

HOLY

By Mike Burnham

Hebrews 12:28....How many of us are "*extremely cautious*" or "*very, very careful*" in our worship of God?

I want us to study to understand what *the holy* is. There can be no worship, no spiritual growth, no true obedience without it. It defines our goal as Christians. God has declared, "*be ye holy, for I am holy.*" 1 Pet. 1:15,16; 1 Thes. 3:13, 4:7. The *standard* of moral obligation is the *Holiness of God*. That's why moral codes never change. With God there is no shadow of turning or variableness, James 1:17. There may be changes in social values but that doesn't make them right, because the *standard* is God's Holiness, not man's inventions. The *ultimate reason and ground* for us to be and do right is because God is *Holy*, 1 Pet. 1:16; Mat. 5:48.

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, (Psm. 89:6-8). For instance, what does the bible say about his *ways and thoughts*? (Isa. 55:8,9), about where he *dwells*? (Isa. 57:15),(also his *holy mountain* and his *holy throne* speaks of his *transcendence, his greatness*, (Psm. 145:3), his *understanding*, (Psm. 147:5). The word is used to de-

scribe God's relationship to the world. He is *higher* than the world. He has *absolute power* over the world. The world has no power over him (Psm. 93:1-5; 99:1-3,5,9; 113:1-6). *Transcendence* describes God in his consuming *majesty*, his *exalted loftiness*. It points to the *infinite* distance that separates him from every creature. He is an infinite *cut above* everything else. It was his *holiness*, this infinite distance of separation, that God was teaching Job (Job 38:1-7). Look at Job's answer: (40:1-5, 42:1-6). Rom. 11:33-36.