BE YE HOLY

By Mike Burnham

1 PETER 1:15-16

Understanding the full meaning of *holiness* is important, not only for our sakes, but some scriptures cannot be understood except by the understanding of holiness. The primary meaning of holy is *"to separate, to cut."* It refers to *"a cut above something*." When we find a garment or another piece of merchandise that is outstanding, that has a superior quality, we use the expression that it is *"a cut above the rest."*

The theological term for holy is "transcendence" and means "to exceed usual limits." To transcend is to "rise above something, to go above and beyond a certain limit." When we speak of the transcendence of God we are talking about that sense in which God is above and beyond us, Psa. 89:6-8. His ways and thoughts are not our ways and thought but are above and beyond them.

To be holy is to be different in a special way. It's to be set apart, separated, and different from what is common, Eze. 22:23-26. It's to be set apart unto purity, or cleanness, Eze. 44:23; Lev. 10:10. When God made earthly things holy, like, holy ground, holy Sabbath, holy convocation, holy nation, holy tithe, holy censers, holy city, etc. they were to be different, set apart, separated from common use. For instance, the formula for the frankincense used as a sweet-smelling savor on the golden altar in the tabernacle could not be used as perfume for the women.

When God said: "Be ye holy, as I am holy" He was not telling us to be absolutely pure as he is pure, which we could not do, but to be different from the world, to live, think, speak above and beyond the way the worldly crowd does. To be separated from them. No longer fulfilling the lusts of men but the will of God, 1 Pet. 4:1-4.