

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The word of God for this morning is from the book of Isaiah 43:1-3.

But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. 3 For I *am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place.

So far our text. Dear fellow redeemed.

What's your name? How did your name come about? Most of the time names are chosen with great care. I know that when my wife and I chose the name for our daughter it took some time.

We wanted it to be special and unique. Not necessarily a name that has never been used before, but unique in meaning to both of us. The process of discussion and compromise can make the final result something special.

Some of us have a custom of using names from both sides of the family to honor the heritage from which the child came from.

A name can be chosen in regards to a special event or turbulent time that was occurring during that period of our lives.

In some cultures there is a method that is held to so strictly that when it's broken it can bring about astonishment.

"So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John." But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." So they made signs to his father -- what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled."

But in a much less serious vein even in the naming of our pets the process isn't something we go into without thinking about it. Otherwise every dog would be 'dog' and every cat would be 'cat'.

Have you thought about your name lately? Do you know how your name came about? Do you reflect on it and remember the history behind it?

So then, what's in a name? Much in every way. Because you actually have another name. One that would've never come about outside of the relationship created by our loving God.

"To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

But sadly unlike the names with which we were born with, we haven't always had this new name which God's word speaks about. In fact we had a name that is very different. A name not given by God but by ourselves.

In actuality we have many natural names: sinner, disobedient, lawlessness, immoral, covetous, idolater.

This natural name that we have we still carry with us. It is evident in our daily lives. We only need to use one of these words to seek out the evidence of this fact. But having many different terms helps us to identify the different sins going on in our lives.

Who here isn't or hasn't been disobedient? I know that there aren't many days that I can think back on in my childhood and feel condemned. Attitudes of children towards parents are usually filled with disobedience. A simple request of, 'clean your room' is greeted with an emphatic NO! And if it wasn't done verbally a temper tantrum or simply walking away shows disobedience.

The Lord has placed parents over their children. If a request is made of a child that is not contrary to God's will, it needs to be followed. We are told to "Honor your father and your mother" but our nature gets in the way.

We are immoral. The 6th Commandment is one that is spoken of often in Scripture. It is something that we all, from time to time will deal with. Remember that even looking at someone to lust after them is being immoral. In that way we have committed a sin against the 6th Commandment.

The shows we watch. The things we read. Do they show any signs of weakness in regards to this?

We are covetous. Our neighbors' home is so much nicer than ours. They have a nice shiny new vehicle. The clothing they wear is a better brand than what we have. And they certainly aren't hammy downs like what I have.

"But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine."

These words were originally spoken to the children of Israel. They are called by different names here; names which apply to you. They are called and in turn we are called Jacob and Israel. These were names that the Lord gave to the people who He brought out of captivity in Egypt. They were a special name to denote that they were now possessions of the Lord, the One true God.

But we now carry these names as well. Romans 2:28 **"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."**

The Lord told the Israel not to fear. We are being told not to fear for the same reason, we are redeemed. The Lord redeemed Israel in a very specific way. He brought them out of captivity from the land of Egypt. With His powerful hand He overcame the power and the forces of Pharaoh.

He showed that He alone is God by turning water into blood. He caused an infestation of frogs. He turned the very dust of the Earth into Lice. He caused flies to come and livestock to die. Then came boils, thunder, hail, fire, locusts and darkness.

He caused a group of people on foot to overcome an army of charioteers by having them drown in the waters. He showed all these things to us so that we know that He has the power to do what He says He will. To give us strength to have confidence in the other promises He has made to us.

But He has also redeemed us from our sins. The same God, before He took the children out of Egypt had them eat the Passover meal. A lamb which had no spot or blemish. It was to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The blood of this same lamb was to be spread on the doorposts and the lintels of the homes of those who believed in the words the Lord gave them. A beautiful picture of our Savior.

From 1 Peter 1:17 **“And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold*, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”**

So what's in a name? And how do we become God's children? The same way the children of Israel did. By faith in the spotless Lamb of God. God's covenant was a sort of adoption contract with us. This covenant or adoption contract was written up by God Himself, just like any other promise that the Lord makes. In it He spells out how we become His children. And thanks be to God that we have nothing to do with it. It all falls upon His shoulders.

Zec 9:11 **“As for you also, Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.”** Our adoption contract, the one that would give us that new name wasn't signed by us. It was signed in the blood of the Spotless Lamb of God. The Only begotten Son of God hanging on the Cross shedding His blood for you. The debt of our sins is fully paid for and we are His.

As you remember Jehovah didn't leave the children of Israel alone while they wandered because of their disobedience.

“When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.”

The children of Israel had a long way to go before they entered into the Holy Land. They often complained against the Lord on the journey. They went so far as to accuse God of wanting to murder them. Exodus 17:2 **“Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?" 3 And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"**

We have a journey as well. One that in its own way be just as turbulent as what the children of Israel experienced in the wilderness. So when the Lord says that you will pass through waters He will be there with you.

The fact that the water of life will never be deep enough for us to perish is a great comfort. What better life guard could we have than the Lord Himself. We are also told that rivers will not overflow us. Very few people have the advantage of living so close to white water as we do. Doesn't the water rushing at high speeds making great noise upon the rocks feel like life sometimes.

And fire is spoken of in our text. What a perfect example of two extremely different things, fire and water. But the outcome and pain that both can inflict is the same. But even fire is nothing for our God to overcome.

Either walking through fire or only the smallest part of the flame is nothing that we need to fear. These examples as others used by our Lord are general truths. They are a way to show you that whatever comes into our lives is going to be dealt with by our God.

“For I *am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place.”

Our text reveals to us why we having nothing to fear, in the same way that the children of Israel had nothing to fear.

I am the Lord you God, the Holy One, your Savior. What's in a name? Much is revealed to us in the names the Jehovah reveals to us. The word “Lord” as found in our text reveals to us that our God is the covenant God who keeps what He promises.

He is the Holy One of Israel. The One promised in that covenant. The One who would come and who has come to take away the sins of the world.

Our Savior. The One who purchased us with His innocent sufferings and death so that we would have that new name.

So instead of sinner, we are known as redeemed, holy, saints, sons, brides, elect, believer, light. So what's in a name for us? Again, much in every way. These new names have been given show the relationship we now have with God. It shows that our debt of sin through Jesus Christ has been won for us.

Rejoice in your new name to the glory of God. Amen.

And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.