

# The Name that is Above Every Name

Անուն մը Որ Ամէն Անունէ Վեր Է

Exodus 3: 14-15

Our family is full of people with the name Sarkis. The story is our Great grandfather had a child who was born on St. Sarkis day. They did not call him Sarkis, and the child passed away. So, the custom was that the firstborn son should be called Sarkis. My grandfather was Sarkis, my father was Sarkis, my first brother who just passed away was called Sarkis. Happened to be my sister married Sarkis, and my aunt married Sarkis. Can you imagine what will happen in our home when we celebrated St. Sarkis Day. I broke the rule and my brother Rafi. There is something wonderful in naming our kids. Sevan and I named our kids based on our experiences with God. Maybe you have similar stories to tell us. Why are you named Joe, Jack, Nancy, Sirnaoush, Hayganoush,...

In the Bible, names have meaningful purposes, too. Names presented the person's character. Jacob, the deceiver, the one who grabbed the foot; Samuel, God heard; Elijah, God is Yahweh; Joshua, Yahweh is my salvation...

How about God. No one named God, right?

God's true name is chosen and revealed by God himself. We do not tell God who he is; he tells us. God has his own naming rights, and this is a sign of his sovereign authority. God's name comes before all other names."<sup>1</sup>

## -What is the Third Commandment or Word?

**I am the LORD (Yahweh) your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.**

**"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. (Exodus 20:1,7 ESV)**

If the First Word or Commandment told us to worship the right and true God, the second Word or Commandment **tells us to worship the right God in a RIGHT WAY, a TRUE WAY.**

If the First Word or Commandment warns us not of to have a **false god**, the second warns not to have false **images** of God, **and third one warns us not to be careless about words about God.**

Kevin DeYoung adds: “We are forbidden from taking the name of God (or *taking up* the name or *bearing* the name, as the phrase could be translated) in a manner that is wicked, worthless, or for wrong purposes.”<sup>2</sup>

## -What’s in a Name?

When we meet to new person, we give our names first. It is our identity.

When Moses had an encounter with God at the burning bush, he wanted to know God’s name.

**13 Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?”**

**14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” 15 God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.**

(Exodus 3:13-15 ESV)

What is his name?

I AM; He IS; God is ALIVE

Literally God’s name means, “I am who I am” or “I will be who I will be.” It speaks of God’s self-existence, self-sufficiency, and supreme sovereignty.<sup>3</sup>

His supreme name is **Yahweh**, which means **Lord God**. This is God’s identity.

Let us remember the first statement of the Ten Words:

**I am the LORD (Yahweh) your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.**

As you see, when you repeat who God is, his name, it reminds who God is, his identity, the ONE who loves you, the ONE who rescues you, the ONE who delivers you...

-In Exodus 33, Moses wants assurance from God to be with him when he goes and sees his people. God is saying to Moses: **My presence will go with you** (33:14)

Moses asks God to show His glory.

In response, God says:

**Moses said, “Please show me your glory.” 19 And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The LORD.’ (Yahweh.) (Exodus 33:18,19 ESV)**

There is something powerful in God’s name.

-No wonder David in his psalms glorified God's name:

**O LORD, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

**You have set your glory above the heavens.** (Psalm 8:1 ESV)

David is worshiping God, praising his name. But it is more than a name. He is describing who God is, **the glory of God**, the Creator above the heavens...

This is the story of Exodus; God is saving his people for His glory.

-In Psalm 106 we read:

**Yet he saved them for his name's sake,  
that he might make known his mighty power.** (Psalm 106:11 ESV)

**God saved his people to honor his name.**

So, when the Israelites were rescued from Egypt, and now they were in the desert, they should have learned that **God's name was more than a name.**

Today we too should not forget this fact.

### **-How do we misuse His name?**

ESV translates: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God **in vain**"

NIV translates: "You shall not **misuse** the name of the LORD your God"

How do we do this?

How do we misuse God's name, or it use in vain?

According to the Dutch scholar Jochem Douma <sup>4</sup>

1. False prophecies in the OT. They said: "thus says the Lord"; it was not from the Lord.

**And the LORD said to me: "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds.** (Jeremiah 14:14 ESV)

2. Swearing False Oaths.

**You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.** (Lev 19:12 ESV)

It drives me crazy when we make false oaths. Where is our integrity?

We can learn from God to keep our promises.

J.I. Packer says:

"The Bible takes promises very seriously; God demands full faithfulness of our vows. Why? Partly because trustworthiness is part of his image, which he wants to see in us; partly because without it society falls apart."<sup>5</sup>

Let our words be truthful in all speech.

