

“HALLOWED BE THY NAME”

Lincoln Park Baptist Church, West Newton, Massachusetts
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Introduction:

For us a person's name has no special significance. It is merely a device to distinguish one person from another. It was not so in Biblical times. Both in the O.T. and in the N.T., the meaning of names plays an important role in the theological perspective of both testaments.

I. In the N.T. the term “name” is frequently used in the ordinary sense, merely as a means of distinguishing one person or thing from another.

- (1) Jesus says that a shepherd “*calls his own sheep by name*” (John 10:3).
- (2) The writer of III John asks the recipient to greet the friends by name.
- (3) The names of the Christians are written in the book of life (Phil. 4). Paul says, “*I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. And I ask you also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are written in the book of life.*”

Rev. 3:5 – “*He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.*”

- (4) We have many examples of personal proper names: ex. Names of the 12 apostles. This usage of names to designate things or persons is just what we do.

II. But the name applies very often to the essence of personality.

A. In the O.T., Jacob the supplanter – Israel the Prince of God.

- (1) Jacob called supplanter for taking Esau's birthright and also for taking away his blessing. (Gen. 27:35) When Esau cries to his father, “*Bless me, even me also, O my father!*” Isaac said: “*Your brother came with guile and he has taken away your blessing.*” Esau said: “*Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright; and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.*”
- (2) When Jacob changes in character, his name is changed. When he was ready to abandon his past life, his name became Israel – He who strives with God and prevails. A change in character involves a change in name. This happens on the mission field.

B. In the N.T. the usage of names is linked very closely with the personality and function of an individual.

(1) John the Baptist

(2) The case of Jesus. Joseph is charged by the angel to call the son whom Mary shall bear “Jesus” – Greek form of Joshua = Deliverer, Savior. *“For he will save his people from their sins.”* Matthew sees in this the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy concerning the birth of a child called Emmanuel, which means “God with us.”

III. The Name also means reputation.

(1) Herod heard of the miracles of Jesus, for Jesus’ name had become known.

(2) The disciples are warned that because of their association with Jesus, they will lose their reputation: men will cast their name as evil.

(3) Because of his humility and obedience unto death, Christ has been given a very special name: *“God has exalted him and bestowed upon him the name which is above every name.”*

(4) The church of Sardis has a very bad reputation: *“You have the name of being alive, but you are dead.”*

IV. The Name of God and revelation. What do we mean when we speak of the name of God? The Name of God means primarily his revealed nature and character.

A. The name of God is God Himself. The Jewish people in N.T. times used the term “name” as a substitute for “God”. This is a circumlocution, as is the expression “Kingdom of Heaven” for “Kingdom of God”.

B. The name of God is an object of fear – Deut. 28:58 – *“If you are not careful to do all the words of this covenant which are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awful name, the Lord your God, then the Lord will bring upon you and your offspring extraordinary affliction.”*

C. Object of thanks, because of his actions. I Chron. 16:35 – *“Deliver us, O God of our salvation, and gather and save us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!”*

D. Object of praise, because of his acts. I Sam. 12:50 – *“For this I will extol thee, O Lord, among the nations, and sing praises to thy name. He gives triumphs to the king and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his descendants forever.”*

Psalm 7:17 – *“I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praises to the name of the Lord, the Most High, because he is my refuge. He saved me from my pursuers.”*

E. Really to know the name of God is to know himself as revealed. Ps. 9:9-10 – *“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in time of trouble. And those who know thy name put their trust in thee, for thou, O Lord, hast not forsaken those who seek thee.”*

F. Jesus is the one who reveals the name of the Father – his will and purposes – to the fullest. *“I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me.”* Christ is God’s chosen vessel to present God’s mind and purpose.

Conclusion:

- (1) Prayer in the name of Jesus is prayer in the character, spirit and attitude of Jesus.
- (2) When we say “Hallowed be thy name”, we mean “as thou, O Lord, hast revealed thyself in Jesus Christ, thy Son.
- (3) You cannot really say “Hallowd be thy name” is you have not really experienced God as Lord, Savior and Protector.
- (4) Our baptism is the confessoin that we belong to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”
- (5) There is a dimension of God that remains hidden and mysterious.

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