

Names of God, Pt 11 - Jehovah M'Kaddesh

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Names of God Series

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We have been studying the names of God and the premise of our study has been this. God has progressively revealed himself to his people by introducing himself with and identifying himself by different names at different times. God's names were given to man by God himself during specific times of man's need so that we might know that God is our all in all. And rather than taking the time this evening to review, as we have done each Wednesday evening, we will get right down to the task this evening of presenting the name of God, יהוה קדש (ye-ho-vaw' kaw-dash), the God who sanctifies.

Now I have two more presentations to make in this series bringing us up to the Thanksgiving holiday, but yet this is the last name that we will examine. Next week we will discover all the names of God that we have learned to date to be found in the 23rd Psalm. And as we study the 23rd Psalm, a familiar psalm to everyone, we will find God's names embedded there, his character embedded there in that psalm. And then the following week I intend to teach you how to use the names of God in a practical way in your daily Christian life.

And what do we do now with the dozen names we have learned, the dozen names of God? And how might we use them in a devotional time or in our prayer life or in our conversation? And so that is the first step that we are charting in the game plan for application.

This evening I want us to find the name יהוה קדש (ye-ho-vaw' kaw-dash) in a number of closely related Scriptures and we are going to begin together in Exodus chapter number 31.

I trust you brought your Bibles this evening. We do use our Bibles at Fourth Baptist Church. That is our practice and our habit and we encourage you to bring a Bible. We begin in Exodus chapter 31. And be prepared to look at a number of different texts quickly with me.

Exodus 31 verse number 12.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between

Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.”¹

Right there is the Hebrew יהוה קדש (ye-ho-vaw’ kaw-dash), the Lord Jehovah who sanctifies you or separates you or consecrates you or makes you holy.

Turn to Leviticus chapter number 20. I am listening for the pages to rustle. Good. Leviticus 20 verse seven.

Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you.²

There it is again.

How about Leviticus 21 verses seven and eight? Speaking of the regulation for conduct of priests.

They shall not take a wife who is a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for the priest is holy to his God. Therefore you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I the LORD, who sanctify you, am holy.³

Leviticus 21 verse number 15.

“Nor shall he profane his posterity among his people, for I the LORD sanctify him.”⁴

Verse 23.

“...only he shall not go near the veil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest he profane My sanctuaries; for I the LORD sanctify them.”⁵

Chapter 22 verse eight.

Whatever dies naturally or is torn by beasts he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I am the LORD. They shall therefore keep My ordinance, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the LORD sanctify them.⁶

Chapter 22 verse 16.

¹ Exodus 31:12-13.

² Leviticus 20:7-8.

³ Leviticus 21:7-8.

⁴ Leviticus 21:15.

⁵ Leviticus 21:23.

⁶ Leviticus 22:8-9.

“...They shall therefore keep My ordinance, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the LORD sanctify them.”⁷

Chapter 22 verse 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.”⁸

What is going on here? In all of these verses here God is outlining the particulars of his expectations for Israel and the rationale for these distinct instructions is the distinctness of God’s very person, his very character.

And the Hebrew word קדש (kaw-dash) translated “sanctify” so many times here in Leviticus chapters 20, 21, 22, in all of these verses and that we have read can be translated additional ways. And I put them for you there on the screen. Sanctify or sanctuary or consecrate, set apart, dedicate and hallowed or we might sum it up with this, holy.

You see, here is your Hebrew lesson for this evening. The word קדש (kaw-dash) is derived from the word קדש (ko-desh) or holy and God often designated himself, calling himself קדש (ko-desh) or holy. In fact, many times in the Bibles it is translated the holy one, the holy one of Israel, קדש (ko-desh).

But if we look again at Leviticus 20 and this is our primary text this evening, Leviticus 20 verses seven and eight, here is what it literally says. Look at Leviticus 20 verse seven.

Consecrate yourselves [or literally קדש (ko-desh) yourselves] therefore, and be holy [or קדש (ko-desh)] for I am the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the [יהוה קדש] (ye-ho-vaw’ kaw-dash)]⁹

Ok? Look again at verse number seven, Leviticus 20 verse seven.

