

2. Fundamentals of Worship: High and Lifted Up

Isaiah 6:1-4

I. INTRO:

- a. Words of the hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy”
- b. Last week: first four of Ten Commandments focus on Jehovah God’s uniqueness and His requirement that His image and name are “off limits.” In the Sabbath He demanded specific, regular times and ways that He be revered.
- c. Deuteronomy 6:4-5 is called the “Shema Israel,” and for centuries has been recited at the beginning of every Jewish prayer
- d. Jewish & Christian faiths emphasize the belief and worship of just one God - called monotheism
 - i. Many of His attributes and character traits revealed
 - ii. Some of His names: “Almighty,” “I Am”
 - iii. Traits: love, mercy, eternal, just, righteous
 - iv. Most outstanding and fundamental: HOLY! What does it mean?

II. “GODS MANY”

- a. Many “gods” in the cultures around Israelites – Dagon, Baal, Molech, Astarte, Chemosh, Heavenly Bodies
- b. Common (though not universal) characteristics of worship of these deities: sexual immorality and fornication, prostitution, drunkenness, magic and divination. Some (Molech) even involved human sacrifice at times.
- c. The gods of the Greeks and Romans of the New Testament period were scarcely better. Both their attributes and the worship of them emphasized immorality and satisfaction of the fleshly appetites.
- d. Contrast these gods to the God of Israel

III. THE “HOLY GOD”

- a. The Song of Moses – Exodus 15:11
- b. Jacob at Bethel – Genesis 28:12-19
- c. At the burning bush – holy ground – Exodus 3:15
- d. The Tabernacle and the Temple – Holy Place and Holy of Holies – sacred and very restricted places designed to emphasize His separateness and majesty.
- e. Isaiah’s vision – Isaiah 6:1-5
 - i. “Holy, holy, holy!” repeated in Revelation 4:8
 - ii. As R. C. Sproul comments on this passage in his book, The Holiness of God: “The Bible says that God is ‘holy, holy, holy.’ Not that He is merely ‘holy,’ or even ‘holy, holy.’ The Bible never says that God is ‘love, love, love,’ or ‘mercy, mercy, mercy.’”

IV. “HOLY” DEFINED

- a. To be holy is to be...
 - i. Distinct, separate, in a class alone
 - ii. Unique, with no rivals or competition
 - iii. See Exodus 15:11; I Samuel 2:2; Psalm 86:8-10
 - iv. Morally pure, incapable by nature of impurity or sin – Habakkuk 1:13a

- b. Failure to respect God's holiness
 - i. Moses failed – Numbers 20:1-14
 - ii. Uzziah failed (and David!) – II Samuel 6:1-11
 - iii. Isaiah, once he truly comprehended God's holiness, realized even his lips were too unclean to speak God's words

V. CONCLUSION

- a. We must worship the One, True God
- b. He is a Holy God – unique and separate
- c. Because of His very nature, our only appropriate response to Him is reverence, respect and obedience
- d. Only in moral and ethical integrity can we approach Him
- e. Any worship of Him must focus on emphasizing and respecting His holiness