up simply fleshly zeal and fleshly love or whatever, and it's not the fire of the Holy Spirit, then it's not that which God has provided. God requires that what is offered to him is offered not only in the way that he prescribes, but with the fire that he provides. And we find that this is the problem that occurs in chapter 10.

Because we find it says in chapter 10, verse one, the native of the sons of Aaron each took his sensor and put fire in it and put incense on it and offered profane fire before the Lord. The King James is strange fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. So the command was that they take fire that is cold from the altar.

Now, this was the altar that God had just ignited with his supernatural flame. This was God's fire on the altar. They were supposed to take God's fire, put coal in a golden sensor and put incense on it and go burn incense inside the tabernacle.

Again, the prayers of the saints, the worship, the praise that that incense represents was supposed to have God's fire, that which originated with God, not which originates in the flesh as its spark. But for some reason, they'd have to buy you did not use that fire. Now, we're not told at all why.

We don't know if they meant to be irreverent, if they meant to be innovative, if they

were afraid. You know, it's possible that this fire in the altar by freaked them out when they saw this fire come out in the presence of God and ignite the altar. They might have felt kind of afraid to come near it.

They said, well, we'll use this fire from over here instead, because I don't know how to get close to that altar. I just saw lightning flash and hit it a moment ago. And I don't know if I don't know if it's safe to go over there and grab those cold.

I don't know if they were afraid or if they just were thinking, well, what does it matter what fire you use? Incense burns just as well, no matter what fire you use. So we'll just use this fire over here. We are not given any indicator at all of what it was that induced them to do this wrong thing.

It might seem rather like a small thing to us, but it's clear that God did not think it was a small thing because when they offered this strange or this profane fire. And by the way, profane means common. We might think of profanity like cussing or something like profane might sound like something particularly corrupt.

Profane is simply a word that's the opposite of sacred. Some things are sacred. Some things are profane.

That is, some things are holy. Some things are common. Profane just means common.

A common fire that's not the holy fire, a fire from some other source other than from God. That's what they used to burn incense before the Lord. So, verse 2, fire went out from the Lord again.

This time it devoured them and they died before the Lord. Now, this is an amazing development when you think about it, because there were already only four priests and one high priest. Aaron and Aaron had four sons who were consecrated with him.

And there were like three million people who needed to be served. And the priest is already, as it were, understaffed. But nonetheless, God takes two of them out and leaves only Aaron and two sons to serve all the people.

Now, a lot of the work, the sacrifices could be done by the Levites. And it's even possible that Aaron had some younger sons that were not old enough to be priests yet. They'd start their priestly office at age 30.

He may have had some additional sons who would soon come into the priesthood. We don't know. But at this point, the first day that the tabernacle opens for services, the priesthood is reduced by, you know, 40 percent in its numbers, which was already understaffed.

Already, they could look forward to be overworked even without this development. It

seems rather a poor economy on God's part. It seems impractical on God's part to take out two of the priests.

Couldn't he just slap their wrists and let them continue? They're needed around here. But obviously, God is showing where his priorities are. At the very beginning of the opening of the worship of God in the prescribed way, they have violated it.

And God's going to make an example of them. What's interesting is that as you read the rest of Israel's history in the Old Testament, the priesthood often became extremely corrupt. Eli's sons were actually seducing women.

They were priests of the altar and seducing women who came to bring their sacrifices. There was, we would think, much worse offenses than this one committed by priests throughout the rest of their history. But God never sent fire out of heaven and consumed them.

It seems like God was unusually severe on this occasion for what appears to be a seemingly relatively minor infraction compared to some of the horrible things done later. After all, it was the chief priest who crucified Jesus. It was the chief priest who condemned Jesus in the Sanhedrin.

I mean, God didn't send fire out of heaven to consume them right on the spot. So it raises questions. Why did God do this impractical thing? This is going to make things, this could present extra hardship on the surviving priests who had not violated God's law.

And it resembles, it seems to me, the story that we find in the book of Acts in chapter 5 of Ananias and Sapphira, who similarly were struck dead by the stroke of God when they did what sounds like a relatively minor thing compared to what many people have done since their time. I mean, sure, they lied to the Holy Spirit. That's not really a small thing.

