

JEHOVAH-M'KADDESH

THE NAME Jehovah-M'Kaddesh is found in Leviticus 20:8. It means Jehovah who sanctifies. "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am Jehovah your God.... **I am Jehovah which sanctify you**" (Lev. 20:7, 8). Its appearance in the Book of Leviticus is most appropriate. The order in which this name appears in the revelations of the name Jehovah, and the particular point of the people's experience when it was revealed are most striking and suggestive. The order in which all these names appear show purpose and progression, and are evidently designed to meet the developing spiritual life and need of the people.

Genesis, the book of beginnings, reveals the beginning of sin. It therefore also reveals the provision of redemption from sin under the name of God, Jehovah-jireh God will provide. Exodus, as the book of redemption, first exhibits the meaning of Jehovah-jireh in the Paschal Lamb of redemption, by which Israel, Jehovah's people, were redeemed from bondage in Egypt, which is the type of our redemption from sin. In Exodus was also revealed the name Jehovah-rophe, Jehovah who heals life's wounds and sweetens its bitter experiences, as signified by Israel's experience at Marah. Then came the revelation of God as Jehovah-nissi at Rephidim, where Amalek, the enemy, opposed and fought against Israel -Jehovah, the banner over His people in that holy warfare which all God's people must wage both within themselves and without, in a hostile world.

Leviticus is the book of life, or walk and worship of a people already redeemed. Therefore sanctification is its most appropriate and important theme. It could not appropriately be presented till redemption was fully accomplished. It has been pointed out that the first mention of God as sanctifying is at the completion of Creation, when God sanctified the Sabbath day (Gen. 2:3). But that day's rest was broken by the entrance of sin, and its privilege lost. The word sanctify is not mentioned again till in Exodus 13:1, 2 Jehovah commanded Moses: "Sanctify unto me all the first-born ... among the children of Israel," the Israel of whom Jehovah had already said, "Israel is my son, even my first-born" (Exod. 4:22). The point is that only when redemption from that sin

which had broken the sanctification and rest of the creation Sabbath had been accomplished, even though only in type, could sanctification be resumed. For Israel itself is evidently typical. As the firstborn in Israel were a figure of all Israel, and accepted in behalf of all Israel, so Israel itself is typical as the first-born among the nations for whom God will accomplish redemption. The Book of Leviticus therefore sets forth that holy way in which a people already redeemed should walk worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1) , and the spiritual worship which Jehovah demands of them. Thus in connection with their moral and spiritual purity this title of God is repeated six times in the two chapters in Leviticus following its first appearance.

THE MEANING AND USE OF THE TERM “SANCTIFY”

The term sanctify occurs frequently in the Old Testament Scriptures. The Hebrew word which it translates 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. It has not been transferred or transliterated in our English Bibles as have other names studied, such as Jehovah-jireh, Jehovahrophe, and Jehovah-nissi, and consequently it has often escaped attention as one of the compound names of Jehovah. Yet certainly there is no more important word in the Old Testament: nor does any other name more truly express the character of Jehovah and His requirements of His people than this name Jehovah-M’Kaddesh -Jehovah who sanctifies.

Its primary meaning, however, is to set apart or separate. This idea is most nearly rendered by the words sanctify or hallow, and the word holy stands for that which is hallowed or set apart. Whatever differences the various English renderings may suggest, the primary idea of separating or setting apart is common to them all.

As setting apart, the word is applied to times and seasons. God sanctified the Sabbath (Gen. 2:3; Exod. 20:8, 11), that is, He set it apart from other days. It was to be a different day. The great feasts and fasts of Israel with their deep spiritual and dispensational significance were times

specially set apart and celebrated by holy convocations of the people (Lev. 23). That most wonderful of ancient Hebrew institutions, the year of Jubilee, coming after the seventh sabbaths of seven years, on the great Day of Atonement, ushered in with a great blowing of the trumpet, and proclaiming a new beginning of redemption and liberty for all, was also thus sanctified or specially set apart (Lev. 25:10).

The word sanctify in this sense was applied to places: the camp of Israel, the hill of Zion, the city of Jerusalem, the altar, the tabernacle, the Temple. The word so frequently used of both tabernacle and Temple is mikdash, so similar to this name of Jehovah, and meaning sanctuary. Thus it is a place set apart for the special presence and worship of Jehovah, who sanctifies. The Holy Land itself is thus a land set apart.

