

3. Hallowed be thy name.

The words “Hallowed be thy name” or “ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου” can be translated as “Sanctified be thy name”. How can we sanctify or Hallow the name of the Father?

In John 17:17 Jesus uses the same word “sanctify” when he prays for his disciples “Sanctify them (ἁγιάσον αὐτοὺς) by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

1. What does the word sanctify or ἁγιάζω mean?

In the Dictionary found in the Interlinear Greek-English New Testament the word is given several meanings. The word means to purify, to sanctify; to set apart from common use; to consecrate; to regard with reverence; and to cleanse. Let us look at some of these.

a) The word means sanctify.

Sanctification means to make holy. In some contexts sanctify means regeneration, being born again. In other contexts it is sanctification or being filled with the Holy Spirit.

b) The word means to consecrate or set apart. The word sanctify means to “make holy” or to “set apart” for a special purpose.

In 2 Chr. 31:6 we read: **“And the children of Israel and Judah, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, brought the tithe of oxen and sheep; also the tithe of holy things which were consecrated to the LORD their God, they laid in heaps.”**

Here the holy things were set aside, sanctified or consecrated to the Lord.

in Genesis 2:3 we read **“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”**

The last two Bible verses are from the Old Testament. The Greek Septuagint translation finished a few hundred years before the coming of Christ uses the word ἁγιάζω in both these verses.

c) to cleanse.

In 2 Timothy 2:20-21 we read, **“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.”**

Here sanctifying, cleansing and making holy come together.

d) The word hallow means to hold in reverence. The Oxford dictionary says hallow means to honour. It also means to grant it high or the utmost respect.

2. Instead of saying Hallowed be thy name, how could we paraphrase it?

Your name be highly honoured

Your name be respected.
Your name be revered, kept holy,

We are to honour God, respect him, be in awe of his holiness. In Isaiah 5:13-16 we read

**Therefore my people have gone into captivity,
Because *they have* no knowledge;
Their honorable men *are* famished,
And their multitude dried up with thirst.
Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself
And opened its mouth beyond measure;
Their glory and their multitude and their pomp,
And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it.
People shall be brought down,
Each man shall be humbled,
And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.
But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment,
And God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.**

The opposite of honouring God's name is to dishonour it. If we misuse the name of God, we bring guilt upon ourselves. In Exodus 20:7 we read, **"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain."**

Let us give the name of God the highest respect. Let us not say Gee Whiz, that is a derivative of misusing the name of Jesus. Let us not even say Cripes because it imitates those who misuse the name of Christ.

In 1. Peter 3:15 we read. **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."**

That is how to honour God.

3. How can we hallow God's name?

a). We should have great respect for the name of God, the Father. When the Jewish people read the Old Testament and encounter the name of the Lord, YHWH, they do not even pronounce the name out of respect. They use Adonai, meaning lord or master, instead of YHWH, the name of God, which is translated as The LORD in our English bibles. This is done out of great reverence. They are careful not to misuse the name of the Lord, so careful that they refrain from using it at all, even in reading.

b) We hallow God's name by praying.

c) We can praise, sing, and worship the Lord. If only the birds with the best voices sang, how quiet the woods would be! When we testify, or pray publicly, in that way we can also honour, hallow, God's name. Don't leave public prayer for those who have polished words. Even the prayer of a child is a great blessing and honours God.

Note how Solomon hallows God in his prayer:

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! (1 Kings 8:27)

d) Walk the walk. That is more important than the talk. It is not those who say Lord, Lord, that hallow his name, but those who do his will. Jesus says:

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven (Matt. 7:21).

What we say and do speaks louder than our words. A good reputation is easily ruined by hard to establish again.

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby (1 Peter 2:12).

At work or school, if I should make a fool of myself, Christ's name suffers. We represent it. We should do it diligently.

By not being holy, honourable, and living worthy of the name of Christ, God's name is brought into disrespect.

God says: **"Be holy for I am holy"** (1 Peter 1:16)

Whosoever names the name of Christ is to abstain from all unrighteousness; depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2: 19). That is hallowing the Lord's name in action.

Moses honoured God's name when he prayed for the people of Israel when God wanted to destroy them. We read,

Then the LORD said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

And Moses said to the LORD: "Then the Egyptians will hear *it*, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, and they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, *are* among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. Now *if* You

kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, 16 ‘Because the LORD was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.’ And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken (Numbers 14:11-17).