Consecrate yourselves [or literally קדש (ko-desh) yourselves] therefore, and be holy [or קדש (ko-desh)] for I am the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the [יהוה קדש] (ye-ho-vaw’ kaw-dash)]¹⁰

Let me give you the comparison here on the screen. Leviticus 20 verse seven.

⁷ Leviticus 22:16.

⁸ Leviticus 22:32.

⁹ Leviticus 20:7-8.

¹⁰ Ibid.

קֹדֵשׁ (ko-desh) is translated holy. The word translated “sanctify” in verse seven and eight is קָדַשׁ (kaw-dash).

Now, if you will look at the Hebrew there, the only difference between those two Hebrew words is a little bit of vowel pointing. You see it right there that I have highlighted. But as I have explained it previously, every Hebrew word is made of a trilateral root. And so these two words share some etymological similarities. And I put this on the screen so that we understand that God’s intent is to make us like what he is. And he is calling us to be like he is. קָדַשׁ (kaw-dash) yourself and be קֹדֵשׁ (ko-desh). Consecrate yourselves, sanctify yourselves and be קֹדֵשׁ (ko-desh), holy or for God is holy and God is the one who is going to do the work.

Now this begs... we are done with the heavy lifting here this evening. This begs the 64,000 dollar question. What does holiness look like? And if we are to be holy, if we are to sanctify ourselves, what picture comes to mind? How can we illustrate holiness?

If we were to ask pop culture to picture holiness they would probably give us a number of different images.

In fact, I did a search of Google images with a title of holy. And here is what I found. Does this help you understand holiness, that picture? This is the Dali Lama, if you don’t recognize him. Is this a picture of holiness? Well, what does holiness look like? What about this picture? This picture was evidently the cover of a British coloring book. You see the word “coloring” there is spelled in the English style. Or perhaps this is a picture of holy as I searched the Google images for holy or holiness these are the things that I found. And this looks like some poster in a little boy’s room, you know, maybe with a caption the final frontier or something. How is this a picture of holiness?

And because I don’t have a picture of holiness for you this evening, I need to give you a lot of texts on the screen and the texts that I give you will be Scripture text and it will help us to picture holiness. I want to address these three ideas this evening: the model for holiness, the mandate for holiness and the means for holiness as God instructed Israel and he does also the New Testament believer though Peter.

“Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.”¹¹

I am יְהוָה קָדַשׁ (ye-ho-vaw’ kaw-dash), Leviticus 20 verse number eight.

First, the model for holiness. Leviticus 20 verse 26. Perhaps it is also open before you there in your laps.

“And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.”¹²

¹¹ Leviticus 20:7

A W Tozer has written this. "Holy is the way God is. To be holy he does not conform to a standard. He is that standard. He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is. Because he is holy, his attributes are holy. That is, whatever we think of as belonging to God must be thought of as holy and the model of God's holiness can be seen in a number of ways. First, it can be seen in God's works, Psalm 145."

"The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."¹³

God's works are a reflection of his character and they are holy. The model of God's holiness can also be seen in God's law in Romans 7:12.

"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."¹⁴

God's law is a reflection of his character. It is holy, also Psalm 19.

God's holiness can be seen at the cross, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us."¹⁵

And on the cross that great exchange took place when our sins were laid upon the person of Jesus Christ, his righteousness was imputed to us. If you were here Sunday morning you remember that study. And as Jesus bore the sins of the world upon himself, God had to turn his back on his own Son. God turned his back on God because Habakkuk one says of God's holiness.

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."¹⁶

He is separate and distinct from that sin.

And so our model for holiness is the person and the character of God.

What about the mandate for holiness? The mandate for holiness is here in our text this evening, Leviticus 20 verse eight.

"And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you."¹⁷

¹² Leviticus 20:26.

¹³ Psalm 145:17.

¹⁴ Romans 7:12.

¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:21.

¹⁶ Habakkuk 1:13.

¹⁷ Leviticus 20:8.

