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Beverly E.C.C., Chicago, IL

“HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME”

Matthew 6:9

□ **“Hallowed be your name”** (Matthew 6:9).

📖 To **“hallow”** something is to treat it as holy, consecrated, and sacred. When we say, **“Hallowed be your name”** we are asking for God’s Name to be held in the highest regard: {GNB} **“May your holy name be honored”**; {NCV} **“We pray that your name will always be kept holy”**; {CEV} **“Help us to honor your name.”**

This is relatively easy to understand. It does not *seem* that difficult to do.

{Mt 6:9} **“Our Father in heaven,”** {Lk 18:11} **“I thank you that I am not like other people – ”** who dirty your holy Name by linking it to an unholy expletive, or who use your Son’s beautiful Name as an ugly curse word.

Ta-da! Insofar as I can remember / have never done that, not *once* in my forty-four years!

But wait. Should I be so confident of my own virtue? There are other ways of taking your Name in vain.

👉 In Leviticus 19:12 you warn, **“Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane [my] name.”** My Grandfather habitually said, “By God, I am going to whatever.” Every time he did not fulfill his promise, he profaned your Name. Have I ever done that?

👉 In Deuteronomy 18:20 you condemn those **“who [presume] to speak in [your] name anything [you] have not commanded.”** I have heard Christians claim, “The

Lord spoke to me” – even as their message flat-out contradicted Scripture. Have I ever done that?

👉 In Jeremiah 29:21 you judge all who arrogantly **“[prophecy] lies in [your] name.”** Some preachers have willfully misrepresented the Word – often for personal gain, but sometimes in a misguided effort to promote the Gospel. Have I ever done that?

☆ The ancient Israelites so honored your personal name (at least formally) that they prohibited anyone from pronouncing it aloud. When writing your name they omitted the vowels and abbreviated it to *Y-H-W-H*, as a reminder to keep it holy. Even now, some Jews write *G-d* as an act of respect.

→ These rules are not binding on *us*. With Christ Jesus the Son as our mediator you and I are free to {Heb 4:16} **“approach” “Our Father in heaven” “with confidence.”** We are allowed to speak his Name.

☆ Nevertheless, the Fourth Commandment still applies: {Ex 20:7} **“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.”**

◇ A pair of simple questions has helped to {Ps 141:3} **“Set a guard over my mouth”** as I use God’s Name: Am I speaking directly to God in prayer? And, Am I speaking intentionally about God with praise or gratitude? If the answer to both is “No”, I had better keep my mouth shut.

“Hallowed be your name.” “May your holy name be honored” and **“always... kept holy.”**

☆ But there is more to it, isn't there Lord? Your Name is not merely a means of identification; it is also a revelation of identity. Scripture often uses your Name as a stand-in for your person.

📖 So when we say, "**Hallowed be your name**" we are asking that you be held in the highest regard: "**May [you] be honored**"; "**We pray that [you] will always be**" revered; "**Help us to honor [you].**"

O LORD, *do I always give you the veneration you deserve?* Do you ever see me as one of those people who {Is 29:13} "**honor [you] with their lips, but [whose] hearts are far from [you]**"?

⚙ The Scriptures say that hypocrites {Mal 1:6-14} "**show contempt for [your] name**" by going through the motions of worship. Help me to worship {Jn 4:24} "**in the Spirit and in truth**," bringing to you my best adoration, praise, confession, thanksgiving, supplication, and surrender, to the glory of God!

⚙ The Scriptures say that hypocrites fail to {Mal 2:5-8} "[stand] **in awe of [your] name**" by neglecting your revealed truth. Put "**true instruction in my mouth.**" Help me to correctly interpret, faithfully learn, clearly teach, and obediently apply your Word, to the glory of God!

⚙ The Scriptures say that hypocrites profane your Name by {Mal 2:10-16} violating their marriage vows, {1 Ti 5:8} ignoring their family's needs, or {Mt 15:1-9} neglecting their parents. Help me to excel in my personal relationships, as a husband, a father, and a son, to the glory of God!

⚙ The Scriptures say that hypocrites discredit your Name by {Mal 3:5, NLT} "[cheating] **workers**," "[oppressing] **widows and orphans**," "[robbing] **foreigners of justice**" and {Jas 2:14-17} ignoring the poor. Help me to {Mic 6:8} "**to act justly**," "**love mercy and**," "**walk humbly**" with you, to the glory of God!

⚙ The Scriptures say that hypocrites deny your Name by {Jas 3:9-10} using cutting words {Jas 3:8} "**full of deadly poison**" to "[curse] **human beings made in [your likeness].**" Help me to "**tame [my] tongue**" by **always** {Eph 4:15} "**speaking the truth in love**", to the glory of God!

In mercy and kindness, empower and inspire me to hallow you with my attitudes, thoughts, words and deeds! Be honored in my relationships, my work, my play, and my spiritual life, to the glory of God!

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name"! Matthew 6:9 is the Word of the LORD.