

YHWH M'Kaddesh

יהוה קדוש

YHWH Who Sanctifies or Makes Holy

It may be argued that no other name more accurately expresses the **bounteous nature** and character of God and the requirements He places on His people than the name "YHWH M'Kaddesh"/"YHWH Qâdash".

Pronounced **Yä-wá' M-ka'dash** or **Yä-wá' Kaw'dash** the compound name is translated into English as "**YHWH who Sanctifies**" or "**YHWH who Makes Holy**".

Etymology

Many studies of this name limit their discussion to the three instances in which the specific compound name, "YHWH M'kaddesh", appears in Scripture; and they group other related Hebrew words under the one term—"m'kaddesh" or "m'keddeshem". However, since there are actually four related Hebrew words that derive from the same root verb, I found it helpful to my understanding of this most wonderful name to look more closely at all four words, both individually and collectively.

The four Hebrew words that derive from the same root verb, "*qâdash*" ("קִדַּשׁ"), are so closely similar in English that their differences are negligible only in Hebrew grammar:

- The verb form, "*m'kaddesh*" ("קִדַּשׁ"), means "**to be made clean**" and is used only in the name "YHWH M'kaddesh"—as in "**the LORD (YHWH) who Sanctifies (M'kaddesh).**" (Exodus 31:13)
- The verb, "*qadash*" (qâdash) ("קִדַּשׁ"), means "**to make**" as ceremonially or morally "**clean**" (pertaining to a person or persons) and is usually translated "**sanctify**", "**dedicate**", or "**consecrate**"—as in "**consecrate (qadash) yourselves.**" (Leviticus 11:44)
- The adjective, "*qadosh*" (qâdôsh) ("קִדְּוֹשׁ"), means "**holy**" or "**sacred**" by high status or superiority (pertaining to GOD, angels, a sanctuary)—as in "**the Holy (Qadosh) One of Israel.**" (Psalm 89:18)
- The adjective, "*qodesh*" (qôdesh) ("קִדְּשׁוֹת"), means "**consecrated**", "**dedicated**", or "**hallowed**" (pertaining to a thing or object)—as in "**they are holy (qodesh)**" or "**holy (qodesh) garments.**" (Ezekiel 42:14)

How often does "YHWH M'Kaddesh" appear in Scripture?

The compound name, "YHWH M'Kaddesh", appears only three times in the Old Testament.

"Say to the Israelites, 'You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD (YHWH), who makes you holy (M'kaddesh).'"
(Exodus 31:13 *parenthetical text added*)



"Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD (YHWH), who makes you holy (M'kaddesh)."
(Leviticus 20:8 *parenthetical text added*)

"Regard them as holy, because they offer up the food of your God (Elohim). Consider them holy (qadosh), because I the LORD (YHWH) am holy (qadosh)--I who make you holy (M'kaddesh)."
(Leviticus 21:8 *parenthetical text added*)

How are "qadash", "qadosh", or "qodesh" used in Scripture?

As you can see from the preceding verse, it is not unusual to find two or more of the other three related word forms in the same verse. Following is a list of verses using at least two of the other word forms. Although not specific to the name "YHWH M'Kaddesh", itself, this list reveals how serious YHWH is about having everything related to Him set apart from all other uses.

- Both "qodesh" and "qadash" are used 55 times in 22 verses, as in...

⁹ "Take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and everything in it; consecrate (qadash) it and all its furnishings, and it will be holy (qadosh).

¹⁰ "And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify (qadash) the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy (qadosh)."

(Exodus 40:10 KJV *parenthetical text added*)

See also Exodus 28:38, 29:33,37, 30:29, 40:13; Leviticus 22:2-3,16,32, 27:14; 1 Samuel 21:5; 2 Kings 12:18; 1 Chronicles 23:13, 26:26; 2 Chronicles 5:11, 29:5, 31:6, 18; Ezekiel 44:19; Haggai 2:12.

- Both "qadash" and "qadosh" are used 16 times in six verses, as in...

"I am the LORD (YHWH) your God (Elohim); consecrate (qadash) yourselves and be holy (qadosh), because I am holy (qadosh)."
(Leviticus 11:44a *parenthetical text added*)

See also Leviticus 6:27, 20:7, 21:8; Isaiah 5:16, 29:23.

- The adjectives "qodesh" and "qadosh" are both used 26 times in nine verses, as in...

