

YOUR NAME IS HOLY

USING THE NAME OF THE LORD IN PRAYER AND WORSHIP



Last week we looked at how the world uses the name of God and how He warns mankind against using His Name in vain. This is not a modern-day concept but stems from the Old Testament. As Israel were journeying through the wilderness, God prepared them in every possible way for their destination. When you read from Exodus 20 onwards for about four chapters, you may feel that it is a waste of time. Surely those rules do not apply to us today? We need to look at it in the context of what Israel would come across once they entered the Promised Land. Spiritual preparedness counted as much, if not more, than physical preparation. He specifically wanted His people to remember what He had done for them, and they had to honour Him:

⁷Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. – **Exodus 20:7**

Today, believers are required to be different. The apostle Peter explained it like this:

⁹But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: ¹⁰Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. – **1 Peter 2:9-10**

Indeed, we are a **chosen generation**, not because of favouritism on the part of God, an excuse that unbelievers often want to use, but because we responded positively to God's call to be saved. We are also a **royal priesthood** – we are as priests in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ – and are called to be a **holy nation**. All of this is so that we can be an example of being taken out of darkness (unbelief, spiritually dead, without mercy) into His light (we are believers, spiritually alive, ones who have mercy bestowed on us).

The quoted text describes believers as “**peculiar**” **people** which today does not carry the meaning it seems to have in the text. It does not mean Christians are *weird*, but rather that we belong exclusively to God. When I worked in West Africa, I once saw the following on a car's bumper sticker: *Eu sou propriedade exclusiva de Jesus Cristo* (Portuguese). How I wished at the time I could get out of my car, go over to the driver, and commend him for taking a public stand that he is the exclusive property of Jesus Christ and belongs to no one else. We absolutely should not conform to the world. Peter addresses this by telling his readers that:

³For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: ⁴Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you. – **1 Peter 4:3-4**

The world does not understand that the Christian believer may once have walked in darkness, doing what the world does. Now that we have been saved, we do not follow them in their wrongs anymore. Their response is to gossip about you, ridicule you and speak evil of you.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. – John 3:16

This is to be expected and simply shows how darkness and light do not, cannot, and never will, share common ground.

Here are some more names God uses in his Word of himself. You are encouraged to use this in your own prayer and worship time.

Jehovah Nissi, The Lord your Banner

¹⁵And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi: ¹⁶For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. – **Exodus 17:15**

Life application: Armies going to war have banners at the front line. Is He your banner, the One who walks ahead of you and victoriously fights your wars for you?

Jehovah Cela', The Lord is my Rock

¹And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:
²And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; ³The God of my rock; in him will I trust: – **2 Samuel 22:2**

Life application: Is He really the Rock you build your life on and trust in? Note what David says: The Lord is his rock (foundation), fortress (safe hiding place), and deliverer (protection). Note how foundation, fortress and deliverer depend on one another.

Jehovah Tiqvah, The Lord is my Hope

⁵For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth. – **Psalms 71:5**

Life application: We have learnt that faith is what we hope for, the proof of what we have not yet seen (Hebrews 11:1). Is He your only hope today?

Jehovah Melek, The Lord is my King

³Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God. – **Psalms 84:3**

Life application: Is the Lord alone your King, or are there others you will rather obey?

CONCLUSION

These are just a few examples, and enough for this week's lesson. In the coming week, reflect on how God is your **banner**, **rock**, **hope**, and **king**. Next week we will continue with more names, their meaning, and how you can apply them in your life of prayer and worship. Think of the following so long: He is Immanuel (He is with us), Shamar (keeper), Qadosh (holy), Tsur (strength), Nachah (guide), Natsal (deliverer). Which of these names have you heard in the past, but did not know what they mean?