And here the mandate for man's holiness is expressed as the will of God. God's will for you is holiness.

Many times people say, "Pastor Matt, how do you discern God's will? I am in the market of a new car. How do I know if I should buy the Ford or the Chevy?"

Well, that is really easy. Don't buy either. Buy a Toyota. I don't know. I don't know.

But how do you know God's will? Where should I go to school or who should I marry or what job should I take?

Let me tell you what God's will is. God's will is for you to be holy. That is his will for you. And I love Leviticus 20 verse eight because it nicely associates the ideas of human responsibility, keep my statutes and perform them. You see it there? And it divine grace. I am the Lord who makes you holy or I am the Lord who sanctifies you. And it weds the two ideas of human responsibility and divine grace. Be holy, be holy. That is your responsibility. For I am the one who makes you holy.

Now, of course, for all of Church history, I suppose, theologians have argued this very notion of sanctification. Is it us to works or is it God who works.

God's will is for us to be holy, also, 1 Peter one.

"...but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."¹⁸

And this is the will of God.

How about 1 Thessalonians four?

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification."¹⁹

"For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness."²⁰

Ephesians 4:24.

"...put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."²¹

2 Corinthians 7:1.

¹⁸ 1 Peter 1:15-16.

¹⁹ 1 Thessalonians 4:3.

²⁰ 1 Thessalonians 4:7.

²¹ Ephesians 4:24.

“...let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”²²

Our model for holiness is God himself, the person and the character of God. The mandate, the command is for us to be holy.

Now number three. And this is really where we want to go, the means for holiness. How do you get there? How do you experience sanctification and holiness in your life?

Well, before you look at the screen, many are taught that it is don't drink, smoke or chew, go with girls that do. That is how you conform yourselves to the image of God. Your hair needs to be cut a certain way. You need to be dressed a certain way. You need to attend a certain school. You need to use a certain Bible version, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. These are the litmus tests for holiness.

So how can we conform ourselves to be like God, godliness, or to be like Christ, Christ likeness or to be Spirit filled? How can we become holy? And I would suggest here, it is on the screen, the means for holiness is first God's Word, that he might sanctify and cleanse her Church, her, with the washing of water by the Word. That is why God's Word is so important. It is a cleansing agent to conform us to the image of God.

Psalm 119 asks:

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.”²³

Of course, John 17 in Jesus' high priestly prayer Jesus prayed:

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”²⁴

God's Word is the means for our sanctification. Also the means of holiness is God's Spirit. And I simply put the Scripture reference there on the screen. We are not going to take the time this evening to explore Romans chapter eight, but certainly God's Spirit.

We could also add here another means for the purifying and the sanctifying, making us holy would be trials and different things that God used. But we are still looking for a picture.

What does the super Christian look like and what does the godly, holy person look like? After all, if we can just imitate or mirror or conform ourselves to that picture, we will have it made, right? Well, yes. But that is why we are being progressively conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

²² 2 Corinthians 7:1.

²³ Psalm 119:9.

²⁴ John 17:17.

And I want to give you a diagram this evening regarding the nothing of sanctification or growing in holiness. And here is the diagram that I will suggest to you. By birth into the human race we are sinners. And before the cross we are the natural man. Of course, by God's grace and his grace alone our sins are forgiven. We are regenerated, born again, made a child of God and you know all those rich truths. And we look forward to the day when we will be glorified and spend eternity in heaven with God. Right?

But what about the space, all of that space between the cross and glory? That is where you and I live right now, right? And that is the struggle we call the Christian life.

What is our experience now between our conversion and our glorification? It ought to be the experience of sanctification or growth in holiness by God's grace and spiritual disciplines. And this is the Christian who is growing in godliness, like God, growing in Christ likeness, like Jesus Christ, growing in spirituality like they Holy Spirit. And if this is not the case, we might describe that child of God as a carnal or a fleshly Christian, as opposed to a spiritual Christian.

