

**Bible Devotions: Lock Stock & Barrel
Devotional Reading for Outdoorsmen
(Old Testament)**

Leviticus 6:13

Never Mess with Another Man's Fire

A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.

Over the years, I've cobbled together a short list of things NOT to do outdoors. One of those things is to never mess with another man's fire. I speak from experience.

During a men and boys campout several years ago, I had built a really nice "cabin teepee" fire. It looks something like this: several small logs are fashioned into a mini log cabin with a teepee of sticks built in the center. Tinder is ignited at the base of the teepee. As the kindling burns, heat is deflected around the inside of the cabin which in turn helps fire the logs. The campfire will blaze away even as it falls in on itself. If built correctly, it lasts for hours without having to be tended.

As the campfire burned beautifully that night, one of the men started kicking at it. The whole set up was quickly destroyed, extinguishing the fire. Boys and their marshmallows had to wait until we started another fire. Thus, NEVER MESS WITH ANOTHER MAN'S FIRE.

Leviticus 6:13 is the finishing touch on the command God gave regarding the law of the burnt offering. This law included details about caring for the fire, the altar, the ashes, the priests' garments, the order of the offering, and the specific things to be burnt by fire.

This was no ordinary fire. This fire came from God. When the priestly ministry began, *fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering* (Leviticus 9:24). It was a holy fire meant for a holy people to keep it burning. Allowing the fire to extinguish or to burn inappropriately was to be reckless with holiness. That's not a good practice, as Aaron's sons discovered when they offered profane fire to the Lord. Because that was contrary to God's commands – a matter of disobedience – *fire went out from the Lord and devoured them* (Leviticus 10:1-2).

God's holy fire is a lot like the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. There, the resurrected Savior gave believers the command to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the whole world. Jesus then sent His Holy Spirit to lead the way, starting in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12; 2:4), then to the men of Judea (Acts 2:14, 36, 41), then to the Samaritans (Acts 8:4-5), and finally to the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-45). By comparison, in Leviticus God gave strict orders for offering sacrifices, then He sent His fire to lead the way.

I'm reminded of a line from the Charlie Daniels song, *The Devil Went Down to Georgia*, in which the young fiddler said, "sit down in that chair right there and let me show you how it's done." Not to be sacrilegious but God also desires to show us how it's done, either by fully consuming a sacrifice or by taking the Gospel to all the nations. As the Father teaches, so shall the son learn.

Only God's holy fire could consume the sacrifice in the days of Moses. Only the Holy Spirit can lead the way for Jesus to be exalted in reaching the world with the Gospel. And now, the Holy Spirit is upon us like fire from God (Acts 2:3-4). Leading, guiding, comforting, empowering, teaching, and illuminating the faithful followers of Jesus. It is a wonderful thing to be consumed this way.

For those who confess JESUS IS LORD, we must be certain that His fire burns within us the right way all the time. May we never be reckless with the holiness that has come upon us. And may we never mess with another Man's fire.

The Fire Is Burning
Johnson Oatman (1856 – 1922)

I've been on Mount Pisgah's lofty heights, and I've satisfied my longing heart's desire;
For I caught a glimpse of glory bright, and my soul is burning with the fire.
I will walk with Jesus, bless His Name, and to be like Him I ev'ry day aspire;
For His love is like a heav'nly flame, and my soul is burning with the fire.
I my all upon the altar lay, as I to my closet lovingly retire;
And the flame consumes while there I pray, and my soul is burning with the fire.
By faith's eye I scan the ocean's foam, and beyond I see the haven I desire;
There I view the beacon lights of home, and my soul is burning with the fire.
O the fire is burning, yes, 'tis brightly burning, O 'tis burning, burning in my soul;
O the fire is burning, yes, 'tis brightly burning, O 'tis burning, burning in my soul.

Bible Devotions: Hook Line & Sinker (study guide)

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HOOK

1. In your family or circle of friends, who is the one usually chosen to build a campfire? Why?

2. What are some things make for a pleasant evening as you sit around a campfire?

3. List three things for which a fire is useful and explain why. Keep it outdoor oriented.

LINE

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God's holy fire is a lot like the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. There, the resurrected Savior gave believers the command to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the whole world. Jesus then sent His Holy Spirit to lead the way. By comparison, in Leviticus God gave strict orders for offering sacrifices, then He sent His fire to lead the way.

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Write 1 or 2 Bible verses that help you keep on fire for Jesus. Explain how these verses help you.

In what way is God consuming you for His purposes? How have you "messed with His fire" and what will you do about it?

SINKER

Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on this devotional. Reflect on your own experiences.

Key words: fire be His witness Holy Spirit
