

Holy as God is Holy

God says, "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God Am Holy." Leviticus 19:2

Holy means to be set apart. Matthew sets Abraham and King David apart from among the 42 generations listed in the genealogy of the birth of Jesus. These men were Holy only because they heard God and lived in keeping with God's promise. (Faith) Read the stories of Abraham and David's life. They were far from perfect. Both were murderers! Yet, God set them apart to be Holy.

Joseph finds himself in a quandary. He knows the Law of Moses. He recognizes adultery and killing as sin. Sin separates people from Holy God. When he discovers Mary to be great with child he came face to face with Sin. How shall he keep the Law?

Think about the experience of sin. Sin separates us from God. Now, think about being Holy. Holiness sets us apart from the world to reveal God's will through our lives. Sin simply keeps step with the way of the world. Holiness brings God's will from heaven to earth.

I would like to ask which we prefer, or find easy, but quickly see my inquiry as foolishness. I am convinced that Adam joined Eve in eating the forbidden fruit because he didn't want to be alone! Little did he know that the forbidden fruit would drive them both into fear of God, self, and neighbor. Therefore, Jesus says, "There will always be wars and rumors of wars." I suppose too many people prefer perfection!

Joseph was taught to focus on sin. He could not reconcile "thou shalt not kill" with stoning Mary to death. Therefore, he could not find a way to keep the Law of Moses. At this point in the story, Joseph has a dream. What happened in that dream conquered Joseph's fear of God, Mary, and all the people of the world? My experience tells me its in hearing the still small voice of God! Now, how about you?

God made Joseph holy as God is Holy. Look, Holiness restored Joseph to reflect the image of God. Joseph took Mary as his wife but not before God took Joseph to be His holy son. Sounds like Joseph understood Jesus' Holy purpose months before God's Son was born into the world.

Before all this took place, I wonder how Joseph would have described what it means to be Holy. I imagine he would describe the Holy of Holies in Exodus 30.

The ark of the covenant, the incense table, and candle stands were gilded in burnished gold. The smelter purified the gold through fire. The gold was ready to be applied to the Holy Furniture when it reflected the smelters image. The Holy of Holies reflects the image of God!

In front of the Ark of the Covenant sits the Golden Incense Table. The priest kept a mixture of spices burning on the Incense Table 24 hours a day, 7 day a week. Frankincense was one of the spices. The smoke from the incense filled the Holy Space with its sweetness. Our many prayers rise with the sweetness of children crying to be made Holy as God is Holy.

Exodus 30 contains God's recipe for anointing oil. The mixture contains Myrrh. Notice that the Priest used this oil to anoint every item and tool they used in their ministry. The anointing made the object Holy. Whatever touched the object was made Holy too. Like creation, The Holy of Holies is created through God's voice.

In today's text, we read about Magi who come from Persia. History says that the Magi learned to interpret dreams from Daniel. Remember, Daniel was included in the "deportation" mentioned in Matthew's Genealogy of the Birth of Jesus. The Babylonians conquered Jerusalem. They pillaged the temple. They carried everything in the Holy of Holies to Babylon. About 75 years later, Cyrus the Great, a Persian, conquered Babylon. He sent the Israelites back to Jerusalem. He gave them money to rebuild the temple. He also gave them the items stolen from the Holy of Holies. The Bible lists Cyrus as a messiah! (See Isaiah 45:1; the word "anointed" and "messiah" describe each other.)

I find it interesting that the Magi, who learned their craft from Daniel, bring Jesus the very Holy Gifts named in Exodus 30. These gifts say that Jesus is the Holy of Holies. These gifts say that God is pleased to live in humanity. Therefore, I find it fascinating that Jesus is like Gold. He reflects the image of God.

I find it amazing that Jesus is like Frankincense. He stands before the Ark of the Covenant to fulfill everything it contains. The Ark holds the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod, and a Golden Bowl of Manna. In regards to the Law of Moses, Jesus did for persons what God did for Joseph. In regards to the Rod of Aaron, we must remember that it was cut from an Almond Tree. It was dead, but when leaned against the Ark it rose to life. It was found with buds and ripe fruit. We see the Cross of Christ come to bud and bear the ripe fruit of God's Grace. In regards to anointing with the Oil of Myrrh, we hear Jesus commit his Spirit into the hands of God. The Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. Then, Jesus anoints us with the Holy Spirit to make us Holy as He is Holy.

Get over being perfect. The world demands it, only to promote fear of God, self, and neighbors. Do you have Jesus in your Heart and Mind? If so, do you have faith that God is building the Holy of Holies in you? Your soul is the Ark of the New Covenant. It resonates with the voice of God who created the heavens and the earth. It lifts high the Cross that buds with new-life and the fruit of Grace we experience as unconditional love. Your Soul is the Golden Cup of Manna. Ask and Your Father in Heaven will give you daily manna. It nourishes your spirit as you journey through the Wilderness of Sin. The manna of Eternal- Life is the Holy Spirit. Open your eyes and you will see. Shut up and listen. God will open your ears. Do this and know Joy beyond your wildest expectations.

One in Christ,

Robert