But did they know they were lying to the Holy Spirit? What they did was they imitated others before them who had sold their properties and brought the money to give to the poor. This was being done before Ananias and Sapphira sold their property. And apparently it was something that gave some people in the church some recognition.

If somebody sold his property and brought it to the poor, I'm sure that that caused people to say, oh, did you hear how generous so-and-so was? And Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of property and thought, well, we can get this kind of talk about us, too. And so they came and pretended that they were giving the whole amount as others had done before them. But they were secretly, between themselves, conspiring to keep some of it behind.

It doesn't really sound like that big a deal. I mean, it is. Obviously, God considered it a big deal.

But compared to a lot of the sins that are committed in the church, it just doesn't seem like that'd be the kind of thing God would just strike someone dead on the spot for. But the case of Nadab and Abihu here, and the case of Ananias and Sapphira there, both represent like the first time after the institution of the new order that someone tried to get away with cheating. And God made an example of them.

Yes, people did worse things later on, and God didn't make an example of them. But once God makes an example of people at the beginning, he sets a precedent. He says, OK, this is what I think of that kind of behavior.

Now, if people do that kind of behavior and worse things later, and they don't get struck dead immediately, that doesn't mean God has changed his mind about it. It just means that God is not going to strike everyone dead immediately. But he already demonstrated in the precedent he set with these guys how he feels about compromise, how he feels about people innovating and doing things differently than what his word prescribes.

How he feels about people cheating, trying to cheat God, trying to act as if one's own ideas about worship are as good as God's ideas about worship in this case. And so these guys, God sought to make an example of them as he made an example of Ananias and Sapphira. It doesn't mean that they were worse sinners than others who weren't made an example of.

It's just that God doesn't have to make a whole lot of examples. Make an example one time is enough to be an example. Now we know what God thinks.

We don't know what God thinks by what he later tolerates in others. The fact that he tolerates or does not immediately judge others is no indicator that he has changed his opinion about offenses like that. In Ecclesiastes chapter 8, Solomon observes this principle.

Ecclesiastes 8 verse 11 and 11 through 13. Really, Solomon said, because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily and many times it isn't. Many times people do an evil work and there's no instant judgment that comes up.

There's no instance execution of a sentence upon them and they feel like they've gotten away with it. Therefore, because they did the wrong thing, maybe a little nervously wondering if they're going to get away with it. And they found out we did get away with it.

And then they feel like they can get away with it regularly because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily. Therefore, the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. But Solomon says, though a sinner does evil 100 times and his days are prolonged.

Yet I surely know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before him. But it

will not be well with the wicked, nor will he prolong his days, which are as a shadow because he does not fear before God. So Solomon says it sometimes looks like the wicked are getting away with stuff.

Because they do an evil work, but the sentence isn't immediately brought upon them and therefore they become encouraged in their evil behavior. In a sense, by not judging them instantly, God is testing them to see if they will repent or if they will just be encouraged to keep doing the wrong thing. We should not do the right thing because we think we'd be otherwise judged.

If we do the right thing, it shouldn't be because we're afraid that we'll be judged instantly for doing the wrong thing. Because many times we won't be judged instantly for doing the wrong thing. We do the wrong thing and we seem to get away with it.

Reuben slept with his father's concubine and nothing came of it. For years, until it was time for the birthright to be dispensed by Jacob and he passed over Reuben, the firstborn, because of that thing. He thought he'd gotten away with something, but it turned out there was a price to pay in the end.

But we should repent of what we do without waiting to get caught, without waiting to be punished. And simply because we become convicted that this is something that God is not pleased with. But people who aren't concerned about what pleases God and they're only worried about whether they're going to get away with something, they get encouraged in their evil behavior by the fact they seem to get away with it.

God didn't let Nadab and Abihu get away with it so that there would be an example set. We would know if other people seem to be getting away with it. No, they're not.

The wrath of God still is abiding on them, hovering over them like the sword of Damocles hanging over his head. You never know when the hair is going to break that's holding it from falling. It says in John chapter three that those who do not believe in the Son of God, the wrath of God is abiding over them.

And it's not always manifested, but it will. The day comes when there will be a manifestation of the righteous wrath of God on sin. It's just once in a while God is good enough to let us see it happen instantly.

Now, did these guys go to hell? Well, the Old Testament doesn't really talk about that. The Old Testament doesn't talk about heaven and hell. I would suggest that these guys are in heaven if they were men in general who were faithful to God.

