

**Sanctification:  
Transformed Into the Image of Christ  
Lesson 2**

**I. Root Word of Sanctification**

- a. There are actually several words which are frequently used in Scripture from which our current understanding of the concept of sanctification has been **derived**: "holy," "hallow," "hallowed," "holiness," "consecrate," "saint," "sanctify," "sanctification."
- b. The **root word** from which the concept of sanctification flows, is found in the Old Testament in the Hebrew verb "qadhash", used about 500 times, and in the New Testament in the Greek verb "hagoazo" used over 300 times.
- c. The noun "sanctification" (hagiasmos) does not occur in the Old Testament at all and is found but **10 times** in the New Testament.
- d. When seeking to understand the concept of sanctification, it must be borne in mind that these words are all translations of the same root, and that therefore no one of them can be treated adequately without **reference** to the others.
- e. Over time, all have of these terms have undergone a certain evolutionary development. Broadly stated, this has been from the formal, or ritual, to the ethical, and these different meanings must be carefully **distinguished**.

**What do we mean that the meaning of the term develops over time from ritual to ethical?**

**II. The Formal Sense. –**

- a. By sanctification is ordinarily meant that **hallowing** of the Christian believer by which he is freed from sin and enabled to accomplish the will of God in his life.
- b. This is not, however, the first or most common meaning in the Scriptures. To sanctify means commonly to make holy, that is, to **separate** from the world and consecrate something or someone to God.
- c. In the ancient use, there is nothing implied in this separation that is **moral** in character. For example, the word translated "prostitute" using the same root word, means the sanctified, consecrated one or devotee. Gen 38:21 *Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, (ked-ay-shaw) that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place. KJV*
- d. The root may refer to days and seasons, to **places**, to objects used for worship, or to persons.
- e. Exactly the same usage is shown with the word "sanctify." To sanctify anything is to declare it as **belonging** to God. Ex 13:2 *"Sanctify unto me all the first-born .... it is mine"*
- f. It applies thus to all that is connected with **worship**, to the Levites, the priests (Num 3:12); and the tent of meeting (Ex 29:44), the altar and all that touches it (Ex 29:36 f), and the offering (Ex 29:27)
- g. The feast and holy days are to be sanctified, that is, set apart from other **ordinary** business days and identifies that they, once sanctified, belong to Yahweh. Neh 13:22 *And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy. KJV*
- h. A man may thus **sanctify** his house or his field, but not the firstling of the flock, for this is already Yahweh's Lev 27:14 *And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the Lord, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand. KJV*
- i. So too, the nation as a whole is sanctified when Yahweh acknowledges it and receives it as **His own**. Ex 19:6 *And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. KJV*
- j. To understand the connection between persons and things consecrated to God and the import to which Yahweh assigns such belonging, we must examine the word "holy" which is ascribed to **Yahweh** himself.

**III. Understanding the Holiness of God**

- a. First, although God most certainly does act ethically, in keeping with His standards of goodness and righteousness, we must understand the use of the word "holy" as applied to Yahweh in the OT is not used primarily in the **ethical** sense.
- b. In other words, God is not holy on the basis of His keeping of rules or standards. But rather, Yahweh's holiness is defined and characterized by His supremacy, His sovereignty, His glory, His essential **being** as God.
- c. Another perspective of His holiness is to see it as His quality of **OTHERLINESS**, a uniqueness that is singular. There is no other person or thing like Him in the Universe. Ps 113:5 *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, KJV*
- d. God is infinitely majestic and exalted above finite **creation**. Isa. 40:18 *"To who will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? "*
- e. Jehovah is infinitely pure. His ethical standards are **perfect** and His moralities (actions) are entirely consistent with the perfect standard He has ordained for his creatures. 1 John 1:5 *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. KJV*
- f. The Bible **contrasts** Jehovah's uniqueness and ethical perfection with the immoral and arbitrary deities of heathenism. Ex. 15:11 *"Who is like You, O Lord among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness"*
- g. God's **holiness** is the perfection and crown of all His attributes. Thus, the angels in heaven proclaim: Isa. 6:3 *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory"*
- h. To say the **Holy One** is simply to say God. Yahweh's holiness is seen in His might, His manifested glory; it is that before which peoples tremble and which makes the nations dread 1 Sam 6:20 *And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us? KJV*

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- i. Holiness is viewed as the exaltedness of God, His supremacy, which is seen in the **judgment** (justice, righteousness) meted out to the disobedient people. Isa 5:16: "Yahweh of hosts is exalted in justice, and God the Holy One is sanctified in righteousness."
- j. To sanctify Yahweh, therefore, to make Him holy; to assert, or **acknowledge**, or bring forth His being as God, His supreme power and glory, His sovereign claim.
- k. Therefore, the sanctification of a person or object is the assertion of Yahweh's right and claim over the persons or things thus sanctified; hence, since they belong to Him it follows that they must **reflect Him**.
- l. This progression of thought is how we move from the ritual to the **ethical** in our understanding of the meaning of the root word.

**IV. Man's Assault on God's Holiness**

- a. Man's **failure** to sanctify Yahweh is his failure to declare Yahweh's glory and power. This was the undoing of Moses in the miracle of the waters of Meribah-Kadesh in which he struck the rock instead of speaking to it as he was instructed. Deut 32:51 *Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. KJV*
- b. There is little distinction to be made between sanctifying God and **glorifying** God. They go hand in hand. The story of Nadab and Abihu points this out. Lev 10:1-3 *And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. 3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace. KJV*
- c. This is so because God is reflected by His people. When, because of Israel's sins, it was defeated and taken into captivity, the nations thought it was because of Yahweh's **weakness**. Hence, Yahweh was profaned in the eyes of the nations. Ezek 36:22-23 *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. KJV*
- d. When the **conduct** of God's people is such that it causes the enemies of God to have a lower estimate of God's power, might or worth, God is profaned. 2 Sam 12:14 *Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. KJV*
- e. As Jehovah is ethical, pure, separate and unique from the pagan gods He **requires** His own people to be sanctified and separate ethically from a pagan lifestyle and from every form of evil. 2 Cor 6:16-18 *"As God has said: 'I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people. Therefore come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty'"*

**V. Application**

- a. Just as the Old Testament clearly shows, not only did individuals of antiquity fail to reflect the Perfection of God, but also the Nation of Israel failed to be holy before Him.
- b. Today, the Church of God, empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit, is tasked with the responsibility to exalt Christ by reflecting His image in their every day lives. We are to separate ourselves from the "unclean thing"
- c. To what extent are you separated from that "unclean thing"?
- d. To what extent do you exalt Christ and sanctify Him by the life that you live?