

10 Commandments Pt 4: “The Name of God” -Aug 17, 2025, Ex 20:7; Dt 5:11; Ezekiel 36:16-28

Intro: We are just getting going on our study of the 10 commandments found in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. Since we are reading the commandments during our confession of sin and the catechism during our confession of faith, we will be looking at other passages that accentuate the commandments in some meaningful way. WLC Qs 111-114.

READ TEXT: ¹⁶Then the word of Yahweh came to me saying, ¹⁷“Son of man, when the house of Israel was living in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds; their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity. ¹⁸Therefore I poured out My wrath on them for the blood which they had shed on the land, because they had defiled it with their idols. ¹⁹Also I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the lands. According to their ways and their deeds I judged them. ²⁰Then they came to the nations to which they came. And they profaned My holy name because it was said of them, ‘These are the people of Yahweh; yet they have come out of His land.’ ²¹But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went. ²²“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says Lord Yahweh, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations, to which you have come. ²³I will prove the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am Yahweh,” declares Lord Yahweh, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. ²⁴And I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land. ²⁵Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. ²⁶Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to do My judgments. ²⁸And you will inhabit the land that I gave to your fathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

Review: The two tables, 1. For God, (1-4); 2. For Man (6-10)

I. The theology of the command.

People think God is a heavenly teddy bear or senile grandpaw. They think that He is a permissive, all-inclusive, no standards, old man with a sweet demeanor.

What we have seen from both, the preamble to the commandments, the entirety of the Old Testament narrative, and the testimony of the New, God is anything but these things. He is not approachable by soiled humanity. He is unlike the creation. He is transcendent and other worldly.

A name is an **identifier** that can also include characteristics of the person or entity being named. Again, we go back to the preamble to the commandments and to the foundational first commandment.

YHWH “I AM” (**6800x** in OT). Covenant, personal name of God. This iteration of God is specific, not general. This is who God reveals Himself to be in Exodus 3 when He is talking to Moses at the burning bush.

In Hebrew, there are three words for God. Elohim can mean any god or gods. It is a general term except when the context makes clear that it is speaking about a specific god. It is translated simply as “god” or “gods”. It is used about 2300 times in the OT to refer to the God of Israel.

Second, there is the word Adonai. Adonai is much like our word “sir” or “lord”. This term is used 439 times in the OT. It is a formal term of respect that is given to someone. It conveys deference and honor. It is normally translated “lord.” In Hebrew and Jewish contexts, this word was pronounced in substitution for the personal name of God, so as to not violate the third commandment. However, this practice is seen as unwise. God revealed Himself as such and should be recognized as such.

The term “Jehovah” is a construction of using the consonants from YHWH and the vowels of Adoni. It is an attempt to obey the third commandment. While “Jehovah” was used by most orthodox believers, in the last 100 years or so, with the proliferation of the cult of the Jehovah’s witnesses, it is unwise and confusing to employ. Additionally, the translation of the personal name of God from YHWH to (all caps) LORD, known as the tetragrammaton, conveys similar regard and intent to keep the third commandment. See the introduction of your Bible for more information. This is the primary reason I use the Legacy Standard Bible, because it is consistent in its translation of these three words, not confusing them. It translates “Elohim” as “God,” “Adonai” as “Lord,” and “YHWH” as “Yahweh.”

Translational issues aside, simply by word count, you can see where the emphasis is. It is on the character of the specific God of Israel, the one, true, and only God. There is no other (Is 45). This is the point. God is real, unique

Jesus

"The Name" in Acts (35x).

1. **Acts 9:14:** "And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." (Referring to Saul's persecution of Christians.)
2. **Acts 9:15:** "But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings...'"
3. **Acts 9:16:** "For I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."
4. **Acts 9:21:** "All those hearing him... said, 'Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name...?'"
5. **Acts 9:27:** "But Barnabas... described... how he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus."
6. **Acts 9:28:** "So he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord."

The name of Jesus was inflammatory in the first century. It caused persecution and even death for some. At the same time, the name of Jesus brought help, healing, and salvation to many more. His name is **the name above every name (Phil 2:9). Every knee will bow and recognize King Jesus. He is the great I AM of the OT. "Before Abraham was, I AM" John 8:58.**

Connection with the Lord's Prayer "hallowed be thy name." (Matt 6:9). In the Lord's Prayer, we pray that the name of God will be made holy among the nations. This is the first petition in the Lord's prayer. We want God's reputation and fame to be considered accurately as He is. "Heavenly Father, make Your name holy among us and all around us. Make us and others to esteem You as You are, that is, Holy God. You are our Father, in heaven. Unlike us. High and lifted up. You are God. You are majestic and higher than the highest heavens (Is 55). We recognize that and pray that Your holiness would be made known to everyone we encounter.