Now some believe that there is no category as a carnal Christian and I am not so convinced. I think there is a category as a carnal Christian, one who is not progressing as they ought in sanctification or in holiness or in conforming to the person of God. And this diagram here is, I believe, the picture of what God has called us to do and is a picture of what God is doing in us, because his character demands it.

And all the way back in the Old Testament, well, pastor Matt, the Old Testament, that is for Israel, that is not for the Church. Well, the principle begins in the Old Testament and the principle continues because the character of God is immutable. It doesn't change. And just as God was calling his people Israel to sanctification or holiness, so also God is calling his people to church to sanctification or holiness. And God is saying, "You be קדש (kaw-dash), consecrate yourselves, because I am קדש (ko-desh). I am holy."

And what we call this is progressive sanctification. It is a process. And it is a work of God and it is the responsibility of man.

How does God enable us to meet his requirements of holiness? And the answer lies along the path of John Bunyan's famous travelers. Perhaps you have read John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Late on their journey Bunyan's pilgrims discover a wonderful mirror. There is nothing unusual about the front of the glass, however on the back of the mirror appears an image of the crucified Lord Jesus. Everyone who looks in the mirror's face sees an ordinary reflection that includes the blemishes and scars that always accompany our humanity. Yet anyone who observes these same persons from the reverse side of the mirror sees only the glory of the Son of God.

This amazing glass from *Pilgrim's Progress* pictures the answer to how we can be holy in this life. Our holiness is not so much a matter of what we achieve, as it is the grace our God provides. Grace is God's willingness to look at us from the perspective that sees his holy Son in our place. God can certainly see the faults and frailties reflected in the

mirrors of our lives. Still he chooses to look at those who trust in his mercy through the lens that features the holiness of his own child in our place.

As a consequence he loves and treasures us as much as if we had never sinned. And that is the positional truth that we even spoke of this past Sunday morning. What does that do for you? I will tell you what that does for me. That compels me to want to further reflect the image of God in my life, in the small matters to קדש (kaw-dash) myself, because he is קדש (ko-desh). And so I separate myself from sin and evil wickedness and darkness and that which is not of God.

You say, “Well, pastor, what about the grey areas, right? There is grey areas.”

Well, you know what 1 John says. 1 John says that he is light and in him is no darkness at all. So why do we argue over the grey areas? We should be working to progressively be moving toward that light, that greater light, that greater purity, that greater holiness instead of fighting with the grey areas.

יהוה קדש (ye-ho-vaw’ kaw-dash), the God who sanctifies. Remember, it is God who is making us holy. But, at the same time, we have a responsibility to separate ourselves unto God.

Last illustration and then we will conclude. Growing up... perhaps I have used this illustration before. Growing up in our home my mother had a set of fine china that her grandmother had left her. And that fine china was in the china cabinet in our dining room. And then she had another set of dishes that we kept in the kitchen cupboards and that other set in the kitchen cupboards was chipped a bit, it was scratched. The plates and the saucers and the... they weren’t all the same size and for that matter they didn’t even match. But on a daily basis we used the dishes in the kitchen cupboard for baloney and cheese at lunch. But when it came time for Christmas dinner or when we had a special guest in our home, that is when we went to the china cabinet in the dining room and we got out those special dishes.

Now we were not separating—hear me—we were not separating the fine china from baloney and cheese at lunch. We were separating the fine china for the special occasions. And in the same way God is calling us to do the same.

2 Timothy chapter two. In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, some to honor, some to dishonor. And if we cleans ourselves, we can be that vessel of honor, not separated from baloney and cheese, but separated for the special occasion. And that is what God is calling his people to. God is קדש (ko-desh). He is holy, holy, holy. And woe to us as his people if we are not working to קדש (kaw-dash) ourselves, sanctify ourselves.

Remember, in the end it is יהוה קדש (ye-ho-vaw’ kaw-dash), the God who will sanctify us.

Let's pray.

Lord, we bow before you this evening in worship as we acknowledge that you are holy. You are hallowed. You are separate and set apart from your creation. You are pure and distinct and, Lord, because of your character revealed even in your very name, you have called us to that. God, may you find us to be set apart to you I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.