



W.O.W: Word Of the Week

Holy (a one-word summary of Leviticus)

September 30, 2020

From time to time, these W.O.W posts overlap with another project I am working on – the books of the Bible summarized in one word. Choosing a word to summarize Leviticus was not hard – applying that word in the context of today's world is more difficult. Here goes – a word of encouragement and guidance for this life, pointing us toward eternal life.

Q-D-SH. Holy. This Hebrew root appears at least 59 times in 27 chapters in Leviticus. The challenge of holiness permeates the letter. We have translation options: holy, pure, sacred, sanctified.

I choose holy. We know the word; we do not know the word. It is an umbrella word, a package word, a summary.

Analysis. Struggle with me through basic definitions and concepts (drawn from *Theological Word Book of Old Testament*). What does it mean that something or someone is holy?

Apartness, separation, thus sacred or holy.

Distinguished from the common, the secular, or the profane. Holy becomes a synonym for God because of his total separateness, especially from sin; above and beyond. Christian holiness has both spiritual and ethical dimensions.

Dedicated, for exclusive use. Absolute dedication.

Application.

I speak my heart. I fear that Christendom in general has little appreciated what it means that God declares us holy, redeeming us and purifying us, reserving us as his exclusive people, his possession, zealous of good works (Tit. 2:14).

In one sense, the spheres of the sacred and the profane are perpetually exclusive. One cannot do both, yet Paul describes being in the world yet not of the world. Certainly, holiness means separation from all that is unholy.

Holiness is not only distinct and separated from unholiness, it also stands in opposition.

Does my life reflect God's exclusive and total claim on all of my life?

Does my attitude toward and use of my blessings (possessions) reflect God's total claim?

Does my commitment to holiness lead me away from anything and everything that is secular?

To what is my life totally dedicated? What is #1? What is my priority?

Word Of the Week! God calls us to holiness. Let's pray!