

IN HIS NAME

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Reading: Luke 10:1-6,9,17

Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name" (Luke 10:17).

In the Lord's Prayer we say the words, "Hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9). Hallowed means holy. We pray that the Lord will help us to remember the holiness of His name. It is so holy that in the spiritual world, evil spirits and devils cannot even say the Lord's name, because they do not think that the Lord is holy.

Once a devil, who had come up out of hell, heard some good spirits talking about the Lord. As he listened, he became very angry, because devils hate the Lord and do not like to hear others talking about Him. So this evil person walked up to the good spirits and began to speak with them, for he wanted to argue with them and wished to turn them against the Lord. But when he tried, he could not speak the Lord's name. He could not speak the name, "Jesus", and could not even open his mouth to try to say it. This made him even more angry than he had been before, and soon he went back down into his dark hell.

No evil spirit or devil can say any of the Lord's names. The reason is that in the other world (in the spiritual world) people can only say what they think, and can only try to do what they love to do. They cannot hide how they think and feel, as we can in this world. So in the other world those who hate the Lord and do not believe in Him cannot hide their hatred and unbelief. They cannot speak what they do not think. So they cannot say the Lord's name. And because they cannot say it, they cannot mix it with their own dirtiness and uncleanness. They cannot take the Lord's name in vain.

But good spirits and angels who love the Lord can and do speak His name often, because they know how holy it is. They love the Lord more than anyone or anything else. They believe in Him and worship Him from the heart. And so, when anyone speaks the Lord's name in a holy way, the angels of heaven are very close. This is why the disciples were able to heal sick people and drive away evil spirits when they spoke the Lord's name. For then the Lord and the angels could be present, and no evil spirit can stand to hear the Lord's name spoken in a holy way, but when he hears it he must run away.

It is very important to learn to speak the Lord's name in a holy way. You do this when you pray, "Our Father who art in the heavens." But in this world it is also possible to say the Lord's name in ways that are not holy. You do this when you make fun of the Lord's name, when you mix it with unclean thoughts, or when you say something that is not true and swear by the Lord's name in order to make other people believe the untrue thing you have said. The Lord's name must never

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be used in any of these ways. And when you are tempted to use it in any of these ways you should remember that the Lord's Prayer says that His name should be hallowed.

There are many names of the Lord. He is called Jesus, Christ, Jehovah, the Holy Spirit, and by many other names. The reason is that each name tells something about what the Lord is like. Isn't it the same with your names? When you hear the name "John" or "Sam", "Jennifer" or "Mary", you don't think of just a name, do you? You think of what that person is like. You think of the color of his hair and eyes, how he talks, what he does, whether he is fun to play with, and whether you like him or not. For a person's name stands for what the person is like. The name means his *qualities*.

So the Lord's names mean the different qualities of the Lord. "Jesus" means "Savior", and tells how the Lord loves all people, wants to save them from the horrible life of hell and lead them to heaven. "Christ" tells how the Lord is a king who has all the power to save people. Each name tells something different about the Lord. And in the same way, anything that tells something about the Lord is part of His name. This is why all of the Lord's Word is part of His name, for it tells all about Him. And when you make jokes about anything in the Word, when you make fun of it or treat it carelessly, then you are taking the Lord's name in vain.

But if you read the Word in a holy way, not mixing it with what is dirty, and if you worship and say the Lord's names in prayer and in songs of praise, then you are keeping His name holy. Then the angels of heaven can be with you and no evil spirit can come near. For the Lord, your heavenly Father, will help you to do what you ask when you pray to Him, "Hallowed be Your name."

Amen.