Moses cared about God’s reputation among the heathen more than he cared about his own name.

David cared about God’s honour when he went to fight against Goliath.

And we, whatever we do in word or deed let us do it to the glory of God.

4. To hallow God, we need to know God.

To hallow God, we need to know him. To know him we need to experience him. We need to come into his presence to be cleansed by him, God can then use us to his glory and be hallowed by us.

To really sanctify or hallow God, we need to be sanctified by God first.

We find a beautiful example of this in Isaiah 6:1-8:

1. In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. 2. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3. And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts; the whole earth *is* full of His glory!”
4. And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. 5. So I said: “Woe *is* me, for I am undone! Because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” 6. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal *which* he had taken with the tongs from the altar. 7. And he touched my mouth *with it*, and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.”
8. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here *am* I! Send me.”

Whoever wants to hallow God will want to know who he is, and whoever realizes who he is will be changed, cleansed. Isaiah is one example, Peter is another.

Look at Luke 5:1-11. Here Peter realizes who Christ really is.

1. So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, 2. and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. 3. Then He got

into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

4. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

5. But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." 6. And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. 7. So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8. When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

9. For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10. and so also *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." 11. So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

Whoever realizes who God is will realize his sin, as Peter did. Whoever realizes his sin can be cleansed by following 1 John 1:9. That is the beginning of a new life. To hallow God is to get a new life. It all ties together.

To honour God is to believe him, to believe him is to obey him, and to obey him is to give him the glory.

Recall the consequences that Moses suffered because of a disobedience when he did not hallow the name of the Lord.

Now the LORD said to Moses: "Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel. 13 And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered. 14 For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes." (Numbers 27:12-14)

Not hallowing God has terrible consequences. How often do we have opportunity to hallow God and we don't? How often do we give God the glory he deserves? How often do we take the glory for something that God should have?

5. Some comments concerning Sanctification or ἁγίασμος

a) sanctification means cleansing:

For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Heb 9:13-14)

Can you see how sanctifies means cleanses in the scripture just cited?

b) Repentance, being born again, salvation, becoming a child of God includes or embodies a cleansing. The next two scriptures clearly show this.

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

c) The holiness movement teaches that after regeneration or being born again, (which can be called initial sanctification,) there is a further sanctification. They call it entire sanctification. One of the proof texts they use is 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.

Here Paul is addressing Christians, those who have already been born again, since he writes to “dear brethren” (1 Thess 1:4) and he desires their sanctification. He writes.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it* ((1 Thess 5:23-25).

He is asking God to sanctify them completely or entirely so that they may be preserved blameless. People who act out of the motivation of love to God and love to their neighbour will not be faultless. Yet God sees the heart and if an action is done out of love, it is blameless in the eyes of God, even if the action itself may be flawed. Jesus himself says,

John 15:2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He (the Father) takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

A branch in Christ refers to a child of God. Jesus says he is the vine and we are the branches. But a child of God is pruned, in other words something is still removed or cut off. The word prunes (NKJV) is translated as “cleanseth” in the American Standard Version and purgeth in the original King James Version. This verse refers to those who have already been born again. Yet since it says every branch we must also expect pruning to happen again, once more fruit has been produced.

d) The verb ἁγιάζω can also mean to hallow or esteem highly.

Yet it would not be advisable to translate 1 Thess 5 as “May God hallow you completely” or to have the Lord’s prayer to read “Sanctified be thy name.” Each nuance of sanctify or ἁγιάζω which means to make holy, must be translated in context to render the best English reading.

Those who are sanctified can hallow the name of the father in the true sense of the word. This came about in the lives of Isaiah and Peter since they recognized who God or who Christ was. Let us lead hallowed lives so that we can pray to God in truth and say: Hallowed be thy name.

Questions for 3. Hallowed

1. What does “hallowed” mean?
2. How can we hallow God’s name?
3. How do the Jews in reading the Torah attempt to hallow God’s name?
4. In which language are hallowed and sanctify synonymous?
5. How did Moses hallow God?
6. Give several meanings for the word: sanctify.
7. How are these meanings related?
8. How is being born again a cleansing?
9. Which scriptures speak of sanctification as a cleansing for the Christian?
10. How is holiness a must if we wish to genuinely hallow God’s name?