

# Back to the Future

## The Name of the Lord

### Exodus 20:7

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#### Introduction

As followers of Jesus we are oriented to move forward. But when our relationship with the Lord becomes out of kilter we must take a step back, to the foundational principles of our faith, in order to move into the dynamic future He has for us. Through the difficulties that we have been experiencing lately there is a summons from the Lord, upon His people, to live in faithfulness to Him as the redeemed people we are.

The Ten Commandments are given to us, as God's people, to assist in living as free people. They help us not only to relate to others, but more importantly, to the Lord. Today we will look at the third commandment as it further calls us to faithfulness.

There are three primary applications of this verse that teach us some great truths on how to live the redeemed life.

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1. Allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, including our language (Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:17; James 3:7-12; Luke 6:45; 1 Peter 3:10).

One of the most common interpretations of the third commandment is the prohibition against profanity. As followers of Jesus, our speech should be edifying to the Lord and encouraging to those around us.

It is a work of the Holy Spirit in our lives that causes the change from a corrupt speech to a Spirit-controlled one. It has been said that when the Holy Spirit moves into our lives we are likely to lose half of our vocabulary.

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2. Reverence the holy name of the Lord as uncommon and sacred (Matthew 6:9; Leviticus 19:12; and Matthew 5:37).

It is not just the absence of profanity that believers should avoid, but also the irreverent usage of the Lord's name.

Misusing His holy name often comes when we use it flippantly in everyday conversation. Misusage also comes when we make oaths in His name and either do not fulfill them or lie while doing so. Likewise, when we say that the Lord revealed

something to us or spoke something to us when, in fact, it was not Him is misusing His name.

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### 3. Live in the character of God (Exodus 34:5-9); Galatians 5:22-23).

An even deeper understanding of third commandment can be found by understanding the meaning of the word *name*. In Hebrew the word for name is *shem*. *Shem* means much more than just name like it does in English, it refers to someone's character.

When we misuse the name of the Lord we fail in reflecting His character.

So, the questions arises, "What is the character of God?" An encounter that Moses had with the Lord on Mount Sinai, in Exodus 34:5-9, reveals His character.

The Lord revealed His character to Moses when He identified His name as YHWH. The name YHWH expresses all that God is and does as the sovereign and self-existent One.

Immediately preceding this encounter God instructed the people and livestock to stay away from the mountain of God, thereby preventing them from encountering His power and holiness. Instead of using those terms to describe His character He says He is compassionate, merciful, patient (long-suffering), loving, and faithful.

As redeemed people we are called to reflect the name, or character, of our Redeemer.

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## Conclusion

A resetting of our status as redeemed people will have great effects on our relationships with the Lord and others.

- 1. AS REDEEMED PEOPLE WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN NEW MEANING TO OUR OLD NAMES AND NATURES (NUMBERS 12:3; EXODUS 33:17).**
- 2. AS REDEEMED PEOPLE WE ARE CALLED TO PRESERVE THE NAME OF THE LORD (NUMBERS 6:27; EXODUS 20:5; LEVITICUS 24:16; AND MATTHEW 7:21-23).**

May our response be to humbly fall before the Lord in repentance of our misuse of His name. And may we strive, through the Holy Spirit to live worthy of His name. When we do we will then experience great blessings on our lives as we move into the future.