The word is again used in the setting apart of persons. Individuals were set apart from birth or even before birth. So Jeremiah was sanctified to Jehovah's service as a prophet to the nations (Jer. 1:5). The firstborn of Israel was set apart (Exod. 13:2). Upon the head of the high priest as the crowning mark of his high office was that perpetual sign of his setting apart to Jehovah: Holiness (Kodesh) to Jehovah (Exod. 28:36). And not only the priesthood but all the people were sanctified or set apart to Jehovah (Deut. 7:6).

The point involved in all these instances of the use of this word is contact with God. The Sabbath day was holy because God rested in it. The day was set apart by Israel as a pledge that God had sanctified this people to Himself (Exod. 31:13) ; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts was to be called the holy mount because Jehovah would dwell there (Zech. 8:3). The sanctuary itself was so named because it was the dwelling place of Jehovah among His people.

ITS APPLICATION TO JEHOVAH

This leads us to the second point of our discussion. As Himself the Holy One, Jehovah is apart from and above all else in the universe. "Jehovah he is God; there is none else beside him" (Deut.

4:35). “Thus saith Jehovah the King of Israel, and his redeemer Jehovah of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God,” says Isaiah (44:6); “a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me” (Isa. 45:21). And I Samuel adds: “There is none holy as Jehovah: for there is none beside thee” (2:2). The most fundamental, the most solemn and impressive of all the attributes of the Deity is His holiness. John truly says, “God is love.” But John is speaking here in a context which emphasizes the quality of love. And besides, that “love that God hath to us,” of which John speaks, is that sacrificing, redeeming love of God, the very purpose of which is to make us fit for His holy presence. It is this holiness of which an old Scottish divine writes: “It is the balance . . . of all the attributes of Deity. Power without holiness would degenerate into cruelty; omniscience without holiness would become craft; justice without holiness would degenerate into revenge; and goodness without holiness would be passionate and intemperate fondness doing mischief rather than accomplishing good.” It is this holiness which gives to God grandeur and majesty, and more than anything else constitutes His fullness and perfection. Certainly it is the most important lesson about God in the Old Testament. In the key verse of the Book of Leviticus, which teaches how we may approach a holy God and walk in a manner approved of Him, it is written, “For I Jehovah your God am holy.” In the vision that changed Isaiah’s life and made him a great prophet, there is that wonderful description of Jehovah, “Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts” (Isa. 6:3). In the presence of that awful holiness, even the seraphim, creatures of burning purity themselves, cover their eyes as if afraid to behold or desecrate that holiness with their gaze. Ever after, Jehovah is to Isaiah the Holy One of Israel. This phrase is peculiar to Isaiah and occurs some thirty times in his prophecy. The prophet Hosea also speaks of Jehovah as “the Holy One in the midst of thee” (11:9).

The Spirit of God is called the Holy Spirit. “Take not thy holy spirit from me,” pleads David (Ps. 51:11). In a striking passage in which he speaks of Jehovah as Israel’s Savior and also as the Angel of the Presence, Isaiah also speaks of His Holy Spirit-truly a Trinity (Isa. 63:8-11). “They rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit.”

The holiness of God is especially made clear in contrast to the heathen deities, and the impurity

and corruption of their nature and worship. It is because of this that Israel is repeatedly and strongly urged: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exod. 20:3). In contrast with them Jehovah is not corrupt in justice nor a respecter of persons (Deut. 10:17). In fact, they are really no gods, for the word idol in Psalm 96:5 and other places is “a thing of nought.” “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 gods of the heathen were a depraved lot, caring only and busy about their own pleasures, lusts, and quarrels. Cruel and unspeakable crimes were committed in their worship. “Their villainy upon earth gave them a title to a niche in the Pantheon of heathenism.” Contrast the awful but beautiful holiness of God who is of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look upon iniquity (Hab. 1:13), holy and reverend is His name (Ps. 111:9; Luke 1:49).

