

Thought for Today: January 24, 2008

Psalm 99 (NASB)

**The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble;
He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake!
The LORD is great in Zion,
And He is exalted above all the peoples.
Let them praise Your great and awesome name;
Holy is He.
The strength of the King loves justice;
You have established equity;
You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.
Exalt the LORD our God
And worship at His footstool;
Holy is He.**

**Moses and Aaron were among His priests,
And Samuel was among those who called on His name;
They called upon the LORD and He answered them.
He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud;
They kept His testimonies
And the statute that He gave them.
O LORD our God, You answered them;
You were a forgiving God to them,
And yet an avenger of their evil deeds.
Exalt the LORD our God
And worship at His holy hill,
For holy is the LORD our God.**

Holiness may be one of the most appropriate ways to distinguish God from everything He has created. To understand that God is holy is to understand that God is free from all impurity and imperfection. God is sacred and uncommon. God is uniquely God—if that makes sense. For this psalmist, recognizing God's holiness was a reason to tremble in awe and to offer God worship and praise.

Much can be learned from this great psalm, but I'm primarily struck by the characteristics of God that flow from His holiness. Since God is holy, He is concerned about justice, equity, righteousness, faithfulness, and forgiveness. We love to think about these things as characteristics of God. Do we realize that God wants to think about these things as characteristics of us?

In order to claim God's blessings, we have to accept His lordship. We have to convert to a life lived by His guidance. We can't be selfish, corrupt, deceitful, envious, profane, greedy, malicious, unforgiving, and unjust. We can't live like this and still be holy. So how do we make it? We start by admitting that we can't make it on our own. We acknowledge that God's holiness is awesome and powerful, and we fall on our faces before Him. We worship Him with our lives and we dedicate ourselves to the same causes and ideals which make God holy.

In Jesus,
Patrick Barber