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HOLINESS: THE STANDARD OF THE KINGDOM

Our God is a holy, living God Whose holiness distinguishes Him from all others. When God created man to be in relationship with Him, He made man perfect and holy, in His image and likeness. In fact, God made everything perfect and good.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Gen 2:7)

And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Gen 1:26-28)

And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (Gen 1:31)

A holy God hates sin and can only fellowship with man who is holy. Sin tarnishes man. It cuts him off from the life of God and results in death.

When man disobeyed the word of God, he fell into sin. Instead of living in the presence of a holy God in sweet fellowship with Him, man was driven out of the Garden of Eden. He lost all authority to rule. **The holiness of God separated Him from man who had become unholy because of sin.**

Most people think of sin as doing terrible things such as killing, stealing, cheating or lying. To God, disobedience is sin. Think of it: Adam and Eve did not kill, steal, cheat or lie. What they did was eat the fruit when God had told them not to. They went against God. **Disobedience took them out of God's sovereign rule and into the rule of Satan.**

From that day onwards, man has been in darkness. Although he had come into deception under Satan, man still tries to find a way to reach God. Because Satan himself wants to be worshipped, he deceives man into worshipping the creation instead of the Creator. He does not mind man worshipping idols or following man-made religions. As long as man does not worship God, Satan receives all other worship because he is the god of this world.

But, the Bible says,

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Sinful man can never approach a holy God because the holiness of God kills anyone or anything unholy. Sin brings death. **Only God can provide a way for man to be saved.** He so loved the world that in His love and mercy, He reached out to man by sending His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us. **Until today, God is looking for us**, just as He had come down

to the Garden of Eden to look for Adam and Eve after they sinned.

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (Gen 3:8-10)

Adam hid from God, afraid because he was naked. Hadn't he and Eve always been naked? How is it that they only realised they were naked after they had fallen into sin? Were they ever clothed? **Yes, they had been clothed, not in physical clothing but in the glory of God.**

When God breathed His life into man, man became a living being (Gen 2:7), filled with the life of God, i.e., the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of glory. Thus, the life of God is the glory of God. It is also the light of men i.e., Jesus, the King of Glory. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Father of glory.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. (1 Pet 4:14)

In Him (Jesus) was life; and the life was the light of men. (John 1:4)

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. (Ps 24:8)

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. (Eph 1:17)

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. (Is 60:1-2)

When Adam and Eve were created, they were filled with the glory of the Lord. They were clothed in the glory of God. The glory of God was seen upon them. They had such sweet fellowship with God because glory and glory could be one. But when sin came in, the fellowship was broken.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23)

Man lost the glory of God in which they had been clothed. That was why Adam and Eve felt unclothed. They became afraid when they realised that they were naked because of their sin. Fear and shame, death and hell came in.

And you bath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. (Eph 2:1-2)

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to restore man back to the position of sonship. God, our Father in heaven, is holy and cannot stand sin. **But through His Son, Jesus Christ, He has made us holy too.** When we are born again of the Holy Spirit of God, we become sons of God. We come out of Satan's rule of darkness and sin into God's rule of light and holiness.

Who bath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim 1:9)

And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine.
(Lev 20:26)

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.” (1 Pet 1:15-16, NKJV)

The Hebrew word for holy, “*qadosh*” (Strong’s #6918), means ceremonially or morally sacred. **It speaks of being separated from everything that defiles and being dedicated to pure and sacred purposes.**

In the Old Testament, even every piece of furniture and utensil had to be anointed for the Lord’s use.

And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. (Ex 28:2)

And of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service, to do service in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the LORD commanded Moses. (Ex 39:1)

And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy.

And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.

And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.

And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.

And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto Me in the priest’s office. (Ex 40:9-13)

And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto Me in the priest’s office: for their

anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.

Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he. (Ex 40:15-16)

As a constant reminder of God's commandment to be holy, the high priest wore on his head an engraving with words meaning "**set apart as holy to the Lord.**"

*And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.***

And they tied unto it a lace of blue, to fasten it on high upon the mitre; as the LORD commanded Moses. (Ex 39:30-31)

Thou shalt sanctify him (the priest) therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy. (Lev 21:8)

Not only were the High Priest, the priests and the Levites to be holy, but the whole congregation of the people of Israel were also to be holy.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

*Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, **Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.** (Lev 19:1-2)*

Neither shall ye profane My holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which ballow you. (Lev 22:32)

Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

And ye shall keep My statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you. (Lev 20:7-8)

In the Old Testament, only the High Priest could enter the Holiest of All once a year to make atonement for the sins of

the people. He could approach God only after he had first cleansed himself.

But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. (Heb 9:7)

*And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, **and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people:** and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded.*

Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. (Lev 9:7-8)

But Jesus Christ is the Great High Priest.

But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens. (Heb 7:24-26, NKJV)

...so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. (1 Thess 3:13, NKJV)

In both the Old and the New Testaments, the people of God are called to be “a holy nation.” **The Kingdom of God is a holy Kingdom ruled by a holy God. The citizens of the Kingdom of God must be holy.**

That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory. (1 Thess 2:12)

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. (1 Thess 4:7)

In the New Testament, the Greek word for holiness, “*bagiosune*” (Strong’s #42), refers to the quality of sacredness. **We are to be separate from the world and consecrate ourselves to serve God wholly and in purity.** Only holy character and holy living will please Him.

A holy God calls us to a life of holiness. He desires that we be a holy people set apart for His purposes. He expects us to be different in the way we think, feel, speak, act and live. **That means living a Kingdom lifestyle that is completely different from the world,** living for our God whereas the people of the world are living for themselves. The difference will be visible and it will bring glory to our God.

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. (Eph 1:4)

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess 5:23)