It is in His transcendent holiness that the glory and beauty of Jehovah consist. In the great song of triumph sung by Moses and the children of Israel after their passage through the Red Sea (Exod. 15), which is also that song of Moses and of the Lamb sung by those who gain the victory over the beast and over his image (Rev. 15: 3), the greatest tribute paid to Jehovah is in the words: “Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah ... glorious in holiness.” The cry of the seraphim, who veil their eyes in the presence of God’s holiness, is “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts”: and then, “the whole earth is full of his glory.” It is against the glory of God’s holiness that all have sinned, for this is what Paul meant when he said: “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

So also the beauty of the Lord is seen in His holiness. When the psalmist expresses the desire to behold the beauty of the Lord, it is in the house of the Lord, His Temple, the place of His holy presence that he expects to do so (Ps. 27:4). The beauty of the Lord is perfect.

But beauty is a product of something, and the perfect beauty of the Lord is the product of His perfect holiness. A noted English preacher, J. D. Jones, has clearly illustrated this by calling attention to the fact that “the most striking feature in Swiss scenery, the glory and boast of Switzerland, is the vision of its mighty mountain peaks clothed ever in their mantles of snowy

white. Take the mountains away, and you have destroyed the beauty of Switzerland. And in much the same way you destroy the 'beauty of the Lord' if you forget His holiness. The basal thing in God's character is His 'awful purity.' We need to lift our eyes to these shining and snow clad peaks of the divine holiness if we are ever to be moved to say, 'How beautiful God is.' "

The Lord our God is holy-this was the first truth Israel learned about Jehovah. The law and the awe-inspiring circumstances connected with its giving on Mount Sinai were all intended to indelibly impress upon them this truth of the holiness of their Jehovah. It is this holiness of which, Moses reveals (Exod. 34:14), God is so jealous. His name is Jealous-that is, His holiness is pure and burning, and He cannot allow the worship of another in His people. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me," He declares (Lev. 10:3). His people are to sanctify Him in their hearts (Isa. 8:13), and to worship Him in the beauty of holiness (I Chron. 16:29; Ps. 29:2).

ITS APPLICATION TO GOD'S PEOPLE

It is the glory and beauty of His holiness that God wishes to impart. It is no idle prayer the psalmist utters when he says: "Let the beauty of Jehovah our God be upon us" (Ps. 90:17). It is a God-implanted desire, and it finds its answer in the words of Peter that we are made "partakers of the divine nature" through great and precious promises made to us (II Peter 1:4). It is God's desire that the man whom He made in His own image, who corrupted that image through sin, should be restored to that image which is "righteousness and true holiness," putting on that new man which is after God (Eph. 4:24).

When God began a new experiment, so to speak, in His purpose for man's redemption by first selecting a people, He set them apart or sanctified them to that purpose saying: "Speak unto the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I, Jehovah, your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2). A holy God demands holiness in His people. A God separate from all that is evil, too pure to behold evil, the very antithesis of all evil, requires that the people He chooses be also separate from all evil and separated to the purpose for which He chose them.

Hence the emphatic command, first of all, that they serve no other gods but Himself, for a people become like the gods they serve. This is abundantly demonstrated in Israel's history.

Then again this people was to be apart, separated from all the peoples round about them in order to avoid the contagion of their corruption. All the institutions of ancient Israel's economy, its whole social and spiritual structure, its ceremonies and rites, the prohibition of certain foods and of intermarriage were designed to insulate them for a while from the rest of mankind, and to make them the best possible instrument for God's purpose. Perhaps it was also, as one writer has suggested, to show them even under the best circumstances and surroundings, that fallen man's "heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"; that his defilement is from within himself also; that there is no hope of redemption and holiness apart from God. "Ye shall be holy for I Jehovah your God am holy" was the magnificent ideal placed before Israel. To be God's peculiar treasure and the instrument of His holy purpose was Israel's grand destiny. Jehovah Himself was the model of separateness, of holiness, ever before them in striving after this destiny.