Exalt the LORD (YHWH) our God (Elohim) and worship at his holy (qodesh) mountain, for the LORD (YHWH) our God (Elohim) is holy (qadosh).
(Psalm 99:9 *parenthetical text added*)

See also Leviticus 7:6, 21:6, 24:9; 2 Chronicles 35:3; Isaiah 58:13; Ezekiel 39:7, 42:13; Daniel 8:13.

In addition to the above, GOD's Word uses "qadosh" 74 times in 91 verses; "qadash" 100 times in 124 verses; and "qodesh" 389 times in 351 verses.

In other words, in addition to the name "YHWH M'Kaddesh", YHWH uses the terms meaning "holy" (set apart), "consecrated", "sacred", or "to make clean" **660 times** in 603 verses.



Obviously, being consecrated or set apart to YHWH's service alone is of the utmost importance to Him!

As Himself the Holy One, YHWH is *separate from and exalted above all else* in the universe.

Whatever seeming differences the various English words may suggest, the primary idea of separating or setting apart to our one true holy GOD is common to them all. The related word forms are used throughout Scripture to...

- set apart specific days for worship, rest, or celebration:

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy (qadash).

⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD (YHWH) your God (Elohim). On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.

¹¹ For in six days the LORD (YHWH) made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD (YHWH) blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (qadash)."
(Exodus 20:8-11 *parenthetical text added*)

"On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, hold a sacred (qodesh) assembly and do no regular work. Celebrate a festival to the LORD (YHWH) for seven days."
(Numbers 29:12 *parenthetical text added*)

See *also* Exodus 12:16, 31:15, 35:2; Numbers 28:18,25-26, 29:1,7,12; 1 Samuel 21:5; 1 Kings 8:8; Nehemiah 8:9-11; Isaiah 58:13.

- emphasize the difference between the "Holy One" of the Bible and the many detestable pagan deities:

"When they see among them their children, the work of my hands, they will keep my name holy (qadash); they will acknowledge the holiness (qadash) of the Holy One (qadosh) of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God (El) of Israel."
(Isaiah 29:23 *parenthetical text added*)

"I will show the holiness (qadash) of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD (YHWH), declares the Sovereign (Adonai) LORD (YHWH), when I am proved holy (qadash) through you before their eyes."
(Ezekiel 36:23 *parenthetical text added*)

See *also* Leviticus 22:2,32; 1 Kings 9:3,7; 2 Chronicles 7:16,20.

- dedicate certain articles for service to YHWH:

King David dedicated (qadash) these articles to the LORD (YHWH), as he had done with the silver and gold from all the nations he had subdued:
(2 Samuel 8:11 *parenthetical text added*)



"You shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is in it, and shall make it holy (qadash), and all its furniture: and it will be holy (qodesh)."
(Exodus 40:9 *parenthetical text added*)

See also Exodus 28:2 & 4; Zechariah 14:21.

- set apart individuals or even an entire nation:

"'you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy (qadosh) nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."
(Exodus 19:6 *parenthetical text added*)

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart (qadash); I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."
(Jeremiah 1:5 *parenthetical text added*)

See also Exodus 13:2, 28:36; Deuteronomy 7:6.

- designate a particular building or location as holy:

"Eat it in the sanctuary (qodesh) area, because it is your share and your sons' share of the food offerings presented to the LORD (YHWH); for so I have been commanded."
(Leviticus 10:13 *parenthetical text added*)

This is what the LORD (YHWH) says: "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty (Shaddai) will be called the Holy (qodesh) Mountain."
(Zechariah 8:3 *parenthetical text added*)

See also Exodus 25:8; Joel 3:17; Obadiah 1:17.

All of these instances refer to contact or interactions with the one true holy GOD. The Sabbath day was holy because YHWH rested in it; the mountain of the LORD and the sanctuary were holy because **YHWH dwelt there**; the people of YHWH were to be holy because **He** would **dwell among them** and they would represent Him to the rest of the world.

YHWH our GOD is above all else!

This was the first truth Israel learned about YHWH. As Himself the Holy One, YHWH is **separate from** and exalted **above all else** in the universe.

"Be holy because I, the LORD (YHWH) your God (Elohim), am holy (qadosh)."
(Leviticus 19:2b *parenthetical text added*)

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD (YHWH) our God (Elohim), the LORD (YHWH) is one."
(Deuteronomy 6:4 *parenthetical text added*)

Some opponents of Trinitarian theology use this verse as proof against that doctrine. Of course, such arguments show not only a lack of understanding of the unique unity and concert of the triune Godhead, but they also neglect the full context in which YHWH made this statement.



