***HOLINESS***

Profane defines the mouth of the rebel. Commonly we hear people using vulgar speech. Irreverently, people say things like “holy c…” not even realizing that such speech is really blasphemous before an all-HOLY God.

In their wickedness, people have NO FEAR of God. That is a most terrifying thing because SUDDENLY God can turn the tables to where, “There they are in great fear where no fear was…” (Ps. 53:5). God can instantly turn “no fear” into sheer terror! Psalm 73:19 emphasizes how the wicked are in a moment, “utterly consumed with terrors.”

A. W. Tozer said, ***“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”*** There are more references to God’s holiness in Scripture, than to any other aspect of His being.

A form of the word “holy” is found about 900 times in the Bible. Related to the root word **HOLY** are the words “saint, sanctify, and sanctification”. All of these terms carry the basic idea of being “*set apart*”. To be HOLY means *“to be set apart”*. It is the idea of that which is separate, unique, or wholly different.

The book of Leviticus has more of an emphasis on God’s holiness, than any other book in the Bible. It is the Old Testament book that especially centers on the theme of SANCTIFICATION. Correspondingly, the New Testament book which especially emphasizes the theme of SANCTIFICATION is 1 Corinthians.

**Leviticus 11:44–45 (NKJV)**

**44** For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and **you shall be holy; for I am holy**. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

**45** For I am the Lord who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore **be holy, for I am holy**.

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)**

**19** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the **Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

**20** For you were bought at a price; therefore **glorify God in your body and in your spirit,** which are God’s.

***GOD IS UNIQUELY HOLY***

1. ***Holy means Unique***

Holiness is commonly used as a synonym for *“****moral purity****”*. It certainly includes that aspect, but the scope of HOLINESS is far broader.

The Hebrew word for **holy** (***kadosh***) especially conveys the idea of UNIQUENESS! It refers to that which is distinct, separated, marked off, one-of-a-kind, or unique.

The opposite of “holy” is that which is common, ordinary, or profane. God is holy in every way. He has no comparison. There is none like Him. He has no peer or equal. God alone is infinite, self-existent, all-knowing, all powerful, omnipresent, and never-changing. There is no other being in the universe like God!

**Exodus 15:11 (NKJV)**

**11** “**Who is like You**, O Lord, among the gods? **Who is like You**, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

**1 Samuel 2:2 (NKJV)**

**2** “**No one is holy like the Lord**, For there is **none besides You**, **Nor is there any rock like our God**.

**Isaiah 40:25 (NKJV)**

**25** “To whom then will you **liken Me**, Or to whom shall I **be equal**?” says the Holy One.

**Isaiah 46:5 (NKJV)**

**5** “**To whom will you liken Me**, and **make Me equal** And **compare Me**, that we should **be alike**?

God is so much more than any one of His individual attributes. He is HOLY. More than any other, this word HOLY best describes God. This word HOLY is used more often in Scripture as an adjective of God’s Name than any other attribute.

There is none like God. He is unmatched, unrivalled, unparalleled, and unlike any other. This is why it is so offensive to God to treat Him as common or ordinary. The first four of the Ten Commandments (the First Table of the Law) all involve God’s holiness. When people create other so-called gods, it is an attack on God’s holiness (cf. Ex. 20:3). When people use God’s name in a common or profane way, that is an attack on His holiness (cf. Ex. 20:7).

**Leviticus 22:32–33 (NKJV)**

**32** You shall **not profane My holy name**, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I am the Lord who sanctifies you,

**33** who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord.”

Profanity that lightly, flippantly, or irreverently uses God’s Name reflects a sinful heart attitude toward the HOLY God. God is so HOLY, so utterly set apart, that even His Name is to be treated as HOLY.

God revealed His COVENANT Name to Moses in Exodus 3:14-15. There God said that His Name is, **“I AM WHO I AM”**. God is defined by Himself. No one else is qualified to define Him. The name **I AM** simply means *“to be”*. He simply is. He is the eternal God. He is self-existent (cf. Mt. 22:32, Mk. 12:26, Jn. 8:58).

