

STRANGE FIRE

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September 20, 2015

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“Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put Fire in it, put incense on it, and Offered strange fire before the LORD, Which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and Devoured them, and they died before The Lord. And Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the LORD 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.”

† Leviticus 10:1-3

I awoke this morning with a strong Presence of the Holy Spirit in the room and I began to think about some crusades and meetings He's been speaking to me about holding in Nigeria next year. The Spirit wants to shake that country to its very foundations!

During this time He began to speak about "strange fire" and its implications upon the ministry. He knows that this is an area that has been grievous to me ever since I first went into ministry as a teenager and actually caused me to leave the ministry while pastoring my first church as a Baptist at age 23 because I saw corruption in ministry—lying and stealing money by pastors and evangelists.

Now I didn't get mad at God; I didn't stop going to church but I just backed away from ministry and just continued to concentrate on family and career as a chemical engineer because even while pastoring a Southern Baptist Church I was working as an engineer in a refinery and despite their trying to get me to accept a salary also from the church I refused. I was doing this unto the Lord and for His glory and not as a career—genuine ministry is a calling and not a vocation.

So I backed away from the ministry back then in 1969 but guess what? God had other plans. When I received the Baptism of Power and spoke in tongues on Father's Day in 1978 at a non-denominational church in Nassau Bay, Texas, that ministry call and anointing immediately came right back upon me! I felt it tangibly!

So, again, even though I was gainfully employed, had a great job that I enjoyed and was earning >\$100,000 a year which was a lot of money back then I began ministering again but, like Paul and Barnabas, I continued to work for a living to support my family. And as I began to minister in various Pentecostal type churches I was horrified to see the same thing I'd seen as a Baptist—corruption, lying, cheating and stealing among the ministry. Where was the holiness and purity that I expected to see among men of God? Ten years after this in 1988 when I was on my way to Nigeria for 4 months the Lord gave me a prophecy

through a known prophet which said, “You’ve been hurt and disappointed by men and by leaders and by associations and days gone past ...”

But in this prophecy through another anointed prophet the Lord also said, “I’m going to begin to take you a new way. And some are going to align and some are going to resign, and those that resign leave ‘em behind. Come on into thy authority and take your rightful place and come on into my place, says the Lord.” I still have the recordings of these powerful prophecies and I began to meditate on them because when God speaks it always means much more than we can imagine.

At that time I was involved with many different ministers in Nigeria and was building the first training centre and orphanage in Akure. One by one they began to “resign”; so much so that a few years later I told the Lord: “Lord, you didn’t tell me that they *all* were going to resign.”

Now you might ask, “*Why* did they all resign?” Strange Fire! I didn’t know it at the time but it was Strange Fire. Of the nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in I Corinthians 12 (to understand these gifts and how they function see *THE GIFTS AND OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT* by J.P. and Evelyn Timmons), the one most dominant in my life is the Gift of Discerning of Spirits. And because this gift is so precise I can tell you for a fact that most Christians and even ministers are not pure—they are tainted in various areas. It is a fact and no doubt one of the reasons the Lord told me in 1998 regarding a ministry assignment in Alaska, “I don’t have very many people I can trust.”

Does God expect us to be perfect? No! The Holy Spirit’s job—one of them if we will yield to Him instead of fighting Him—is to “conform us to the image of Christ” and when that day arrives we will be perfect just like Jesus is. But in the meantime, He does expect us to be pure—to not have ulterior motives. In ministry, God will judge you quicker on motive than He will on what you say or do. One of the ten “M’s” of

Ministry that we used to talk about is *motive*. And as I always write or preach, “What does the Word say?”

