

NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES **(Exodus 20:7)**

Commandment #3 is about misusing the name of God. Is this still an issue for us today? To deal with this subject we need to answer three questions.

I. QUESTION #1: WHY IS HIS NAME SO IMPORTANT?

1. In any culture now or then, a name is a verbal symbol for the person.
 - In ancient culture, the name expressed the very value, character, and influence of someone.
2. Yahweh's name signified his essence.
 - God revealed it long before the Israelites came to the Mountain.
 - Four letters: YHWH: means "I am who I am" or "I will be who I will be."
 - It speaks of His self-existence, His self-sufficiency, His supreme sovereignty.
3. Yahweh's name represented God's whole reputation.
 - God's name communicates His reputation and thus deserves as much reverence and respect as God Himself.

II. QUESTION #2: WHAT KIND OF PUNISHMENT MIGHT COME?

1. The exact punishment for breaking this command is not given.
2. It could be anything God chooses from something minor to death.
3. The exact message God is giving is "He is not going to let someone get away without punishment."
 - That's the expanded definition of the Heb. word "*yenaqqeh*" (hold guiltless).
 - The reality is that the wages of sin is what? Answer: Death
 - For the believer, there are consequences for our sins.

III. QUESTION #3: WHAT IS INVOLVED IN MISUSING GOD'S NAME?

1. The primary meaning of this phrase would be about invoking the name of God as a guarantor of one's words.
 - So, the most basic meaning has to do with perjury.
2. But it is stated so generally that it encompasses any misuse. Let's look at the most common areas of ancient misuse.
 - Sorcery: ancient culture believed if you used a deity's name you captured their power.
3. False prophecy: attempting to use God's name to advance one's personal agenda.
 - Prophets would say, "Thus saith the Lord."
4. People could use God's name; they just couldn't misuse it.
 - To misuse His name was to misrepresent His character
 - The most obvious way people misuse God's name is to use in a curse word.
 - We can break this commandment today when we use God's name to further our own agenda.
 - We can break this commandment when we trivialize the name of God

As Christians we carry the very name of Christ. It is associated with everything we do so we should always seek to honor his name.