This one infraction, notwithstanding, I don't think would be the thing that would cancel their ticket forever in their whole relationship with God. Every Christian does some things wrong, and yet Christians are saved. God saves by grace.

I mean, Noah did the wrong thing when he got drunk, but that didn't cancel his reservation to heaven. But it is remembered against him. Many times our sins, even if they don't damn us, they bring earthly shame or earthly consequences, even earthly death upon us.

In this case, if God wants to make an example to the priest, he takes these guys out. It does not really tell us if God's ultimate wrath was against them in terms of eternal anger. But in this case, he does make a visible example of them, and they die.

Their earthly life ends. Now, this would be so stunning, so unexpected. I wonder if anyone noticed them pulling the coals from the wrong place and didn't speak to them about it.

Someone knew it was that reason because it's recorded that it was because they offered profane fire. But when they died, obviously Aaron and the two brothers who survived had got to be. They were just stunned.

Moses, you would think, would be stunned. That was his nephews. But Moses just kind of speaks rather matter-of-factly.

Moses said to Aaron, this is what Yahweh 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. Well, what lessons are there for us about this offering of strange fire? Obviously, this has to do with the worship of God.

These priests were the ones who were conducting the official worship of God. We are priests. We worship God.

Our whole lives are supposed to be worshipped. We're supposed to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Our possessions belong to God.

They are offered to God. Our praises are the things we do to conduct ourselves in specific gatherings where we are gathered for corporate worship. All of these things are part of our worship.

You know, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10, Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do it to the glory of God. You know, our diet, the things we eat, how much we eat. These things are all to be things that we are... Those are some of the most mundane decisions that we make.

What we wear, how we present ourselves, what we drive, how we live, all those things. Everything about our lives. Nothing is so mundane that it falls outside the realm of what we are supposed to be considering as what we're offering to God.

We're offering our whole lives to God, our bodies. And therefore, all the decisions we

make are considered acts of worship. What we eat, what we drink, we do it to the glory of God.

And therefore, the way we live our lives, and especially the way that we direct things to God, the way we worship or serve God in ministry especially, are things that we need to make sure that we're doing them as God wishes them to be done. First of all, the way he prescribes it, and that was one of the problems here. He had prescribed that they take the coals from this altar and not somewhere else.

And so they changed the prescribed order. They felt, I would say they were probably pragmatists. What is a pragmatist? Well, a pragmatist is a person who thinks if it works, don't criticize it.

If it gets results, don't criticize it. And there are people who have that view of religion today. You know, any fire will burn the incense equally well.

Why do we have to use the fire that God said to use? This fire burns the incense, it burns just as sweet. That's pragmatism, saying the results are the same, even if we're not doing exactly what God said to do. You see, you can be a pragmatist or you can be a purist.

A purist is someone who wants to purely follow the instructions that God gave, even if it would seem that they might seem superfluous or unnecessary. A pragmatist says, why do it the hard way? Why do it that way? Why be a stickler for detail when you get the same results as other ways? And it seems to me that people in ministry often are in violation of this principle in that we try to think of what will build the church bigger. You know, if we don't teach the Word so plainly, if we maybe give sermons that are more appealing to people who are less dedicated, if we don't faithfully carry out the commission that we've been given, but we instead modify it a little bit to make it more pleasing to men, we might get a big church, and isn't that really what God wants? For there to be a big group of people calling themselves Christians? And so we have all these different things we change in the way that ministry is done in order to get the results we think God would be pleased with.

But it seems to me that God is more interested in that we do things faithfully the way He says to them and not worry about the size or the type of results we get. God can worry about those. We are responsible for the purity and the depth of our ministry.

God's responsible for the breadth and the impact of it. God is the one who gives the results. We're not called upon to be successful.

We're called upon to be faithful, and God's the one who decides our degree of success. So it doesn't matter. Jesus, of course, when He had a big crowd of people following Him, He didn't do anything to try to keep them following Him.



He gave them the hardest words He felt that they needed to hear. And He lost most of them. The crowd left Him.

He had a very small group left over. But Jesus hadn't done anything wrong. He actually had a small group because He had done the right thing.

