

Love and Holiness



Is it possible to live a holy life?

God tells us, "...be holy for I Am holy."
[Lev 11:45] The born-again believer is holy based on what Christ has done. But being holy and living holy are two different things. Malachi's burden is that we learn what it means to live a holy life.

A. The Meaning of Holy *Lev 11:45; Eph 1:4; Eph 5:25-27*

1. The basic meaning in scripture is: To be set apart!
2. God is the one who is qualitatively different or set apart from creation.
3. Holy also refers to someone or something that has been set apart for a special purpose. Hence we are set apart 'from' and also set apart 'to.'
4. Since God is holy, the lives of His covenant people were to reflect God's own holiness. *Ex 19:5-6; 1 Pet 1:1-16*
5. We are made holy by the sanctifying presence of the indwelling Spirit on the basis of the atoning work of Christ. *Rom 8:14-17*

B. The Foundation of Holiness: Love *Mal 1:2*

1. Background to the book of Malachi
2. The burden of the word—a heavy message
3. When the righteous suffer and the wicked seem to prosper, we are apt to question God's love.
4. God loves His people even when they ignore or disobey Him.

C. Holy Love and Hatred *Mal 1:2-4*

1. Hebrew word for 'hatred' means to 'set against.'
2. What does God hate?
Psalm 5:5; Prov 6:16-19; Psalm 11:5; Pro 8:13; Rev 2:15
3. Jacob and Esau
Love and hatred here is not 'emotion-based.' This is better understood as "one I have chosen and one I have rejected."
See also *Luke 14:26 and Matt 10:37*
4. Jacob/Spirit — Esau/Flesh
Jacob in this passage can represent the 'spiritual' man and Esau the 'carnal' or 'man of flesh.' *1 Cor 3:1-4*

D. Restoring Holiness, Love and Grace *Mal 1:5; Heb 12:14-16*

1. God's love is based on His choice of us, not our conduct for Him. *1 John 4:10*
2. God's love is proven by His covenant for us so we would believe in Him. *Gen 15:6-17; 1 John 2:1*
3. God's love is affirmed in us as we keep His commands.
John 15:8-11
4. As we pursue holiness we live in His grace and the LORD is magnified within us.

*Holiness is not the end of progress,
but deliverance from standing still. (G. Campbell Morgan)*

Malachi 1:1-5

:1 The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

:2 "I have loved you," says the LORD.

"Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?'

Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the LORD. "**Yet Jacob I have loved;**

:3 **But Esau I have hated**, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness."

:4 Even though Edom has said, "We have been impoverished, But we will return and build the desolate places," Thus says the LORD of hosts: "They may build, but I will throw down; They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness, And the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever.

:5 Your eyes shall see, And you shall say, 'The LORD is magnified beyond the border of Israel.'

Hebrews 12:14-16

:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

:15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

:16 lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like **Esau**, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

Hebrews 2:1