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His Holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not Lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully.” † Psalm 24:3-4

So all these Balaam Boys you’ve been giving money to asking you to “sow a seed” against cancer, your loved ones being saved, etc., cannot even stand in the “Holy Place” because they don’t have clean hands and a pure heart—they are offering Strange Fire and God will not accept it and won’t even listen to their prayers. If they were to repent, he would listen to that prayer but most will not; they are destined to eternal death by offering Strange Fire and are profaning the Name of the Lord through their whoredoms and by “lifting up his soul to an idol”—the idol of money.

If you expect to minister *for the Lord* then you must first minister *to the Lord*. That is why most of the prophets in the Old Testament were priests first or came from the priestly tribe of Levite, save Samuel who was from Benjamin. And if you spend much time—and you will have to if you expect to be a true minister of the Lord and not offer Strange Fire—then the Holy Spirit will teach you about the Spirit of Fear of the Lord (Is. 11: 1-5) because this is part of the seven-fold Spirit of God. Almost nobody in the Church today knows anything about this Spirit and thus they don’t “fear the Lord.” It’s a clear understanding of the Spirit of Fear of the Lord that purifies a person; this portion of the Spirit is the *true* Fire that God demands. Those who do not fear the Lord will always offer Strange Fire. But when we truly know the Spirit of Fear of the Lord we will have been purged and purified—we will have clean hands and a pure heart.

It is only then that we can expect to “stand” in the Presence of the Lord as Elijah did and speak for Him. Remember, you will stand in the Presence of the Lord in Heaven long before He will allow you to speak for Him on this earth and if you don’t understand that then you need to pray and seek the Holy Spirit because He is the Great Teacher of the Church and He is the Great Purifier and Refiner who wants to refine us as pure gold through the Spirit of Fear of the Lord.

This morning when the precious Holy Spirit was speaking to me about this Strange Fire and how so many who claim to be ministers for the Lord are offering Strange Fire He said: “There will always be Strange Fire. That’s because men will always try to control God for their own purposes—today that’s mostly money.”

But just like in Moses’ day, God will not be controlled! And you’d better be careful if you claim to minister for the Lord today because we are finally entering into that period of Glory and Judgment where overlooked sin under Grace will be quickly and severely judged just like Nadab and Abihu experienced in the desert when they attempted to minister to the Lord their own way.

Almost everybody today who says they are in ministry claims to be an apostle. Now you can say anything you want to say or you can write anything you want to write. You can put the title “Apostle” on your business card or “Bishop” or “Prophet” or even “Pastor” but if you are *not* called to that office then you are not anointed by the Holy Spirit with God’s *true Fire!* Your Strange Fire will surely show and be seen.

The Apostle Paul dealt with this problem in his day (cf. 2 Cor. 11) though today it’s much more widespread in the Church than then. He had to defend his teachings and ministry against the “Super Apostles” as he referred to them who charged a great deal of money for their meetings (hummm, sounds like today) whereas Paul obeyed the

commandment of the Lord not to “charge for the Gospel.” And Paul defended his apostleship by stating that a true apostle will “do the works of an apostle” which is signs, wonders and miracles and he will have seen the Lord. You can say you’re an apostle or a prophet but you cannot raise the dead like Elisha did or raise up a crippled man like Peter did without the *true* Fire of the Holy Spirit. Strange fire never raised the dead or opened blind eyes.

Jude described it this way:

“Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned Themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam’s error and perished in Korah’s rebellion. These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they Feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves, waterless Clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice Dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their Shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has Been reserved forever.”

I believe if you read and meditate on these verses from Jude you will see several different metaphors describing Strange Fire. Let this be a warning to the Church of today and especially to those claiming to be Five-fold ministers. Fear God! Don’t be guilty of offering Strange Fire and idol worship; if you have been repent before it is too late because to not do so will result in what Jude wrote as “twice dead.”

A WARNING!

The Spirit says, "Just as strange fire produced death during the days of Moses in those who were supposed to minister for me so shall it produce death today for those who continue to play with strange fire."

The true fire of God demands holiness and purity—God demands it!

MARANATHA



2 CORINTHIANS 4:7