Therefore, Jesus didn't decide what He would do based on what would bring the largest crowd or what would get the biggest visible results. He just did the will of His Father, and sometimes that didn't appear to get the kind of results that one would think a preacher would want to have. But I think sometimes of the way that psychology has been brought into the church as a means of ministry, when God has given us, in the Bible, adequate principles of ministry, yet we take from the world, we take strange sources for our service of God.

There is, for a long time in the 80s, it's not so much the fad now, but in the 80s there was a big fad in the charismatic movement called inner healing. You'll still find some people who practice it, but it was big. It was big almost everywhere you went.

People were talking about inner healing. And they were saying, everyone needs to get saved, filled with the Spirit, get inner healing, and sometimes they want to give you deliverance too. And there's this series of things that every Christian pretty much needed, inner healing.

Inner healing was the idea that you have traumas that you've experienced from your first seven years. You don't remember them necessarily. They're subliminal.

They're in the unconscious mind. But they are hindering you. They're hindering your life.

They're hindering your walk with God. And therefore, you need someone to do this special kind of ministry. It involved them getting a word of knowledge about what it is in your past that you don't remember, about what injured you, what scarred you, what tweaked you, so that you're not doing the right thing in your life.

And then they need to take you back through guided visualization, to take you back to that time in your childhood when that happened. And for you to begin to visualize that Jesus comes in there, and Jesus fixes the situation that was really at the root of your problems. And then you get this, you're healed at the root of your problems.

And it's called inner healing. Well, boy, I'll tell you what, I saw that everywhere I went in the 80s in charismatic churches. What Christians didn't seem to know or care to know was that it was an occult practice.

The practice that they called guided visualization came right out of the occult. Shamans have been doing that kind of thing forever. In fact, there's a woman who wrote a book, Johanna Michelson wrote a book called *The Beautiful Side of Darkness* about her pre-

Christian life as a shaman.

And how she did this kind of visualization stuff. The idea is that you kind of visualize some kind of a hero or an archetype that you want to be like. And in your visualization, you make that person actually come into your life.

It's a demonic thing. And it came into the church actually through Carl Jung. Carl Jung, who had been a disciple of Sigmund Freud, but had parted company with him because Sigmund Freud didn't believe in the supernatural, and Carl Jung did.

Carl Jung did because he grew up in a haunted house, a poltergeist house. Carl Jung communed with demons from his childhood. And he had, as he said, a spirit guide.

He called his spirit guide Philemon. He called him his ghostly guru. And his ghostly guru gave Carl Jung his ideas about what makes people tick and what they need to do.

And it was Carl Jung who brought these things into the realm of modern science, out of the realm of witchcraft. This guided visualization process. He said that we need to have archetypes that we visualize.

And these archetypes will become real to us. Jung himself, as a child, said there was a picture of either his grandfather or some relative of his at the end of a hallway, a portrait. And he said as a child he would stand there and gaze at it until the seated figure in the picture would stand up, step down out of the portrait, and come down and walk down the hall with him.

And he'd go out in the garden and commune with this being. And so he believed that you could picture, you know, anyone you admired. Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, Jesus Christ, anyone.

And that, if you visualized it enough, that person would actually come to you, really. And you'd really be in contact with that person. And of course, when Johanna Michelson wrote her book about this, she said that she, as a non-Christian, had chosen Jesus to be her architect.

And so she was accustomed to visualizing Jesus and he would come into a room in her mind and she'd be sitting there and they'd commune with each other. And it'd really be him and her talking, supposedly. But when she was getting closer to getting converted, she had this experience of visualizing him and then his mask came off and it was a demon impersonating Jesus.

And she was terrified and this led her actually to find the real Jesus eventually. But Carl Jung's ideas were brought into the charismatic movement through a woman named Agnes Sanford and perpetrated through a great number of popular charismatic teachers who were disciples under Agnes Sanford. Many of these names are not well known today

as they were in the 80s.

But in the 80s, this was huge. But the point I wanted to make was that people claimed they were getting help in their lives from this procedure. And when I would point out to some of those who were practicing it that this was an occult practice, that the apostles never practiced this, Jesus never practiced this, no one ever advocated this, it came right into the church through a pagan, Carl Jung, an occultist.

And it's an occult procedure. You know what answer I'd always hear? That it helps so many people. In other words, they justified doing this occult thing in the church because it helps so many people.

