

Series: The Names of God
Title: Jehovah-M'Kaddesh
Text: Leviticus 20:7-8

Introduction

Today we are going to study the name Jehovah-M'Kaddesh found in Leviticus 20:8.

It means Jehovah who sanctifies.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: 'Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech. 'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. 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. 'For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood *shall be* upon him.

(Leviticus 20: 1-9 NKJV)

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.

(Leviticus 20: 7-8 NKJV)

The order in which all these names appear shows purpose and progression. They are designed to meet the developing spiritual life and need of the people. Genesis is the book of beginnings. It reveals the origin of life and of sin, but it also shows God's provision of redemption. He is the Jehovah Jireh – the God who provides. Exodus reveals the name Jehovah Rophe, the God who heals life's wounds and sweetens its bitter experiences. Then comes the revelation of God as Jehovah Nissi, the God who is the banner over His people when they must wage war within themselves and in a hostile world.

Leviticus is the book about the walk and worship of God's redeemed people. Leviticus is a book about sanctification. Sanctification is the process of separating yourself from the ways of the world to live a life that honors God.

The first mention of sanctifying is after the work of creation when God rested and sanctified the Sabbath day (Genesis 2: 3). But that rest was broken by the entrance

of sin, and its privilege was lost. The word sanctify is not mentioned again till in Exodus 13:1, 2. "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and beast; it is Mine." (Exodus 13:1-2 NKJV)

In Exodus 4:22, Jehovah said, "Israel is my son, even my firstborn." God pictures how He would provide redemption from sin through the sacrificial system. The sacrifice of the first-born son would atone for the sin that severed the Sanctification and rest of the creation Sabbath. Leviticus would teach that only through substitutionary sacrifice could sanctification be resumed.

For Israel, the sacrificial system was a picture of the sacrifice God would make to restore the peace and rest He originally intended for humanity. The firstborn in Israel was a reminder that all of Israel was God's firstborn among the nations for whom God would accomplish redemption.

The Book of Leviticus teaches Israel what the Apostle Paul teaches us in Ephesians 4:1, how to walk worthy of our calling and the spiritual worship that Jehovah demanded of them.

Sanctification is connected to moral and spiritual purity. The title, Jehovah-M'Kaddesh, is repeated six times in the two chapters of Leviticus. The Hebrew word "sanctify" is also translated by other English words such as dedicate, consecrate, sanctuary, hallow, and holy, but especially by the word holy, and often by Holy One. In its various forms, it appears some 700 times.

Yet it is an important word in the Old Testament. No other name expresses God's character and what He requires of His people like the name Jehovah-M'Kaddesh, Jehovah who sanctifies.

I. Sanctification is Separation From Sin and the World.

The primary meaning of M'Kaddesh is to set apart or separate. Generally, the word applies to times and seasons. God sanctified the Sabbath (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8, 11) when He set it apart from other days. It was to be a different day.

Israel's great feasts and fasts had a deeply spiritual significance. They were specially set apart and celebrated by holy convocations of the people (Leviticus 23). The year of Jubilee came after the seventh sabbaths of seven years, on the great Day of Atonement. It began with the blowing of the trumpet and proclamation of a new beginning of redemption and liberty for all. It was also sanctified or specially set apart (Leviticus 25:10).

The word sanctify was also applied to places: the camp of Israel, the hill of Zion, the city of Jerusalem, the altar, the tabernacle, and the Temple. It was a place set apart for the unique presence and worship of Jehovah, who sanctities. The Holy Land itself is a land set apart.

The word sanctified is also used in setting apart persons. Some individuals were set apart from birth or even before birth. Jeremiah was sanctified to Jehovah's service as a prophet to the nations before he was even born (Jeremiah 1:5). Upon the crown of the high priest, the words "Holiness (Kodesh) to Jehovah" were written as a sign that he was set apart to Jehovah (Exodus 28:36). And not only the priesthood but all the people were sanctified or set apart to Jehovah (Deuteronomy 7:6). Their contact for holiness was Jehovah.

The Sabbath day was holy because God rested in it. The Sabbath day was set apart by Israel as a pledge that God had sanctified the people to Himself (Exodus 31:13). The mountain of the Lord of hosts was called the holy mount because Jehovah would dwell there (Zechariah 8:3). The sanctuary was the dwelling place of Jehovah among His people.

Jehovah is set apart from everything else in the universe. Deuteronomy 4:35 says, "To you, it was shown, that you might know that the LORD Himself *is* God; *there is* none other besides Him." (Deuteronomy 4:35 NKJV) And I Samuel adds: "No one is holy like the LORD, For *there is* none besides You, Nor *is there* any rock like our God." (1 Samuel 2:2 NKJV)

The most impressive of all the attributes of Jehovah is His holiness. It is His holiness that supplies the balance for all the attributes of His Deity.

- Power without holiness becomes cruelty;
- Omniscience without holiness becomes craft;
- Justice without holiness becomes revenge; and
- Goodness without holiness becomes indulgence.

God's holiness demonstrates His majesty, fullness, and perfection.

Holiness is probably the most important lesson about God in the Old Testament. The key verse of the Book of Leviticus teaches how to approach a holy God and walk in a way approved of Him. God says to Moses, "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God *am* holy.'" (Leviticus 19:2 NKJV)

In the vision that changed Isaiah's life, the angels cried, "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts" (Isaiah 6:3). In the presence of God's holiness, even the seraphim cover their eyes in reverence.

