#### Lesson 3:

#### Nadab and Abihu

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

Leviticus 10:1-7; 8:1-13; Exodus 28; Numbers 3:4

MEMORY WORK:

Joshua 1:9

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

How I worship is one very important way that I can show God that I love Him. So I must have the right attitude as I worship, and I must worship Him the way He tells me to in His Word.

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|  **LESSON STARTS HERE** |

INTRODUCTION:

Review last week’s lesson.

Sometimes Mama and Daddy and other grownups ask you to do things that you don’t want to do, or they make rules that you don’t understand. God is our Heavenly Father, and He tells us what to do in His Word, the Bible. He expects us to obey His Word, even if we don’t understand why. We must follow God’s rules no matter what. Today, we’re going to talk about two men who did not pay attention to God’s rules.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. As God guided the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan (the Promised Land), He planned a special place for them to worship Him (the Tabernacle) and specific ways that they were to worship Him. This was very important because all of the two to three million people camping in the desert (wilderness) had been born and raised in Egypt, surrounded by idols and idol- worshipping people. (Review basic points from the last lesson on the tabernacle.)
2. Part of God’s plan was to have one special group of men–—the tribe of Levi (Levites)—to be in charge of the Tabernacle and the worship activities there (including making the sacrifices every day). Some Levites were priests and the rest were special helpers. Aaron, Moses’ brother, was chosen by God to be the first High Priest. His four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, were priests who were to work under him (Exodus 6:23-25).
3. When the Tabernacle was completed, the Israelites celebrated for eight days. They had a special ceremony for Aaron and his sons so that everyone would know they had been chosen by God to lead the people in their worship. God gave specific instructions to Moses about this ceremony. God spoke to Moses, and Moses understood that he had to do exactly what God said, not substituting his own ideas about the Tabernacle, the work of the priests, or the pattern of worship God specified.
4. Aaron and his sons washed and put on beautiful clothing made especially for them as the priests (Exodus 28). After special sacrifices were offered, fire came down from heaven and completely consumed the offering on the altar so that the Israelites would know that Almighty God would always watch over their worship and would always be with them. The Israelites were very happy and thankful, but the joy in the camp did not last long.
5. Two of Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, made some bad choices with serious consequences. They decided to offer “foreign fire” to burn incense at the Tabernacle, and God struck them dead. So, a time of great celebration turned to a time of great sadness. What was so wrong about the “kind” of fire they offered? What did Nadab and Abihu do that was so wrong?
6. The text says that they used the wrong fire (“foreign fire,” “profane fire,” or “unauthorized fire”)—fire which God “had not commanded them” (Leviticus 10:1). This seems to indicate that they did not get the fire for the sacrifice from the right place (which many believe was supposed to be from the altar). [Others also argue, based on Exodus 30:7-10, that they may not have even been authorized to make this particular sacrifice, although it is possible that the mention of “Aaron” in that passage might actually mean, “the house of Aaron,” which would include his sons (cf. vss. 8-11). Some argue that the timing of their offering might have been presumptuous. Others argue that they may have been drunk, and thus not in a respectful, holy mindset, based on the following verses (vss. 8-11).] Regardless of the specifics of what God was upset about, one thing is clear: they did not have permission or authority from God for what they did. When we worship God, we must have permission for what we do!

**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See Apologetics Press’ booklet, [***Surrendering to His Lordship***](http://www.apologeticspress.org/store/Product.aspx?pid=451), for further background study on the biblical principle of authority. See also the articles “[**Hermeneutical Principles in the Old Testament**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=967)” and “[**Technicalities**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=1258)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site.

1. Nadab and Abihu were trained to be special servants to God, but they thought their own way of doing things was as good as God’s. They were foolish because they decided to ignore God’s rules. They died because they disobeyed. It was (and still is) a serious thing to be a servant of the Lord. In Hebrews 12:28-29, the writer says that we must serve God “acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire” (see also Deuteronomy 4:24).
2. Moses told Aaron that he should not let the people see him mourn (be sad) for his two older sons who died, because they had sinned against God (Leviticus 10:6-7; 21:10-12). By mourning for his sons, God could have been made to look like the “bad Guy” in the story, because people would have felt sorry for Aaron. But Nadab and Abihu died for their own sins, not because of God.
3. The Israelites learned a very important lesson the day that Nadab and Abihu died, and so can we. We show love for God by how we worship Him, without adding or changing anything of the pattern He has given us in His Word.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL VISUALS (note disclaimers):

##### Betty Lukens’ felt pieces. This lesson is not in the manual. Pick out felt figures you feel would be necessary for the lesson.

* There are no images on the flash drive for this lesson.

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS:

Any songs about obedience, listening

### SUNDAY

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* Remind the children how worship in the Old Testament was very different than what we do today. But always, God has given us specific instructions on how to worship. Remind the children about the tabernacle. Discuss and show the garments of the high priests. You can make a high priest breastplate as a craft using yellow cardstock, ribbon and stick on jewels or simply coloring the correct color in the correct space. Remind the students that there was only one high priest at a time (Aaron). Nadab and Abihu were his sons.
* Show the students items to remind them about ways we worship God, such as a songbook, a Bible, a communion tray, a collection basket, a picture of someone praying. As you talk about each item and how it relates to worship, ask them questions about how we should behave. [What should we do during a prayer? During the Lord’s Supper? During the sermon? Should we giggle, squirm, and talk out loud? Should we act like we do at a ball game?]
* “[The Acts of Worship Activity](http://www.apcurriculum.com/dcirfol/2-11-12-74Acts%20of%20Worship.pdf)” (provided in activity sheets)

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

INTRODUCTION:

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson. briefly (See [Review Questions](http://www.apcurriculum.com/dcirfol/4-24-32RQ.pdf) for example questions.)
2. Talk about what it means to have permission to do something, and what it would be like in life if people did whatever they wanted without permission (for example, pharmacists adding other drugs to prescriptions that doctors had prescribed; restaurants taking your parents’ debit cards or money when it’s time to pay and charging your parents for things they did not order; Noah adding an extra floor to the ark made out of oak, or adding wings to the ark to try to make it fly).

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

##### Review Time – Many aspects of worship in the Old Testament are very different from today. This would be a good time to review parts of the tabernacle, roles of the priest, sacrifices, etc.

### Review Questions

### 1. Who were Aaron’s four sons that worked under him?

### a. Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar

### 2. After the Tabernacle was completed, how long did the Israelites celebrate?

### a. Eight days

### 3. God had given speical instructions to the Israelites concerning a special ceremony they were to have; what happened after the special sacrifices had been made?

### a. Fire came down from heaven and completely consumed the offering on the altar.

### 4. What “bad choice” did Nadab and Abihu make with their offerings?

### a. They decided to offer “foreign fire” to burn incense at the tabernacle.

### 5. What happened to them?

### a. God sent fire to burn them to death.

### 6. Why did God execute them?

### a. They used the wrong fire.

### 7. What are the acts of worship today?

###  a. Praying, Singing, Giving, Communion, Study of God’s Word

Additional Notes / Activities Performed & Curriculum Feed Back

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