You know, the incense burns just as well even if you do it the occult way as if you do it God's way. You know, ministry, they were pragmatic, pragmatic. The idea they had was that as long as people are being helped, it doesn't matter what the method is.

Well, you know, you can go to Manila in the Philippines and you can go to a psychic healer who allegedly can reach into your body and pull cancerous tissues out and remove them without leaving a scar on your body. Probably most of this is hocus-pocus and fakery. But there are people who've said, including Westerners, doctors, medical people who've gone over there, had this procedure and claimed to be healed of their cancer.

Now, it's not Christian. It's clearly occultic. It's clearly demonic.

But, I mean, couldn't one argue, well, why don't argue against it? It cures your cancer. Who cares if it's from a demon? Well, God cares if it's from a demon or not. God cares about whether we're getting our help from God or from demons, and whether we're looking to God or to demons, whether we're faithfully doing what God said to do or something else.

A lot of people are taking consciousness-altering medications, what they call medications. Sometimes we just call them drugs because they're not really meds. They don't really cure any disease.

And they're taking these things to resolve anxiety and to resolve depression and to resolve mood states that throughout history people have had to resolve without meds, and Christians have had to resolve them by drawing near to God and seeking help from God. And if He didn't help them out of their depression or anxiety, they just had to offer that trial up to God and say, well, God, you know, then if you're not going to remove it, I'll take it. I'll receive it.

I'm not going to go and use consciousness-altering drugs for it. And yet many Christians will use that. To me, that's burning strange fire.

That kind of ministry to spiritual needs of people is coming from the wrong source. And it's hard to convince people that that's not okay because it sometimes seems to give relief. It seems to sometimes provide the spiritual advantages that people are looking for.

But it's not from God. I realize that some people say, well, how do you know it's not from God? You know, all truth is God's truth. And, you know, God did, do we not believe that God has helped science to figure out cures to problems and so forth? Well, yeah, to physical problems.

But spiritual problems, when you look anywhere but to God for spiritual aid, you're committing adultery. It's idolatry. When you put something, anything, in the place that God wants to occupy, then that's idolatry and that's not okay.

And therefore, pragmatism in religion is something that was demonstrated in Nadab and Abihu's case, and God's attitude toward it was demonstrated in their case, too. Now, he doesn't strike out immediately at those who use worldly or occult means to bring about allegedly Christian desirable results. But I don't believe he's for it.

He says, this is what God said in verse 3, By those who come near me, and that would be us, we hope, I must be regarded as holy. What's that mean? God is separate. God is different.

God is not worshipped by human flesh or worse, by occult means. He's worshipped, he's different than all others. He must be worshipped in the means that he himself prescribes, that he himself commands.

Now, Aaron held his peace here, and 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. So these were some near relatives of Aaron. They weren't sons of Aaron.

They were actually first cousins of Aaron. But they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses said. So the corpses were removed.

And Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, the survivors, Do not uncover your heads, nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon you and all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord has kindled. That is the burning of Nadab and Abihu.

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. Now this is essentially saying, Aaron and you, Ithamar and Eleazar, I know you're going to want to be mourning the death of your brothers and your son, but you can't.

You've got a job to do. God has ordained this work for you to do. And you can't interrupt it just because you have a family crisis.

That seems pretty severe. But that's sort of a standard rule of Scripture in the New Testament. He that loves father or mother or wife or children, brother or sister, more than me, is not worthy of me.

And when you've got a task to perform, you can't just nurse your wounds and neglect your duties. Now there are times certainly God is sympathetic. He draws near to the brokenhearted.

But there are times when your duties simply cannot be put aside. And you've just got to buck up and be a man about it and go on with your duties. They could probably mourn for Nadab and Abihu at a later time.

Once they were done with their duties here, they could maybe have a time of mourning at a later date. But they could not interrupt what they were doing at this moment. Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying in verse 8 and 9, 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, that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses. The people of Israel were to learn about the laws of God from the priests teaching them, since the priests had the law and the people didn't. That is, the priests had copies of it they could read and study and teach.

The people didn't have their own copies to read at home. So they depended on the priest to tell them what's right and what's wrong. Now, Nadab and Abihu had apparently violated this.

They had not made a distinction between what's holy and what's unholy, between what's holy fire and profane fire, what's clean and unclean. And the suggestion might be here that they've been drinking too much. Now, I don't mean that they've been partying all night and got drunk.