Regardless of how one feels about the Trinitarian doctrine, we know that YHWH cannot be resolved into various kinds of deity. Thus, in saying that "YHWH is one," YHWH was denying the validity of, and separating Himself from, identification with the other nations' polytheistic gods, such as Baalim. YHWH was, in fact, saying that He is the **one** and **only GOD** separate from and superior to all other gods.

You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD (YHWH) **is** God (Elohim); besides him there is **no other**.
(Deuteronomy 4:35 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

He is holy!

In Isaiah's vision of the LORD on His throne, he recorded that the seraphim—those splendid, gigantic "fiery ones" (possibly an allusion to their burning love for the Almighty)—cover their faces while proclaiming YHWH's holiness.

- ¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord (Adonai), high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple.
- ² Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they **covered their faces**, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.
- ³ And they were calling to one another: "**Holy** (qadosh), **holy** (qadosh), **holy** (qadosh) is the LORD (YHWH) Almighty; the whole earth is **full of his glory**."
- ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

(Isaiah 6:1-4 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

Do they cover their faces because YHWH's glory and holiness are too intense to behold? Or is it because, as Bible scholar Nathan Stone suggests, that in spite of their own blazing glory, they are so aware of their unworthiness that they don't want to desecrate One so holy even with their gaze? Recall what YHWH told Moses when he asked to see GOD.

"But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."
(Exodus 33:20)

The most fundamental, solemn, and impressive of all the attributes of YHWH is His holiness. It is this intrinsic attribute that makes Him **the** GOD! Apart from His holiness, He would cease to **be** GOD! As Nathan Stone quoted in *Names of God*:

"It is this holiness of which an old Scottish divine writes: 'It is the balance . . . of all the attributes of Deity. Power without holiness would degenerate into cruelty; omniscience without holiness would become craft; justice without holiness would degenerate into revenge; and goodness without holiness would be passionate and intemperate fondness doing mischief rather than accomplishing good.' It is this holiness which gives to God grandeur and majesty, and more than anything else constitutes His fullness and perfection."¹

YHWH our GOD is holy! All the Law and the miraculous events that followed on Mt. Sinai and in the wilderness were intended to indelibly impress upon Israel the truth of the holiness of their God. It is this holiness of which YHWH is so jealous.



Do not worship any other god (el), for the LORD (YHWH),
whose name is Jealous (Kanno), is a jealous God (El).
(Exodus 34:14 *parenthetical text added*)

YHWH's holiness is so pure . . . so intense . . . so overpowering . . . so incomprehensible . . . that it cannot be compared with any other gods. What comparison is there between the period at the end of a sentence and our galaxy with its thousands of solar systems? Or, how would you compare a microscopic mite with an albatross or the condor?

Ludicrous? Yes. And that is the very point that Scripture is trying to make. Just as the mite is, in fact, totally insignificant when considering the albatross' power and might, no other "god" can even **approach** the brilliance and holiness of YHWH. **That's** why He cannot abide our worship of, or service to, other "gods".

- 3 "You shall have no other gods (elohim) before me.
- 4 You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.
- 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD (YHWH) your God (Elohim), am a jealous God (El),"
(Exodus 20:3-5a *parenthetical text added*)

Ascribe to the LORD (YHWH) the glory due his name;
worship the LORD (YHWH) in the splendor of his holiness (qodesh).
(Psalm 29:2 *parenthetical text added*)

Of course, your "god" doesn't have to be an actual god such as Krishna, Shiva, Brahma, Gaia, Buddha, Baal, etc. A "god" can be anything or anyone you desire more than you desire YHWH. It can be money, material possessions, alcohol or tobacco, your iPod or computer games, another person, sex, and so on. Slowly but surely, our false gods are a love affair with destruction—not because they're necessarily "bad" in and of themselves (such as another person or even a ministry), but because they draw us away from the **only** One who **is** "good" and true.