Jesus added saying:

**But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God...<sup>7</sup> Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.** (Matthew 5: 33-37 ESV)

"I swear to God, I did not do this...." "Աստուծոյ լիկայ" In Aleppo, people swore a lot. My parents advised me not to do it. "Let your yes be yes and you no, no." In fact, whoever swears a lot meant they are not telling the truth.

3. We misuse God's name by giving false attribution.

Jen Wilkin uses the word **misattribution**.

-We have certain personal plans, and we need God to endorse them. We use the name of God to justify them.

In the name of Jesus, we do so many unbiblical things, in fact, many evil things.

"The sin of misattribution is the perfect smokescreen, presenting a piety and humility while making pride and hypocrisy."<sup>6</sup>

-For example, in the Middle East, people wanted to migrate to the USA, or Europe. People lied to the embassies when they applied for visas, knowing that they will not return to their cities. They said they are going for tourism. They were not telling the truth. They did it in the name of the Lord.

-People tell you that God told them to do this or that.

I believe God can lead us from His Word but watch out about statements like this in using God's name in vain.

-We blame God for the bad decisions we make. When are we going to learn to take responsibility for our actions?

**4. We misuse God's name when we say things about God, like about his moral code, but we do the exact opposite in our lives.** Jesus was furious about hypocrisy.

You may attend church service, you may be in the leadership of the church, you may serve others, yet your heart could be at the wrong place with God. You don't read his Word, you don't confess your sins, your real life is contrary to the biblical beliefs. Lip service? "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and not do what I tell you."

Luke 6:46

**-Name above all Names**

Is there a place we can use God's name?

Yes, we can use God's name, to honor him, worship him, exalt him, pray in his name.

God wants us to use his name. Many places God revealed his name, different names?

**JEHOVAH JIREH (THE LORD WILL PROVIDE) Gen 22:14**

**JEHOVAH SABAOTH (THE LORD OF HOSTS) 1 Sam 1:3**

**JEHOVAH NISSI (THE LORD MY BANNER) Exd 17:15**

**EL OLAM (THE EVERLASTING GOD) Gen 21:33**

**EL SHADDAI (LORD GOD ALMIGHTY) Gen 17:1**

Almost 7000 times we see God's name addressed in the Bible, why? God loves us and wants us to address him personally. Calling him by name shows an intimate relationship.

John Calvin says:

"...We should be zealous and careful to honor his name with godly reference. Therefore, we ought to be so disposed in mind and speech that we neither think nor say anything concerning God and his mysteries, without reference and much soberness; that in estimating his works we conceive nothing but what is honorable to him."<sup>7</sup>

I want to use God's name properly.

We can praise Him, honor him, bless him, lift his name high;

In the Lord's prayer we say, "**Hallowed be thy name...**"

"Let your name be set apart for worship, for sacred things..."

God's name is HOLY.

How can I worship without His NAME.

How can I?

**"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name."** (Psalm 29:2a)

**"Sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise."** (Psalm 66:2)

**"Blessed be his glorious name forever."** (Psalm 72:19a)

**"Bless the Lord, all my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."** (Psalm 103:1)

**"Call on the name of the Lord."** (Genesis 4:26)

**"In the name of the Lord."** (Deuteronomy 18:19)

**"Trust in the name of the Lord."** (Isaiah 50:10)

How about Paul asking us that whatever we do, let us do it in the name of Jesus?

**And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.** (Col 3:17 ESV)

God wants us to use His name in reverence and humility and adoration.

We baptize in the name of the triune God: God the Father, and the Son and the Spirit.

We were washed and sanctified by the **name of the Lord Jesus Christ**. Paul says:

**But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.** (1 Corinthians 6:11 ESV)

**Application:**

One application: watch out how you talk and use words about God or anything else in your ordinary life.

Are you honoring our Lord Jesus Christ both in deeds and words?

Today we will have communion. Why?

Is it because it is the first Sunday?

Is it because it is habit?

Who prepared this Table?

Let me read to you Philippians 2 about Jesus Christ, the son of God, name above all names:

but (Christ) emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him **the name that is above every name,** <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

.....

1. Philip Graham Ryken, *Written in the Stone*, p 85
2. Kevin DeYoung, *The 10 Commandments*, P 53
3. Philip Graham Ryken, *Written in the Stone*, p 86
4. *ibid* p 88
5. J.I. Packer, *Keeping the 10 Commandments*, p 60
6. Jen Wilkin, *Ten Words to Live By*, p 52
7. Calvin, *Institutes of Christian religion*, from Philip Graham Ryken *Written in the Stone* P 91