It's just that in those days, alcoholic beverage was just about the only kind of beverage that was available. The water wasn't very good for drinking. The water could be made safer by putting alcoholic beverage in it.

That's what was commonly done in the Middle East, is putting wine in the water to kill the bacteria and stuff like that to make it safe to drink. But often, you know, if you didn't drink water itself, there wasn't much else to drink except fruit juices which would ferment rather quickly in that environment. They didn't have refrigeration.

The only way you can keep fruit juices from fermenting is to refrigerate it. Or I guess if you pasteurize it or something like that, maybe it won't ferment. But that's a newer process.

The thing is, everybody drank wine in those days. And if you're thirsty, you might drink a lot of it. If it's a hot day, you might drink a lot.

That's what you drank for refreshment. It's possible that Nehemiah and Abihu had just drunk too much wine. And what is suggested here is that drinking too much wine impairs your moral judgment.

You priests, when you are ministering, should not drink wine, God said. Now, that didn't mean priests could never drink wine. But when they were doing their service at the tabernacle, don't drink any wine.

Why? You need to be able to have your senses about you, your moral senses. You have to have your discernment. You have to not make the kind of mistakes Nehemiah and Abihu made where they couldn't distinguish in their own minds between a holy fire and ordinary fire.

It may be that this is said on this occasion because Nehemiah and Abihu actually had brought their own death upon themselves by drinking to the point where they didn't distinguish between the holy things and the unholy things. And so, God now tells Aaron, don't you or your sons drink wine when you enter the tabernacle, lest you die like they did, so that you can tell the difference. See, over in Proverbs chapter 31, King Lemuel, whoever he was, many people think he was Solomon, but we don't know of any King Lemuel, but he is so identified here.

He tells us what the advice his mother gave him before he became king. He apparently had a wise mother who, upon his becoming king, told him what things to watch out for, the dangers of his profession. And in Proverbs 31, verse 4, she said, It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it's not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes intoxicating drink, lest they drink and forget the law and pervert the justice of all the afflicted.

Give strong drink to him who is perishing and wine to those who are bitter of heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his misery no more. Now, apparently this suggests that wine is something that God has given to help people, you know, lift their spirits a little bit.

Certainly not to become what we call drunkards, but to elevate their spirits when they're grieving. But not when they're ruling. It's not for kings and princes to drink wine and intoxicating drink, because it says they may forget the law.

They may pervert judgment. It does, after all, one thing that clearly is an effect of intoxication is that it blurs moral judgment. In Hosea, chapter 4 and verse 11, it says,

Harlotry, wine and new wine enslave the heart.

Now, the heart in Scripture is really the mind in the center of will and thought and so forth. And the heart becomes enslaved. It loses its capacity to function freely and properly when it's under the influence of harlotry, that is, you know, lust, and also alcohol.

And so God tells Aaron, from now on, no more drinking wine when you're working the tabernacle ship, because that's going to endanger you. You might die like your sons did. Verse 12, Then Moses spoke to Aaron and 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.

In other words, you've got to keep doing the stuff you were doing before. Just because your brothers have just died before your eyes, it doesn't mean you don't have to eat the sacrifices as the law prescribed you should. And 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.

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 the peace offering of the children of Israel. 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 as a statute forever, as the Lord has commanded. All of that we knew.

Then it says, Then Moses diligently made 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, Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the 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 set before the Lord, for them before the Lord. Now, it was the priest's duty to eat goat flesh of the sin offerings, not the bull's flesh.

When a bull was offered as a sin offering, no one ate any of that. The carcass was burned. But when it was a goat for the people or for a common person or for a ruler, the priest had to eat the flesh.

And I guess Ithamar and Eleazar had become so, were just kind of paralyzed by being stunned by shock by what happened to their brothers, that they had kind of neglected it. And Aaron started, or Moses started looking at the lamb. The whole thing had burned up.

The goat had burned up instead of being eaten. There was nothing left of it. So it had become a whole burnt offering when it was supposed to not be.

And this one again was a breach of the procedure. Here, the very first day of the tabernacle is open, everything is going wrong. People are dying.

You know, the wrong incense is being burned or the wrong fire is being used to burn the incense. And now the lamb that's supposed to be eaten, it's burned to a crisp here on the altar. And Moses is upset because this is not how things are supposed to be going.

