

MEDITATIONS FOR IYYAR



HEALING AND HOLINESS

Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine. (Leviticus 20:26)

Not long after leading the Israelites from the Sea of Reeds, Moses lead the Israelites three days into the wilderness of Shur and the bitter waters of *Marah* are turned sweet. Here G-d promises Israel that if they will follow His ways, "I will not afflict you with any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians; because I am יהוה רפאך *Adonai Rophekha* - The LORD your healer."¹

The acronym for יהוה רפאך, *Adonai Rophekha*, spells out *Iyyar* - a promising time of healing.

The Torah portions for *Iyyar* normally corresponds to the last part of *Vayikra* (Leviticus) where the principal motif is holiness.

A.W. Tozer writes in 'Knowledge of the Holy':

Neither the writer nor the reader of these words is qualified to appreciate the holiness of G-d. Quite literally a new channel must be cut through the desert of our minds to allow the sweet waters of truth that will heal our great sickness to flow in. We cannot grasp the true meaning of the divine holiness by thinking of someone or something very pure and then raising the concept to the highest degree we are capable of.

"G-d's holiness is not simply the best we know infinitely bettered. We know nothing like the divine holiness... Holy is the way G-d is. To be holy He does not conform to a standard. He is that standard.

In this month of holiness and healing, it is our hope that these meditations will stir your thoughts and prepare your heart as you move from the month of redemption to the month of revelation.

The following thoughts to ponder are taken from the highly recommended book *Holiness - Rabbinic Judaism and the Graeco-Roman World* by Hannah K. Harrington.

IYYAR - 1

Holiness is inherent in and emanates from G-d himself.

IYYAR - 2

Goodness, in terms of a present, beneficent power, which can exercise justice and mercy with wisdom and equity, is characteristic of holiness.

IYYAR - 3

Holiness describes G-d more closely than any other designation. His very essence is holiness. One could say that holiness is G-d's "innermost reality" to which all of His attributes are related.

IYYAR - 4

The term for "holy," *kadosh*, is often explained as "separated" or "set aside" ...withdrawal from ordinary usage [in order to be set apart unto G-d and sanctified; such as the Sabbath which He set apart from the other six days].

IYYAR - 5

Holiness signifies utter withdrawal from what is morally evil.

¹ Exodus 15:26

IYYAR - 6

The *Kaddish* begins with the words, “Magnified and sanctified [*yitgadel v’yitkadesh*] be his great Name in the world which he has created according to his will. And may he establish his kingdom during your life and during your day....”

The prayer that G-d’s Name would be made holy, or sanctified, in the world is a request that his supremacy would be recognized by everyone.

As a prayer to G-d, the *Kaddish* is a plea that G-d will cause himself to be seen as holy, that is, that He will bring the whole world to recognize His exclusive sovereignty.

The same thought is expressed in the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9ff.) where Jesus prays to the Father saying, “May your Name be hallowed ...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

IYYAR - 7

G-d’s holy perfection is mirrored, to some degree, in those people He designates to be holy.

IYYAR - 8

Jacob Milgrom says of G-d, “Holiness is the extension of his nature; it is the agency of his will.” In other words, holiness is not just a divine state of being but it is the extension of the divine nature into the human realm.

IYYAR - 9

Holiness, as the agency of divine will, is neither a mere exhibition of power nor an abstract condition of “otherness” or “perfection,” but a means to effect righteousness in the earth.

IYYAR - 10

The link of holiness and good deeds in G-d’s behavior is set forth as a model.

IYYAR - 11

Glory, in a sense, is holiness made visible.

IYYAR - 12

Holiness is the additional strength needed by all life to implement G-d’s goodness on earth. The spirit of the Holy One is the vital source which animates human beings to resist evil and do good.

IYYAR - 13

On the one hand, holiness is “other,” withdrawn, exclusive, perfect, and powerful. And yet, many texts reveal another side to holiness, one which is active in the community and gives it life and quality. Isaiah states this paradox well: “For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, *lehabiyot*, ‘to give life to,’ the spirit of the humble and the heart of the contrite” (Isaiah 57:15).

IYYAR - 14

The continued presence of divine holiness requires human maintenance.

IYYAR - 15

Holiness is meant to be irrevocable.

IYYAR - 16

Holiness means nearness to G-d.

IYYAR - 17

Holiness comes at a price.

IYYAR - 18

Holiness is precious. It must be guarded and maintained.

IYYAR - 19

Holiness is beautiful.

IYYAR - 20

Holiness is both powerful perfection and merciful goodness. It is never simply absolute power, but it seeks ways to enable human access even after frail human beings have provoked it.

IYYAR - 21

Holiness...cannot be effected without proper recognition and restitution of wrong done to others, whether it is to G-d or to one's fellow human beings.

IYYAR - 22

Holiness...cannot be created in a vacuum.

IYYAR - 23

Holiness is not a one-way street in which G-d does all the giving.

IYYAR - 24

Holiness brings life.

IYYAR - 25

Holiness, a divine force which transforms human beings, can be transmitted through the Divine Word.

IYYAR - 26

The written character of Scripture is not what gives it holiness. Rather it is the infusion of Divine breath.

IYYAR - 27

The transmission of holiness through the Holy Word is not a static but a dynamic process which revitalizes those involved.

IYYAR - 28

The ethical commitment in holiness begins with the principle of *Imitatio Dei*, human imitation of G-d.

IYYAR - 29

The endeavor to create perfect holiness and wear down impurity on a daily basis is a lifelong pursuit.

IYYAR - 30

G-d is...intimately involved in the affairs of humanity...there is a personal quality to his holiness. It's focus is not power for power's sake but the empowerment and protection of [His] holy people.