

# **HOLY AND REVEREND IS HIS NAME**

**Gary McDade**

## **The Text**

The text in which the title appears impresses upon the reader the lofty and sacred place the God of heaven both desires and deserves among the human family. It says, “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever” (Psa. 111:9-10).

## **The Theme**

Respect and reverence for God are qualities which emerge from the name and nature of the most high. The Bible has been elevated by God to a position of regard in advance of his sacred name to position the reader to understand and appreciate the power and place of preeminence the Lord and his Christ have (Col. 1:18). Another of the Psalms plainly makes the point, “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name” (Psa. 138:2).

## **The Times**

The secularizing of the sacred characterizes the times in which we live. Some years ago a church in Memphis promoted its youth group through a takeoff from a well known physical exercise facility called, “Gold’s Gym.” Sometimes you would see out in public muscled up men in tank tops which had a picture of a weight lifter whose elevated load perched atop his fully extended arms and appeared to be so heavy the bar was bent into a downward turned crescent shape. Everyone had heard of “Gold’s Gym.” The clever youth minister had T-shirts designed for his understudies with the familiar silk screened muscle man from the “Gold’s Gym” but substituted in the place of the company name were the words “God’s Gym.” Everyone thought it was cute. No one objected. No one cared about the effrontery of bringing down the sacred name of God to the depths of a T-shirt. Big deal. It pleased the young people and their ignorant leader and that was the cardinal objective.

However, enough time has passed until those former youngsters are now in more mature areas of responsibility in the church, and the I's have it: Desensitize, Destabilize, and Demoralize.

### **The Tedium**

In the place of trying to offset the boredom of the modern teenager, who has more extensive access to entertainment medium than entire societies of mankind in former generations had available, the divine recommendation is teaching the word of God. What recourse did an apostle charged with the development of a young man offer to him? The insight is available for investigation. Jesus Christ shed his blood to provide it (Matt. 26:28). He prophesied that it would be available even long after the stars and solar system has passed out of existence (Matt. 24:35). The apostle is Paul; the youth is Timothy. The Bible records Paul's inspired instruction, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (I Tim. 4:13). Before the written word was available, Timothy received miraculous spiritual gifts by the imposition of apostolic hands (II Tim. 1:6), and in view of this temporary provision Paul continued, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (I Tim. 4:14). The application to those living since the days of miraculous manifestations is: Using the Bible as your guide apply yourself through the abilities you have to the service of God. And, Paul went on to conclude the chapter, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (vv. 15-16).

### **The Temptation**

The opportunity to provide direction and instruction from the word of God is often challenged by the temptation to take on the coloring of the world around us. Ministers whose primary work is with youth are not the only ones who need a regular dose of James 4:4 and I John 2:15-17, all elders, preachers, and Bible teachers need to go to work on the mission and purpose of the church as presented in the Bible because most of the current emphasis in the church today is on keeping the membership self-satisfied. The verses mentioned say, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of

the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (I John 2:15-17).

## **The Truth**

The name and cause of God is high and holy and should be held in reverence by all them about him. Again, the Psalmist said, “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him” (Psa. 89:7). Perhaps a reminder would be appreciated that another way of referring to the church of Christ is “to the general assembly and church of the firstborn” (Heb. 12:23). The reverence of God carries with it the blessing of his divine presence, for the Bible says, “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit” (Psa. 34:18). Even the heathen King Nebuchadnezzar learned, “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase” (Dan. 4:37). Surely, the church can see the truth.

## **The Timing**

Reverence to the name of God must be done right, and it must be done right now! Hear once more the Psalmist, “While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being” (Psa. 146:2). The time is coming when reverent praise will be silenced from the lips of a dying humanity (Heb. 9:27). The Messianic prophet Isaiah wrote, “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:6-11). This is the point Isaiah cried, “The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa. 40:6-8). In quoting Isaiah the

apostle Peter added, “And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (I Pet. 1:25b).