

HOLINESS AND JUSTICE  
(Leviticus 10:1-7; 2 Samuel 6)

- I. There Are Times When God Appears to Be Unjust
  - A. The story of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-7)
    - 1. Nadab and Abihu offered unauthorized fire at the altar of God
      - a. They were sons of Aaron, the high priest
      - b. God hastily struck them dead for a seemingly small error
    - 2. Aaron complained to Moses
      - a. That his sons were killed by God seemed unfair to Aaron
      - b. Moses said that God must be treated as holy
      - c. This answer satisfied Aaron and he remained silent
  - B. The story of Uzzah the Kohathite (2 Samuel 6)
    - 1. The ark of the covenant was being returned to Jerusalem on an oxcart when it suddenly began to fall
    - 2. Uzzah steadied the ark with his hand to keep it from falling into the dirt
    - 3. God struck Uzzah dead for touching the ark
      - a. The law mandated that no one was to touch the ark
      - b. Uzzah arrogantly assumed that his hands were less polluted than the dirt
- II. How Do We Reconcile the Angry God of the Old Testament with the Merciful God of the New Testament?
  - A. Some modern views deny that the God of the Old Testament existed
  - B. Hans Kung said the real mystery is not that a holy and righteous God should exercise justice, but that He tolerates rebellious creatures
  - C. All sin is a capital offense against God
    - 1. Even in the slightest sin we defy the authority of God, insult His majesty, and challenge His justice
    - 2. We have become recalcitrant in our hearts and our consciences have been seared
  - D. According to Kung, the Old Testament actually represents a radical diminishing of God's wrath
- III. The Problem Is That Many Christians Expect God's Grace
  - A. God's forbearing mercy is designed to give us time to repent
  - B. First we take mercy for granted, then assume it, and finally demand it
  - C. Mercy, by definition, is free and given voluntarily
- IV. A Holy God is Both Just and Merciful, But Never Unjust
  - A. Don't ask God for justice—you might get it
  - B. If God were to deal with us according to justice, we would perish instantly
  - C. We live by His mercy