But interestingly, God didn't smite Eleazar and Ithamar for this breach, which was probably no more or less a breach of protocol than what Nadab and Abihu did, but this was clearly inadvertent on their part. It's not likely that they deliberately did something different than they were supposed to. I think in all likelihood, God realized they were in shock, they were distracted.

You know, they weren't paying close enough attention. This is fairly justifiable of them. And so they were not punished.

But Moses is rebuking them for not doing it. He says in verse 18, See, its blood was not brought inside the holy place. Indeed, you should have eaten it in the holy place as I commanded.

Now, what he's referring to there is that in the sin offerings, if it was a sin offering for the priest or for the people, generally it was a bull. And its blood was taken into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil of the Holy of Holies and then put on the horns of the golden altar. And then the bull would not be eaten, but its carcass would be burned outside the camp.

That just was a bull. But when it was a goat or a lamb, its blood was not taken in and sprinkled in there. And it was specifically said in the law that that animal whose blood is sprinkled inside the tabernacle should not be eaten.

But Moses is saying the goat, its blood was not sprinkled in there. It should be eaten. You didn't eat it.

This is what you've done wrong. Now Aaron spoke up apparently on behalf of his sons. In verse 19, 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 I have been accepted in the sight of the Lord? So Moses heard that and was content. It's not entirely clear how Aaron is arguing, but Moses understood the argument.

What I think he's saying is this. He's saying, Moses, I mean, check it out. We did everything right up to this point.

We have offered the sin offering like we should. And the burnt offering like we should.



We have behaved as we should up to this point and followed the procedure.

And yet God has bereaved me of my two sons. Like, if this is what God does when I'm doing the right thing, you know, what motivation is there for me to do everything right if these kinds of things happen to me? If I'd just, if I'd eaten the sin offering, even though I've lost my appetite, you know, because I'm in grief, would, you know, is God going to be good to me then? He wasn't good to me when I did the other things right. We offered the sin offering, we offered the burnt offering, and still I suffered this loss.

Is there some reason that God's going to be good to me when I eat the sin offering, which is also doing the right thing, even though it's pretty much against my abilities right now? I mean, let's face it, there would be times when it would be hard for a priest to eat a big piece of meat. One time would be when his sons have just died before his eyes. You know, your appetite is somewhat affected.

And I think Aaron is just arguing that, like, you know, we've done things right up to this point. It's not really our fault that this thing has happened to us. And we're kind of put off balance here.

And, you know, is it going to make that big a difference to God if we eat this or not? And for some reason, Moses just felt like, OK, we'll give you a pass on this. And God did too. After all, Nadab and Abihu's sin was done, you know, without them being under any duress or under any special pressure or emotional trauma.

They just did the wrong thing, possibly under the influence of alcohol, we don't know. But the neglect of the eating of the goat by Ithmar, Eliezer and Aaron was certainly done. That neglect occurred under emotional trauma.

And I think Aaron is trying to point that out and saying, you know, God certainly will give us a pass on this. And in fact, God did. So God was somewhat sympathetic toward them for their loss.

But he didn't allow them to stop their ministrations and to observe a time of mourning. Not at this point. So we see that the priesthood is consecrated, begins its ministry.

The first day the tabernacle opens, you know, it's a, I would say, a comedy of errors. But it's more like a tragedy of errors because all these things went wrong. And it's kind of funny in a way.

I mean, not funny, humorous, but peculiar. That this would be recorded this way because it's somewhat embarrassing to the Jewish priesthood that, you know, on this glorious day of their first day of service, everything went wrong. I mean, it'd be an embarrassment for them to record it.

But it's just a tribute to the honesty of the records of the Bible that they tell these kinds

of embarrassing stories. Not just embarrassing of the two priests who died, but just the whole, the whole mess. The whole inauguration of the tabernacle itself is just a mess.

But presumably things got orderly after that. And we don't read any more of this kind of thing happening afterward. Instead, we have to assume that the rituals that are described in the first seven chapters went off without a hitch in most cases, most days.

We're going to take a break and we're going to come back and talk about the section of Leviticus that defines what makes people clean or unclean. Which is actually kind of an interesting section, it seems to me. There's some interesting observations to make about it.

We'll take a break first and hit chapter 11 when we come back. .