

The Biblical Concept of the Holiness of God

Introduction

- A. When one asks the question: Who is God and what is He like? the Biblical answer is as follows – God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable – in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. When we ask about the nature of God in His relationships to mankind, then the answer is, God is absolute in Truth, Love and Holiness.
- B. It is vitally important that we understand that only in God do we have a valid basis and authority for all correct belief and action. The standard of truth, love and holiness is the nature of God Himself.

I. The Meaning of Divine Holiness.

- A. God describes Himself as holy, Leviticus 11:1+U, U5 (I Peter 1:15,16).

For I am the Lord your God, ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves and ye shall be holy, for I am holy . . . for I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God, ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Observation: The Hebrew and Greek words used to indicate God's holiness point to the meaning of apartness, separation from, or, difference* The emphasis is that God is infinitely different from His creation in the excellence of His perfections. He is not only absolutely free from all impurity but is particularly the embodiment of all that is pure, good, loving and truthful.

- B. God is worshipped as holy, Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8.

And one (seraphim) cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory . . . And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within, and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

Observation: To worship God is to recognize and praise Him for who and what He is. To worship God in truth (John 4:24) we must understand His holiness and then engage in the adoration of which He is worthy.

- C. God's holiness is declared in His actions.

Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Exodus 15:11

Yea, they turned back and tempted God and limited the Holy One of Israel. Psalm 78:41

Observation: The passage in Exodus indicates how God's holiness was manifested in judging the Egyptians and setting His people free. In Psalm 78 we are reminded that all activity which contradicts the holiness of God severely limits the grace and divine favor which could flow into our lives.

- D. God's holiness is exemplified in the holy priesthood of Jesus Christ, Hebrews 7:26.

For such an high priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

Observation: The death of Jesus Christ as our sacrifice, His triumphal Resurrection, and His cleansing work of salvation in our lives all points to the reality of divine holiness. The demands of God's holiness is seen in the suffering of the Crucifixion and the nature of holiness is reflected in His Resurrection and the salvation of the sinner.

II. The Holiness of God and the Believer's Responsibility.

A. Holiness is a characteristic of the believer's standing, Ephesians 1:4.

According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

Observation: Salvation brings the repentant sinner into a holy relationship with God. This holy standing before God is entirely the work of Jesus Christ and not the result of our goodness. We are holy only because of the reality of the sacrifice of Calvary. We must accept this standing before God and praise Him for it.

B. Holiness of life is not an optional but a necessary goal, II Cor. 7:1.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Observation: To be God-like in daily life is one of God's demands. He is Truth – we must be truthful; He is love – we must be loving; He is holy – we must be holy. This is only possible through a practice of the provision made known to us in the Scripture.

C. Holiness is a characteristic of the believer's sacrifice, Romans 12:1.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Observation: Here is a gift that we can give to God, namely, ourselves. When we do this we are encouraged to see that He looks upon that sacrifice as holy – and accepts us. We may not treat ourselves as unholy.

D. Holiness is the result of the obedience of faith and love, Romans 6:22.

But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Observation: When the believer learns to respond by faith and love to the work of Jesus Christ in His Crucifixion and Resurrection (vs 1-13), then the grace of God to live a holy life begins to flow into his daily walk. Holiness is the result of God working in us.

Conclusion: We must choose to be free from sin and to live a holy life.

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