The term sanctified or separated, however, means more than position or relationship in regard to Jehovah. It means participation in the nature of Jehovah, His character and works. It is not without grounds that the word holy, although primarily meaning set apart, has come to represent moral and spiritual qualities. To be separate and apart from all evil and wickedness is not merely to be negative but to be good. They were commanded not only not to do "after the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt . . . and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you ..." but "ye shall do my judgments, and keep my ordinances, to walk therein" (Lev. 18:3, 4). Holiness is also positive and active. The people of God, therefore, must be holy in practice as well as separated in position. The one is meaningless without the other. This sanctifying or separating of His people is, on the part of Jehovah, an act; but the practice of holiness in His people is the working out of that act for themselves. "I am Jehovah which sanctify you," but we read in the preceding verse, "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy" (Lev. 20:7). God has endowed us with free will. He recognizes that prerogative of free will. He commands His people

to be holy but He will not force them to be so. He placed within Israel, on the basis of redemption, the power to be holy, and provided them with every incentive to holiness, but man must of his own free will exercise that provision and power. Jehovah would have man's free and willing separation and holiness, otherwise it is no holiness at all, for without free will it loses its moral character. Therefore this holiness is a process, not an act accomplished once for all. It lasts as long as man shall live and calls for his continued exercise and choice. This exercise was to make for growth in the holiness that a holy God required of a separated people.

Jehovah, as apart from and above all creatures, as sanctified and holy, is immeasurably transcendent; but as the Sanctifier of His people, setting them apart to Himself and His purpose, He becomes immanent, indwelling and empowering them by His Holy Spirit to live holy and acceptably before Him.

What Jehovah was to His people in the Old Testament, as Jehovah the Holy One who sanctifies, the Lord Jesus Christ is in the New Testament.

As to Himself, He was from His very conception and birth the Son of God and the holy child born to the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). As the only begotten of the Father, the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, He perfectly manifested the glory and beauty of the Father. This, it was shown, is chiefly expressed by the perfect holiness of Jehovah. So the Lord Jesus, the Jehovah-Jesus, was altogether holy and spotless in His life. He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). In contrast to the Aaronic high priesthood, He became our High Priest "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). He was made sin for us, in His redeeming love, but He Himself knew no sin (2 Cor. 5 : 21) .

He set Himself wholly apart as the Son and manifestation of the Father to do the Father's will, and surrendered Himself completely to it. "Lo, I come, as it is written in the volume of the book, to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7-9). He became our Sanctification as Paul says (1 Cor. 1:30).

“We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10), and by this offering “he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10:14).

What Israel was meant to be nationally we also are to be as a Church and personally. Peter quotes the very words of Leviticus in urging this. “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [or living, as the A.S.V. more clearly puts it]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (I Peter 1: 15, 16). For we are, he continues, “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the excellencies of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (2:9).

To such holiness, or separateness, we have been elected. “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” has “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). We are called with a holy calling (II Tim. 1:9). As in the Old Testament, so in the New, we are set apart or sanctified on the basis of our redemption in Christ. “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling” (2 Tim. 1:9). “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10: 10). “That he might sanctify the people with his own blood,” he “suffered without the gate” (Heb. 13:12).

This sanctification or separateness of life is accomplished by the Word of His truth: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth,” said the Lord Jesus in His great prayer (John 17:17), for they were not of the world even as He was not of the world (v. 16). He is our example in this: “For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” (v. 19). -But He has also empowered us to this through the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of holiness and power. He is the Author of this our holiness, who makes our bodies the temples of His presence and produces the fruit of the Spirit, the love, joy, peace, goodness, faith, etc., of which Paul speaks in Galatians 5:22, 23.

Here we are reminded of the truth that, as in the Old Testament sanctification was not only with regard to our position in Jehovah, but with regard also to life and practice, so also in the New

Testament; for after speaking of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in a believer, Paul continues: “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25). And if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Again and again we are exhorted to sanctification of life. Our bodies are to be presented a living sacrifice, holy to God and acceptable (Rom. 12:1, 2). Contrasting their former mode of life, Paul addressed the Corinthians: “Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified ... in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:11). Our new man is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24). We are Christ’s workmanship created in Him unto good works in which we are to walk (Eph. 2:10), and which we are to maintain (Titus 3:8).

The chastenings of the Lord also are to this end, that we might be partakers of His holiness, that “holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:10, 14). Only the pure in heart can see God.

It is the Church’s glorious destiny to be presented holy and spotless to her Lord, a glorious Church. And in what does this glory consist? It is in “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:26, 27); and that we shall be like Him when He shall appear. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (1 John 3:3).

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (I Thess. 4:3), the sanctification of the whole spirit and soul and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thess. 5:23).