

A CLOSER LOOK AT GOD  
Exodus 15:11

Intro: Last week we saw how Isaiah discovered his own sinfulness, and the sinfulness of his people, by the vision he received of the holiness of God.

This week I trust that the Lord will enable us to understand what the ways of God with Moses taught him about the holiness of God.

Let me ask you this question: What do you think of when the holiness of God is mentioned?

Probably most of us think immediately of His sinless character. We think of the absolute perfection of God, that He is not only without sin, but that He is incapable of sin. Holiness means to us the complete moral purity of God.

There is no question but that that is what it means.

But the holiness of God means even more than that. Since we are commanded to be holy, and to be holy means to be like God, it is important to know as much as we can about our holy God so that we will know what we are looking for and what we should expect. Obviously there are ways in which we will never be completely like God. We will never be Deity. But let us see from the Word what we can learn about God after we have learned, as we have, from Isaiah's vision, that the only way to know our own sinfulness is to see ourselves in the light of what God is.

Exodus 15:11 will be our text. Let us ask some questions about this verse:

- 1) Whose words are these?
- 2) What is the nature of this chapter?
- 3) **When** did he write them?

There seems to be no question but that all of the people, and even Moses, were more **occupied** with the Lord than they ever had been. And at least Moses, but probably most of the people as well, had come to understand the holiness of God as never before. Obviously they did not know what we now know about God's purpose that His people be like He is, but more may have been made known to them than we realize. At a later date they were certainly to be made aware of the necessity for holiness through what the Lord had ordained for the high priest of Israel. Cf. Ex. 28:36; 39:30 -- "Holiness to the Lord."

But what does our text tell us about the holiness of God that will help us in our pursuit of holiness? It is safe to say that the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptians was a glorious display of the holiness of God.

The first and most obvious thing about holiness of God is . . .

I. IT MEANT THAT GOD IS UNIQUE.

Notice how Moses had expressed it:

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness . . .

Having seen what Moses and the Israelites had seen, there was no point in talking about men. "Gods" are greater than men, and even though they are not actually "gods," yet they are trusted as "gods" and worshipped as "gods." Where can you find among the "gods" of the nations any who are comparable to the God of Israel, the God of heaven and earth?

What did the plagues in Egypt prove? They were a contest between the God of Israel and "the gods" of Egypt.

What about the contest that Elijah had with the prophets of Baal? See 1 Kings 18.

What about the time during the days of Hezekiah when Rabshakeh of the Assyrians came against Judah? Do you remember what he said. Read 2 Kings 19:10-13.

What was the outcome? In one night the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 men of the Assyrian army!

What was the message of Isaiah the prophet in Hezekiah's day? Listen to it:

Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God (Isa. 44:6).

Because God was a holy God He was absolutely unique; He was different.

And for us to be like God means that we, too, will be different. We find a great move within the church today to pattern the church after the world. But what does the Word of God teach? Remember our text in 1 Peter 1:14-16.

Think of the holy men and women of the OT and of the NT. One thing characterized all of them: they were different! Remember Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Stephen, Paul, John, Peter, and many, many others.

II. IT MEANT THAT GOD WAS POWERFUL.

Notice the expression, "doing wonders."

Do we want the power of God in our lives? Then we must be holy. Holiness means power.

This is the only way that we can understand Peter's words in Luke 5:8. It was the display of Christ's power which made Peter know that Christ was holy, that no mere man could possibly do what the Lord had done.

Note how this is true according to Psalm 47--leading up to "the throne of his holiness" in v. 8.

God's holiness means that He is mighty. Holiness is power, divine power. And it will mean power in our lives, too.

Think of this in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ when He stood before Pilate. Cf. John 19:11.

Think of Moses in the OT standing against all of the power of Egypt. Think of John the Baptist in the NT--and there are many other examples of spiritual power in both Testaments!

IT IS BY  
BEING HOLY  
THAT WE  
CAN RESIST  
TEMPTATION,  
AND RISE ABOVE  
OUR TRIALS.

### III. IT MEANT THAT GOD WAS RIGHT.

What did the people say to Moses when they got to the Red Sea, knowing that the Egyptian army was coming, and that they appeared to be trapped? Cf. Ex. 14:10-12.

Don't you get tired of doing the wrong things, of making the wrong decisions? Do you know that God has never experienced that regret?

Did Abraham regret that he left Ur of the Chaldees? Did Moses regret that he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God? Did Daniel regret that he did not abide by the king's order that he should not pray to his God? Did Job regret his words, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him"? Did the Apostle Paul regret that day on the road to Damascus when he said to the Lord Jesus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

To be holy does not mean that we will never make a mistake, but it does mean that we are on the right track. How tragic it would be to come to the end of your days and find that you have made all of the wrong choices!

To be like God means that we must be holy, and to be holy is to be headed in the right direction. All Israel stood against God on that day at the Red Sea. But they were wrong; God was right!

### IV. IT MEANT THAT GOD WAS PRAISEWORTHY.

That is what Moses and the Israelites were doing on the far side of the Red Sea--praising their holy God!

I am not thinking that, if we are holy, we will receive the praises of men. A holy life is despised by those who do not know the Lord, and many who do know the Lord have not yet realized the joys connected with holiness. What I am thinking is that, to be holy, will fill our hearts with praise to God.

Look with me at Psalm 29:2, and then at Psalm 96:9. Follow this up with Psalm 97:12.

God is worshipped because He is holy. Cf. Isa. 6:3 and Rev. 4:8.

Concl: The closer we look at God in the Word, the more we shall see of His holiness, and the greater will be our desire to be like Him. A holy life is different, unique,  
but it is a life of power,  
and a life that is right,  
as well as the only life that satisfies.

How good the Lord is to let us see these things in the Word as a further encouragement to be obedient to His Word when He said, "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16; cf. Lev. 11:44).