

¹ In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory!” ⁴ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.” (*Isaiah 6:1-7*)

The heart of this theme:

- The infinite holiness of God (*Isaiah 6:1-4*)
- The terrible sinfulness of man (*Isaiah 6:5*)
- The unbelievable hope of unity (*Isaiah 6:6-7*)

Holiness Defined: three elements

1) Moral Purity

- In Exodus 19:6, God calls Israel a “holy nation.” In the next chapter (Exodus 20) he tells them *how* to be holy: the Ten Commandments
- “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” (*2 Corinthians 7:1*)

2) Dedicated Separation

- ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work. (*Exodus 20:8-10*)
- “You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.” (*Leviticus 20:26*)

3) Praiseworthy Beauty

- “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (*Isaiah 6:3*)
- “Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!” (*Psalms 96:9*)
- ‘Holy holy holy, all the earth adore Thee, all Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth and sky and sea’

I. Genesis 1-2 | Eden: Holy People in a Holy Place

“And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.” (*Genesis 2:25*)

“And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion...’” (*Genesis 1:28*)

“And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.” (*Genesis 2:9*)

II. Genesis 3 | Sin Corrupts the Holy People and the Holy Place

1) Sin is *moral disobedience*

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life.” (*Genesis 3:17*)

2) Sin is *separation from God*

“He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.” (*Genesis 3:24*)

3) Sin is *ugly*

“Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.” (*Genesis 3:7*)

III. OT History | Holiness Invades the Unholy

A. Holy Space: “Take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” (*Exodus 3:5*)

1. **Israel: a holy land** (*Zechariah 2:12*)

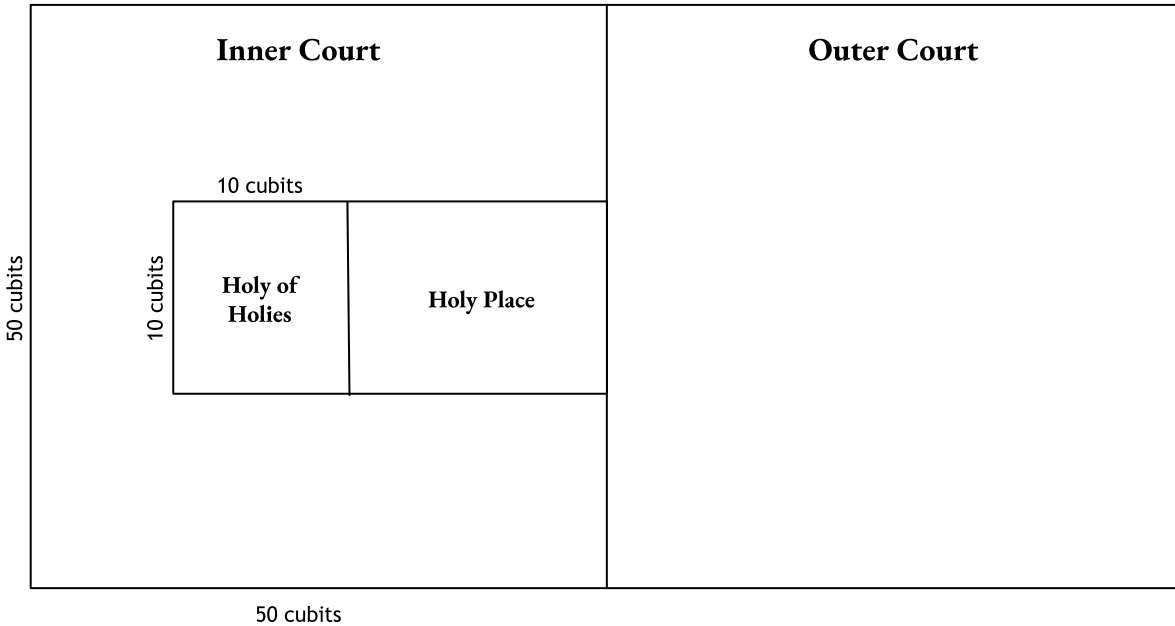
2. **Jerusalem: a holy city** (*Joel 3:17*)

3. **The Temple/Tabernacle: a holy place**

“Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” (*Exodus 40:34*)

¹⁰ When the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, ¹¹ ...for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. (*1 Kings 8:10-11*)

The Tabernacle



B. Holy People

1. Israel was commanded to be holy

¹ I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless...I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. (*Genesis 17:1,8*)

“You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.” (*Leviticus 19:2*)

“The laws of clean and unclean were physically oriented laws which pedagogically taught the Israelites concerning the spiritual world...God is teaching His people to feel about sin (spiritual realm) as they are accustomed to feeling about a dishonorable and uncomfortable exclusion from the ritual service.” - K. Lawson Younger

2. Israel was unable to be holy

1 Samuel 5-6: the Ark of Yahweh was dangerous for the Philistines *and* for Israel. “Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God?” (*1 Samuel 6:20*)

⁶ And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the Ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. ⁷ And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God. (*2 Samuel 6:6-7*)

IV. The Prophets | The Promise of Universal Holiness

²⁰ And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “Holy to the Lord.” And the pots in the house of the Lord shall be as the bowls before the altar. ²¹ And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the Lord of hosts. (*Zechariah 14:20-21*)

A. The Promise of a Holy Space

⁴ And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house...¹⁸ Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold of the house...¹⁹ And the cherubim stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the Lord, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them. (*Ezekiel 10:4, 18-19*)

“And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The Lord Is There.” (*Ezekiel 48:35*)

B. The Promise of a Holy People

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus...⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert...⁸ And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it...⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. (*Isaiah 35:1, 5-6, 8-9*)

“Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.” (*Isaiah 53:11*)

V. The Gospels | Jesus: Holiness Incarnate

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt [*Gk: ‘tabernacled’*] among us, and we have seen his glory” (*John 1:14*)

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit...²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” which means, God with us. (*Matthew 1:18, 22-23*)

⁴³ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased...⁴⁸ And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.” (*Luke 8:43-44, 48*)

⁵⁰ Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. ⁵¹ And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. (*Matthew 27:50-51*)

¹¹ Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. (*John 20:11-12*; cf. *Exodus 25:19*)

VI. Acts & the Epistles | The Church: A Holy People

²⁵ ...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. (*Ephesians 5:25-27*)

A. A Reality: we *are* holy

“To the saints...” (Gk. ‘holy ones;’ *Ephesians 1:1*, *Philippians 1:1*, *Colossians 1:2*)

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (*1 Corinthians 6:9-11*)

B. A Command: we are *told* to be holy

“As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct” (*1 Peter 1:15*; cf. *Matthew 5:48*)

¹² ... Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you. (*Philippians 2:12-13*)

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” (*Hebrews 12:14*)

C. A Process: we *become* holier (sanctification)

● Moral Purity

- ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. (*1 Thess. 4:3-7*)

● Dedicated Separation

- ⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called...and he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God...¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (*Hebrews 11:8-10, 13*)
- **Praiseworthy Beauty**
 - “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.” (*2 Corinthians 3:18*)

VII. Revelation | New Jerusalem: the Holy People who are God’s Holy Place

“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.” (*1 Corinthians 13:12*)

⁹ Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—¹³ on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶ The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal... ²⁷ Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (*Revelation 21:9-16, 27; cf. 1 Kings 6:20*)

Book Recommendations

- *The Holiness of God*, RC Sproul
- *The Hole in Our Holiness*, Kevin DeYoung
- *I’m a Saint*, Lecrae (song)
- *Contagious Holiness*, Craig Blomberg