Jesus repeatedly referred to Himself as “I AM” in the gospel of John; which the Jews, in unbelief, considered to be blasphemy (cf. Jn. 8:24, 8:58, 10:33).

But, note something very significant in Exodus 3:14-15. The name **I AM** is there attached to the name **YHWH**, which is translated as *“LORD”* in verse 15. Both the name **“I AM”** and the name **“YHWH”** are based on a verb form meaning ***“to be”***. The emphasis then is that YHWH is the self-existent, eternal ONE. It is this God Who is now in an eternal covenant relationship with Israel.

Here in Exodus 3, we have linkage of I AM, YHWH, and the covenant language related to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And God says, **“This is My Name forever”**. This combination is now a forever-reality. It is because of this that scholars often say that the Name ***YHWH*** is the PERSONAL NAME of God; or the COVENANT NAME for God. It was considered by the Jews to be the most sacred Name for God in the Old Testament. It uniquely emphasized the HOLINESS of God. There is no other eternal God like Him. There is no other faithful/covenant-keeping God like Him.

In Isaiah 6, Isaiah was given a unique vision of the LORD. In this vision, the seraphim (literally, “fiery ones”) were heard crying, ***“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;”*** (cf. Isa. 6:3). Upon seeing this, Isaiah was never the same again. So much did this vision emphasizing God’s holiness impact him, that 29 times in the book he referred to God as ***“the Holy One of Israel”***.

God is Who He is because He is HOLY. Holiness most effectively expresses the IDENTITY of God.

**Isaiah 57:15 (NKJV)**

**15** For thus says the **High and Lofty** **One** **Who inhabits eternity**, **whose name is Holy**: “I dwell in the **high and holy place**, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

***2. Holy Signifies the Standard of Moral Perfection***

The most common symbol for God’s holiness in the Bible is that of FIRE. Holiness emphasizes God’s absolute uniqueness, but it also stresses His absolute moral purity. Fire emphasizes purity with maximum intensity (cf. Ps. 12:6). Fire in particular accentuates God’s moral character of purity.

God called Moses from a burning bush and told him to take off his sandals because the place where he was standing was holy ground (cf. Ex. 3:1-5). When God met with Israel at Mount Sinai, He “descended upon it in fire” (cf. Ex. 19:18).

In Revelation 4, we find that from the throne of God proceed “lightnings” and the four living creatures constantly say, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty” (cf. Rev. 4:5, 8). Three times in the book of Revelation, Christ’s eyes are said to be “like a flame of fire” (cf. Rev. 1:14, 2:18, 19:12).

**Hebrews 12:29 (NKJV)**

**29** For our God is a **consuming fire.**

Holiness is God-likeness. God Himself, and God ALONE, is the STANDARD for what is perfectly moral and pure.

**Romans 3:23 (NKJV)**

**23** for all have sinned and fall short of **the glory of God**,

**1 John 1:5 (NKJV)**

**5** This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that **God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.**

If you want to get to heaven by being good enough, then all you have to do is be as perfectly holy as God is holy. That is the standard! Habakkuk 1:13 says that God cannot look upon sin. Ps. 5:4 says evil will not dwell with God. Rev. 21:27 says that nothing that defiles shall enter into the New Jerusalem. This is why we need a Savior. This is why we need Jesus. There are none good – none perfectly good – none good enough to get to heaven (cf. Mt. 19:17, Rom. 3:10-23).

This is why the Bible says that only those written in “the Lamb’s Book of Life” will enter into heaven. Only those who through faith, who are cleansed from ALL sin by the blood of Jesus, can stand before the presence of ALL-HOLY GOD (cf. Rom. 3:24-26, Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14, 1 Pet. 1:19, 1 Jn. 1:7)!

Just think about how incredibly, PERFECTLY HOLY God is and then realize that to stand before Him we have to be PERFECTLY cleansed from absolutely all sin. We have to be cleansed through and through, WHITE as snow. Only the blood of Jesus can so cleanse us and make us this HOLY in God’s sight. THANKFUL FOR A GREAT SAVIOR – OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!!