We are to pray "in **Jesus'** name" not "in Your name" or any other name... (Jn 14:13-14). This may seem like a small technicality. It is not. We are to acknowledge our presence before the Holy God is only acceptable because of the name, that is the finished work of, Jesus Christ. We are to pray in that name in particular. We are not to offer up a generality of "in Your name" or something similar. Our prayers are in the name of Jesus Christ, the God man, the only mediator between God and men, whose death on the cross is the only propitiation for our sins.

Men, take note here and lead your family, this church, and any public prayers accordingly. We pray to the Father, by the work of the Spirit, in the name of Jesus specifically and overtly.

The theology of the command is that God is unique in His character and should be approached with caution and care. He is not like us. We do not speak of Him carelessly or flippantly. We do not use His name in vain.

II. The specifics of the command.

Prohibits vain, frivolous, insincere, thoughtless utterance or use.

Includes using God's name or His representation as a form of **exasperation**, frustration, or surprise.

God, Jesus, Jesus Christ, Lord, etc. Gawwwd, Lawwwd, etc.

Wow! Oh my! Incredible! Oh dear! (if you're Bob). Man! Holy moly!

Profane: to treat (something sacred) with abuse, irreverence, or contempt.

Look back at our passage in Ez 36. Verses 20-23. Five times in three verses God says that they profaned His name.

It is not permissible to utter references to God, Jesus, or any derivative or substitution that might cast aspersion on Him. Nothing that slanders, slurs, or confuses His reputation and representation is permitted.

The use of God's name in modern cinema is abhorrent. The frequency and unthoughtful misuse of God in common idiomatic speech is a horrible violation of this command. In our common vernacular, God is seen as insignificant at best and usually derided as some sort of outdated notion. He is dismissed, insulted, and ignored most, if not all the time.

God is not mocked. What a man sows, that shall he reap. Gal 6:7. God will avenge His character and name. Do not be included in those who fall under this judgement. As His children, we must exclude ourselves from this behavior and such a society's norms. We must insist on God being rightly respected and His character correctly displayed. We are intolerant in this regard.

God is Holy, that is the theology behind the command. Additionally, He is to be obeyed specifically.

III. The connection of the command to our baptism. Or better said, our connection to the named God through our baptism.

In whose name were you baptized? Was it not in the name of the Triune God? The family name has been placed upon you through covenant baptism. We are His children, the sheep of His pasture. Our Father is stronger than all and John 10 says that no one can snatch us away from His hand. Romans 8 says that nothing can separate us from the love of God. We are united with Him in our baptism.

Against Oneness Pentecostals. Oneness Pentecostals do not believe in the Trinity and by their own confession, only baptize in the name of Jesus. If you come across it, just know that it is not orthodox, sound Christian teaching and is considered a heresy.

Against hypocrisy. We saw the hypocrisy of ancient Israel in the text from Ezekiel. In v16 it says they defiled the land by their ways and their deeds.

In Rom 6, Paul asks the question, “Should we continue in sin so that grace might increase?” The answer is a resounding and final “no.” Then he goes on to ask how we could continue on in sin having been baptized into Jesus’ death.

In Matthew 23, Jesus has stinging words to the Pharisees for their hypocrisy. They focus on the minutea of religion while ignoring the most important things. They character is out of sync with what they claim to believe. They are insincere, dishonest, hypocrites; two faced liars; double minded men who use religion to exalt themselves; false shepherds exploiting the people for their own means.

God is explicitly and personally opposed to such attitudes, and actions. He is much displeased with this behavior and will judge it with extreme prejudice. We must live consistently with what we claim. In the Ezekiel passage, He handed them over to judgement because of their unfaithfulness. Let us not be like them. Indeed, He has cleaned us with water (v25). He has given us a new heart (v26). He has put His Spirit (v27) within us. He has set His mark on us, both through our baptism and the giving of the Spirit. We obey Him because we love Him.

God is Holy. His name is that He is. We revere Him and are careful not to misrepresent Him in word or deed.

Application:

1. **Repent** of any violation of the third commandment.
2. Pray “**in Jesus’ name**” (Jn 14:13-14).
3. Live **consistently** with your baptism. You’ve been joined to God by covenant baptism. If you need to get baptized, do it. If you need to baptize your children, do it.

Our God is a consuming fire. Oh, that He would consume the nations with His justice and mercy. For Christ and His kingdom, for a thousand years. Amen!

Closing prayer: Yes, Lord, make Yourself known among the nations. Make us people who understand the commandments and obey you faithfully. Thank you for this instruction. Would your Spirit apply it to our lives that we may be pleasing to You. Find us people informed and equipped by Your word, empowered by Your Spirit to make disciples of all nations, starting with these United States, The Great State of Texas, and our home here in the Permian Basin. May You use us in our generation, to destroy the works of the devil and build the glorious kingdom of our God and King. As we come to the table of communion, meet with us as we remember that Christ gave His life as a ransom for many. In Jesus' name, Amen.