

Hallowed Be Thy Name: The Lord's Prayer—part 2 of 6

Matthew 6:9-13 King James Version (KJV)

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, **Hallowed be thy name.**

10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Introduction

The Lord's Prayer is the finest example of prayer to say. It includes only the words we need to say in prayer. It is so, because the Lord our God does not waste His words. Concerning the words He speaks, the Lord Himself declares, "*For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, " So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it* (NKJV, Isaiah 55:10-11). He means what He says, and says what He means. Likewise, Jesus teaches us to say a right prayer that will not return to us void but achieve in the thing for which we send it.

Throughout the Lenten season, we will examine the choice words that Jesus has put in the Lord's Prayer. We will learn about the intent of His words; why He wants us to say certain words in the Lord's prayer. Once we understand the meaning behind the words we say, we can pray more effectively.

Recap: God in Heaven is our Father. He is not a God who is cold, stern or stays aloof from His children. He is our loving and caring Father in Heaven. We also learned that prayer is not a religion. Rather, it is a relationship. It is not a chore to do but a privilege to cherish. Each time we pray to God, His ears are attentive to our prayer. He loves to answer our prayers too.

Today I am doing part 2 of 6 on the Lord's Prayer—*Hallowed Be Thy Name*. It means, *Let God's Name be holy*. God's Name is to be revered and respected by all people: both in the Church and outside the Church. Let's take a fresh look at the Name of the LORD.

Content

There are at least 18 different names to God in the Scriptures (e.g., *I AM, El Shaddai, the everlasting God, Rock, Jealous, Peace, the Lord of hosts*, to name a few).

You may ask what's the big deal with God's name. Everything. His name means everything in our relationship with God. It means everything in our prayer life. The way we treat His name brings forth either blessings or troubles. Let's dig a little deeper.

A. What Does His Name Mean to God Himself?

Here's the truth: among all the names in heaven and on the earth, God cares about His own name the most. How seriously does He care about His name? Most jealously. Most fiercely. *I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images (Isaiah 42:8). For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another (Isaiah 48:11).* He doesn't share His glory with any other gods. Nor His praise from His people with graven images. Why does He care so much about His name? Because He is the King of heaven and the earth. Because He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Never trifle with His name. Rather, fear and honor His name. He protects His name so fiercely that He gets jealous when any other name gets in between Him and His people. He said to His people: *be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth (Exodus 23:13, Psalm 16:4).* He will be jealous for His holy name (Ezekiel 39:25). He is indeed a jealous God.

Please understand that God's jealousy is **only for His holy name**, not for trivial things. He doesn't get jealous when you watch football on TV with friends or bask in the sun. However, He gets jealous when your heart turns to other gods. His jealousy is the love jealousy like the one between two lovers: God and His people. Did you know that God calls Himself the husband and Israel His wife (Jeremiah 31:32)? When His people give their hearts to idols, God's heart burns with jealousy like a husband whose heart is burning when he sees his wife flirting with other man. Listen. The **only time God gets jealous** is when we go after other gods. *They [the Israelites] made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger (Deuteronomy 32:16).* By the way, nine out of 10 times in the Old Testament when the Lord was provoked to anger, it was caused by His people's idolatry.

Did you hear? When we follow other gods, we profane His name. When we worship them, we provoke Him to anger and defile His name. Stay away from idols.

B. What Does His Name Mean to Us His Children?

First, His name is **the desire of our souls** (Isaiah 26:8). Next, His name is also **the key to the answered prayers**. Jesus says, "If you ask Me anything **in My name**, I will do it (John 14:14)." Thirdly, His name is our **refuge and shelter** in times of trouble. The Lord God says to His people Israel, *[A Remnant of Israel] they will take refuge in the name of the Lord (Zephaniah 3:12).*

His name is our SOS call. His name is our spiritual 911. When the Lord hears His name in our prayer, He pays immediate attention and delivers us from our troubles (Joel 2:32, Acts 2:21). As the dispatcher of 911 immediately responds to our stress call, so will our Heavenly Father to our cries. *I called on Your name, O Lord, Jeremiah cried, out of the lowest pit (Lamentations 3:55).* Are you in the pit now? Call on His name, and He will answer.

There are **two sure-fire prayer blockers**: Remember, I said that His name has everything to do with our prayer life. Beware of two things that block our prayers: Idol worship and taking His Name in vain. Why do they block our prayers? Because they both provoke God to anger. So, here's the action plan.

a. Remove idols from your life: One day Prophet Ezekiel in the Old Testament had a vision in which he saw the glory of the LORD returning to the Temple of God in Jerusalem. The same glory of the LORD had departed from the temple due to the sins of Israel in the past (Ezekiel 10:18). The LORD God explained to Ezekiel why He had left His Temple and the condition for His return: *... they [Israel] have defiled My holy name by their abominations which they have committed. So, I have consumed them in My anger.⁹ Now let them remove their prostitution and the corpses of their kings far from Me and I will dwell among them forever (Ezekiel 43:8-9)."*

Let's talk about idols in God's Temple. We too have idols inside the Church today. Not molten images or statues but idols with no physical forms such as self-love, self-righteousness, humanism (meaning people first before God), new age teaching, false cults, and even sexual immorality. E.g., Some years ago, my former church stopped a new age group from renting our space, because one night we discovered that they were chanting to Buddha statue in our church parlor. My heart dropped that night! Here's God's promise. On the day when we remove our idols and spiritual prostitution in His Church, the glory of the LORD will return to us and stay with us.

What about idols in our heart? The Bible says that our body is the Temple of God where He dwells through His Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). By allowing worries, the love of money, fears, pride, hate, lust, and ungodly desires to stay in our hearts, we are setting them up right next to the Temple of God in our heart. It's time to get rid of them. On the day when we remove them all from our hearts, the glory of the LORD will return to our heart and stay with us.

Please understand what idol worship does to you. First, it will take you farther away from your God as you pledge your loyalty to the idols. You set up their statues right next to God's temple in your heart, which is an abomination to God. That makes the glory of the LORD depart from you. It takes your eyes away from the LORD and fixes them unto the idols. It also makes you forget the name of the LORD. E.g., King Solomon started right with the LORD.

When he prayed at the dedication ceremony of the Temple in Jerusalem, “*fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house*” (2 Chronicles 7:1). However, years later, when he acquired 700 wives and 300 concubines, they turned his heart away from the LORD to follow other gods (1 Kings 11:3-4).

Remove idols from your heart today. You cannot serve the LORD and idols at the same time. Separate the holy from the profane.

b. Take His name seriously: The third Commandment of the Ten Commandments says, *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain* (Exodus 20:7, Deuteronomy 5:11). Further the LORD declares, *You shall not swear falsely by My name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the Lord* (Leviticus 19:12). This is why Jesus commands us not to swear at all. When you swear, you use the name of the LORD in vain, therefore, you end up profaning the name of your God and God will hold you accountable. Train your heart and lips to fear His name (Psalm 86:11, 2 Peter 2:14, Hebrews 5:14). Do not swear. Take His name seriously.

Conclusion

When you say, *Hallowed be thy name*, in the Lord’s Prayer, say it with reverence. Promise to God that you will treat and revere His holy name. Let God’s name be hallowed in your heart and on your lips. Let others see that as well. Let us pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to keep Your name holy. Let the words of our mouth and meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight. Let our mouth never utter anything that defiles Your name. Help us to remove from our heart the idols and anything that is displeasing to You. Amen.

Summary

The Lord's Prayer is the finest example of prayer for us to say. Hallowed by Thy name---God's Name is to be revered and taken seriously by all people: both in the Church and outside the Church.