I say to the LORD (YHWH), "You are my Lord (Adonai);
apart from you I have **no good** thing."
(Psalm 16:2 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;
according to your love remember me, for **you, LORD (YHWH), are good**.
(Psalm 25:7 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

Unfortunately, left to our own devices, we can never achieve the holiness required by YHWH. It is impossible for us to keep YHWH's Law and to overcome the desires of our carnal nature.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
(Romans 3:23)

Thankfully, we are not left to our own devices, but YHWH assures that He will transform us and sanctify us unto Himself — **if** we are willing.

"that you may know that I am the LORD (YHWH)
who sanctifies (m'kaddesh) you."
(Exodus 31:13 *parenthetical text added*)



YHWH wishes to impart the glory and beauty of His holiness to us.

YHWH is the **one true GOD**, set apart and superior to all others who would call themselves "gods". He is the self-existent, eternal, all-powerful **I AM**. He is our **Mighty El**, our Creator, Supreme Authority, and Master **Adonai**; He is the Mighty GOD of the Mountains, **El Shaddai**; He is the Highest GOD of gods, **El Elyon**!

We discussed previously how jealous YHWH is for how those of us in whom He has placed His name live our lives and represent His name before a watching world. As it's an anthropological fact that people inevitably become like the god(s) they serve, it follows, then, that the one **true holy GOD** would require His people to also be holy. As Nathan Stone wrote:

"A God separate from all that is evil, too pure to behold evil, the very anti-thesis of all evil, requires that the people He chooses be also separate from all evil and separated to the purpose for which He chose them."²

"Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: '**Be holy** (qadosh) because I, the LORD (YHWH) your God (Elohim), am holy (qadosh).'"
(Leviticus 19:2 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

Meditation

No doubt, you've heard the phrase "holier than thou." It's usually meant in a disparaging manner about people who think—or who appear to think—they're better than others.

However, it's important to understand that, from a human perspective, "holiness" does not mean "good" or "perfection". The word "holy" means "to be separate" or "set apart". Sanctification is the **separation** of an object, place, or person to the dedication of the **one true GOD**.

As Christians, we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ. This means we are declared righteous before our holy GOD. He no longer sees our sin, but He sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which has been imputed (applied) to us.

This **righteousness** is given through faith in **Jesus Christ** to all who believe.
(Romans 3:22 *emphasis added*)

For we maintain that a man is **justified by faith** apart from works of the Law.
(Romans 3:28 *emphasis added*)

Christ is the culmination of the law so that
there may be **righteousness** for **everyone who believes**.
(Romans 10:4 *emphasis added*)

However, justification is not sanctification. Justification liberates us from the **quilt** and **penalty** of sin. Sanctification, on the other hand, is YHWH's most wonderful work in us that releases us from the **power** of sin.



From the point of conversion and on, sanctification is a lifelong process, the full reality of which will finally be realized when we stand with all the Saints in His holy Presence. As one pastor explained, at the moment of conversion, we receive **positional** sanctification. It is not dependent on our spiritual **condition**, but on our spiritual **position** in Christ.

The Holy Spirit then begins the process of **progressive** spiritual and actual sanctification as we put off our old sinful nature and become more like Christ and His nature of righteousness.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the **new** creation has come: The old has gone, the **new is here!**
(2 Corinthians 5:17 *emphasis added*)

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
(Galatians 2:20)

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have **crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires.
(Galatians 5:24 *emphasis added*)

- 1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, **set your hearts on things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.
- 3 For you died, and **your life** is now **hidden with Christ** in God.
- 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
- 5 **Put to death**, therefore, whatever belongs to your **earthly nature**: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.
- 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.
- 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.
- 8 But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.
- 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices
- 10 and have **put on the new** self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.
(Colossians 3:1-10 *emphasis added*)

Thus, the term "sanctified" or "set apart" means more than just position or relationship in regard to YHWH. It means **participation** in the divine nature of YHWH: His holiness, justice, omniscience, goodness, compassion, righteousness, majesty, fullness, and perfection.

How wonderfully exciting that this one true holy GOD doesn't leave us struggling in our own strength, trying to achieve a state of holiness that's impossible to

attain. **No!** He is **YHWH M'Kaddesh**, "The GOD Who **Makes** Holy". What we cannot do on our own, He is willing and eager to do in us—if we **let** Him.

Oh, most holy GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I pray that we would humble ourselves and allow You to **be** YHWH M'Kaddesh in us so that our lives might bring glory and honor to Your most glorious name!

¹ Stone, Nathan, Names of God. Chicago: Moody Press, 1944, 2010. p. 121.

² Ibid. p. 127.



