

WHAT KIND OF FIRE IS BEING OFFERED?

IS IT SACRED FIRE OR IS IT STRANGE FIRE?

“For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God”; Deut. 4:24

SACRED Fire can be described as:

1. Sacred Fire is one of holiness, devotion and consecration unto the Lord. The fire in which our service is rendered is that of the Spirit of Holiness. Every offering must be presented according to God’s instruction; Leviticus 2:1-3.
2. It was kept perpetually burning and was the one central symbol of the holiness of God: “The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out”; Leviticus 6:13.
3. The Holy Fire of God expresses His approval; it is associated with His glory, and an acceptable sacrifice offered by His people; Leviticus 9:23-24
4. Faithful priests of the New Covenant show a holy reverence for the sacred things of God; they are put in a holy trust. They are “living sacrifices”; Romans 12:1, who offer up true worship; 1 Peter 2:5.
5. This is not common fire, but miraculous fire, which is appropriated for the service of the altars. It represents a life of prayer and faith unto God; Isaiah 10:17.
6. Holy Fire is that which is wrought of the Lord Himself, from the Most Holy Place, by the power of His Holy Spirit. It transported Elijah to heaven; 2 Kings 2:11
7. Jehovah God “answers by fire”; 1 Kings 18:38; 1 Chronicles 21:26; Judges 6:21
8. Sacred Fire is associated with our lives being in accordance with God’s order, by His divine appointment; 1 Corinthians 12:18:
 - a. it is realizing and embracing our proper place and service unto the Lord
 - b. it is doing His appointed work, out of a pure heart, with the right motives
 - c. it is knowing that we have no right to choose the place of our ministry or the specifics of our ministry
 - d. it honors God’s divine government, and is content with our assignment and calling

STRANGE Fire can be described as:

1. The Hebrew word “strange” is defined as “to turn aside; foreign; profane; to commit adultery”. Strange Fire is “unauthorized” fire: an unauthorized offering or work.
2. Strange Fire is something which God has not ordered. It does not come directly from the Lord; it is “service” unto God which is energized by the strength and will of the flesh, and is led by the natural wisdom and desires of man.
3. Burning Strange Fire is like spiritual adultery: friendship with the world, exhibiting a strange relationship or desiring the ministry/work of our own will; James 4:4.
4. To offer Strange Fire is deadly business, as illustrated with Korah’s rebellion; Numbers 16:1-32. It may include:
 - a. assuming an office or responsibility which has been committed to another; engaging in a work which is not our duty
 - b. it shows contempt for sacred things, being guilty of presumption and intrusion into a sacred office, carelessness or irreverence; lack of the fear of God
 - c. it intrudes upon God’s service in another way other than divine appointment

5. At the root of it, is the sin of presumption. Nadab and Abihu knew that the fire used for the altar of incense was to be taken exclusively from the altar of burnt sacrifice, but they disobeyed, and died before the Lord; Leviticus 10:1-2; Numbers 3:2-4; 26:61

6. King Saul usurped the priest's office and fell into the trap of offering strange fire when he came under an intense attack from the Philistines. Instead of waiting for Samuel to arrive, he offered a burnt offering that only the priest was authorized to offer. That day he lost his kingdom; 1 Samuel 13:8-14.

7. King Uzziah presumed to enter the temple of God to burn incense on the altar, which was the work of the priests alone. He presumed to enter a ministry for which he had not been anointed. While the priests watched him, the scripture records "Leprosy rose up in his forehead" and Uzziah bore the curse of leprosy the rest of his days; 2 Chronicles 26:16-21.

The LESSON of Strange Fire:

1. Pride, compromise and the worship of "self will" can lead to all sorts of Strange Fire.
2. Do not be hasty; wait upon the Lord for His leading.
3. Do not depart from the parameters of His Word; John 14:15

Note:

When Peter denied the Lord Jesus on the night He was betrayed, he had been "warming himself" by a fire that men had started to keep themselves warm. Those who flee from, or deny the "All Consuming Fire", will find themselves drawn to the fires that are "kindled" by the hands of men; Luke 22:55-60.

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