

"The Lord's Prayer. 'Hallowed Be Thy Name'"

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"HALLOWED BE THY NAME"

Notice that the very first petition, the first sentence in the Lord's prayer, which He has given to "teach us to pray," is not for something for ourselves, or bringing our own needs before Him. It is a praise petition, a request that the Father's own name may be hallowed,—held holy or sacred.

You may think that this petition is one that does not make any difference to you personally. But the truth is, as we shall see, that this one really affects you more than any of the others. For the name of the Lord, which we pray may be hallowed, is simply the declaration of what God Himself is; it shows us His character.

And all that we are or hope to be, all that we have or ever shall have, depends upon what God is; for everything comes from Him. So we are told to "give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness." "Holy" means whole, perfect, pure, beautiful.

As we come to God in prayer, the words "Our Father" assure us of His tender love; "which art in heaven" tell us of His power, and of the joy and peace that we find in His presence; and as we pray, "Hallowed be Thy name," we think upon His perfect, pure, lovely character, and we "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

Moses once asked the Lord to tell him what His name was, and the Lord answered him: "I AM THAT I AM." He meant that His name is that which He Himself is. So you can take the words "I AM," and fill out the sentence with all that His Word tells us that He is. He Himself afterwards did this for Moses, for He "passed by before him," and "proclaimed the name of the Lord:" "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin."

Knowing the name of the Lord, His love, His mercy, and His grace, His perfect and holy character, we know that "His way is perfect," and all that He does is just and right. So we can safely trust in Him, and "let Him do what seemeth Him good."

"In Thee I place my trust;
On Thee I calmly rest;
I know Thee good, I know Thee just,
And count Thy choice the best."

Since God is our Father, we are heirs of all that He is, and all that He has; for His Word says, "If children, then, if so we may inherit His pure and holy character, and this will give us His name also, for that is the description of His character."

All those who are taken when Jesus comes to live with Him for ever in the Father's house, have "the Father's name written in their foreheads." This means that they share in His Divine nature, and so are just like Him in character. Is it not then a very wonderful and precious thing that we should be called by His name? In giving us His name, He gives us His nature, so that we may be "perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect," and so may have the family likeness which proves us to be His children. There is power in His name to make us holy, whole, perfect. Do you remember what Peter said about the lame man who was healed at the gate of the temple? When he was asked by what power, or by what name, the great miracle had been done, he said it was by the name of Jesus of Nazareth: "His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, . . . and given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." There is power in His precious name to make us perfect and strong in soul and body, when we take it by faith, as the lame man did.

But suppose that we should take His name, and not become like Him in character, what should we then be doing? Recall the third commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Is not this what those are doing, who take His name, but do not know its power to make them like Him?

The Lord said of His people, the Jews, that by their sinful ways they caused His holy name, by which they caused His holy name, to be blasphemed and profaned wherever they went. They were taking His name in vain, and causing the people among whom they were scattered because of their sin, to think that there was no saving power in Him.

This third commandment is a precious promise given to us by our Heavenly Father, to save us from dishonouring Him in this way. It is a promise that if we will take His holy name upon us in faith, believing in His power to save us from our sins, it shall not be in vain, for He will lead us "in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."