

Qedosh Yisrael – The Holy One of Israel

When Moses first met the God of the Bible, he had some wrong ideas about God. In re-educating Moses, the first characteristic God chose to reveal about Himself was his holiness. This was new information to our world. Everything people understood about God changed when Moses encountered God in the burning bush. The reason is simple: God let it be known that He is a holy God. The first mention of holiness in all of Scripture is the occasion of the burning bush.

God said to Moses: *"Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."* Exodus 3:1-5 (NIV)

This is what Moses can understand from the conversation. The place where he is standing is in the presence of God. The sandals on his feet are too ordinary and too common to be respectful in the presence of God. God is holy and He cannot be approached casually.

Characteristics of God's holiness in contrast to people:

God is independently holy and you are not.

You have no holiness of your own to offer to anyone. You only have the holiness of Jesus Christ which you have received as a gift. See Colossians 1:22.

You are not independently holy but God is. God does not have to borrow holiness from anyone else. He is a holy God.

God is infinitely holy and you are not.

When you take your measure of holiness and compare it to the holiness of God, your personal holiness does not register even a blip on the radar screen. God is not 5 or 10 times more holy than the holiest person you can think of. God's holiness places Him in an entirely different category.

God is immutably holy.

God has always been and always will be perfectly holy. The holiness of God will never change or diminish and that means His passionate hatred of sin will never change or diminish.

God's holiness separates Him from His creation. We would be forever lost in our sin were it not for the gift of a sinless Savior who satisfies the demands of a holy God. Because God is holy, He can demand our holiness:

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.'" Leviticus 19:1-2

This week, pray this prayer every day:

My Lord and my God, you are holy and I am not. As I consider your holiness, grant that I might commit to holy ways, think holy thoughts, live in holy obedience and reject evil with a holy attitude.