The Spirit of God is called the Holy Spirit. "In remorse over his sin, David cries out, Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Psalm 51:11). In Chapter 63, Isaiah speaks of Jehovah as Israel's Saviour and the Angel of the Presence, and His Holy Spirit--truly a Trinity (Isaiah 63:8-11). He says the people rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.

The heathen gods were impure and corrupt. Their worshippers were immoral and unholy. Israel is repeatedly told, "You shall have no other gods before Me." (Exodus 20:3 NKJV) Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods?" says

Jeremiah (16:20). But they did sanctify to themselves gods, the work of their own hands and the creatures of their imaginations. The heathen gods were depraved, promoting their pleasures, lusts, and quarrels. They committed cruel and unspeakable crimes in their worship.

The holiness of God is of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look upon iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13). Holy and reverent is His name (Psalm 111:9; Luke 1:49). Against the glory of God's holiness, all have sinned (Romans 3:23). And the beauty of the Lord is seen in His holiness. In Psalm 27, David writes, "One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple." (Psalms 27:4 NKJV)

But beauty is a product of something, and the perfect beauty of the Lord is the product of His perfect holiness. "The Lord, our God, is holy." It is the first truth Israel learned about Jehovah. God said, "I will be sanctified in them that come near me" (Leviticus 10:3). Jehovah calls us to sanctify Him in our hearts (Isaiah 8:13) and worship Him in the beauty of holiness (I Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 29:2).

When God reveals His purpose of redemption, He chooses Israel to be a picture of that redemption. He sets them apart and sanctifies them for that purpose. As a holy God, He demands holiness in His people. His people were to separate themselves from all the people around them and not partake of their unholiness and corruption.

Israel's economy and its whole social and spiritual structure, along with its ceremonies and rites, were an illustration to the world's nations that God and His people were holy. The prohibition of certain foods and intermarriage were designed to insulate Israel from the sinful ways of their rival nations, making them the best possible instrument for God's purpose.

Israel was chosen to be God's special treasure and the instrument of His holy purpose. Unfortunately, Israel failed miserably and, at times, became worse than the people they were supposed to influence for good. But even though Israel failed, Jehovah remained the perfect model of separateness and holiness, which caused Israel to be the example of how God deals with our sinfulness.

However, the term sanctified or separated means more than position or relationship regarding Jehovah.

II. Participation In the Nature of Jehovah

It means participation in the nature, character, and works of Jehovah.

Although the word holy primarily means set apart, it also represents moral and spiritual qualities. To be separate and set apart from evil and wickedness is not meant merely to be a negative command but to have a positive effect that promotes the freedom to do what is good and righteous. Leviticus 18 says, "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel and say to them:

'I am the LORD your God. According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwell, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances. You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I *am* the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD.'" (Leviticus 18:1-5 NKJV)

Holiness is positive and active. The people of God must be holy in practice as well as separate in position. The one is meaningless without the other. The sanctifying or separating of His people is an act of Jehovah.

But the practice of holiness is the working out of that act by the people. He commands us to be holy, but He will not force us to be holy. In Christ, we have the power to be holy, but we must exercise that provision and power of our own free will. Holiness is a process that requires our participation.

Jesus was from birth the Son of God and the holy child born to the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). Jesus was the only begotten of the Father. He perfectly manifested the glory and beauty of the Father. He was the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person. He was "in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). He became our High Priest; holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Hebrews 7:26). In His redeeming love, he was made sin for us, but He Himself knew no sin (II Corinthians 5:21).

He set Himself wholly apart for the purpose and manifestation of the Father. He came to do the Father's will and wholly surrendered Himself to it. The Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians that He became our sanctification. (I Cor. 1:30). Hebrews 10 says, "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10), and by this offering, "he has perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

What Israel was meant to be nationally, we, as the Church, are to be personally. Peter quotes the very words of Leviticus in urging this. "But since He who has called you is holy, so you be holy in all manner of life; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16). He continues, "For you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9 NKJV) It is to this holiness and separateness we have been called.

But God has also empowered us to live a holy life through the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of holiness and power.

III. Empowered For Holy Living

God has empowered us for holy living.

He is the Author of our holiness. He makes our body the Temple of His presence, and He produces the fruit of the Spirit, the love, joy, peace, goodness, and faith within us. (Galatians 5:22-23).

If we live in the Spirit, then we walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25). And if we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. That is the only way we can live a sanctified life. Our bodies become a living sacrifice to the lusts of the flesh and a Holy Temple that God accepts (Rom. 12:1, 2).

Our new life in Christ is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24). We are Christ's workmanship created in Him for good works. Only the pure in heart can see it. It is our destiny to be presented holy and spotless to God as a glorious Church. 1 John 3:3 says that every person who has this hope within them is purified. (1 John 3:3).

1 Thessalonians 4:3 says, "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness." (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 NKJV)

Conclusion

God chose you before the foundation of the world to be His perfect and holy work. Sin marred us and separated us from God's perfect plan for our lives. But God's purpose has never changed. He used Israel as a picture of his eternal plan of redemption through His Son, Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:4 says that God "chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." (Ephesians 1:4 NKJV)

It is a holy calling. It is a calling that includes you. It is a calling that includes us all. (II Timothy 1:9). The message is the same in the Old Testament and the New; we are set apart and sanctified by the action of a Holy God.

Our redemption rests upon the sacrifice and atonement made by Christ for us. "We are sanctified, transformed, and changed through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). In John 17:19, Jesus said, "**for their sakes, I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.**" (John 17:19 NKJV)

Jesus is Jehovah M'Kaddesh, the God who sanctifies! In verse 20, he says, "**I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.**" (John 17:20 NKJV)