

HALLOWED BE THY NAME
#12 – “Abba and Pater: Heavenly Father”
April 17, 2005

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, . . .

Opening Words of Jesus’s Model Prayer, Matthew 6:9b

¹⁴For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. *Romans 8:14-17 TNIV*

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” ⁷So you are no longer slaves, but God’s children; and since you are his children, he has made you also heirs. *Galatians 4:4-7*

Introduction: There is one significant name for God that does not make its appearance until Jesus himself uses it. This intimate name for God is “Father,” found in the New Testament as the Greek *Pater* or the Aramaic *Abba*. God’s people always knew that God possessed fatherly qualities, but only Jesus could show us that we could actually call him Daddy. It is in this name of God that we discover how near to God’s heart we really are.

- I. What’s in the Names Abba and Pater?
- A. Pater is the New Testament Greek rendition of the name Jesus used to address God in his model prayer in the context of his Sermon on the Mount.
1. Since Jesus did not speak Greek, but Aramaic Hebrew, he probably used the word Abba when he prayed.
 2. Jesus was teaching us to pray when he called God, “Daddy,” so he wanted us to know how close we could be to God.
- B. Abba is the name Paul used to speak of God’s adopting us through Jesus Christ to make us his children and his heirs.
- C. Though Paul wrote in elegant Greek, he left the Aramaic *Abba* untranslated for emphasis.
- II. Abba is Our Heavenly Father!
- A. The Old Testament ascribes the loving, merciful qualities of fatherhood to God.
- Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you? *Deuteronomy 32:6b*

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. *Psalms 103:13-14*

See also *Isaiah 63:8, 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4, 19, 31:20, Hosea 11:3, 8; Malachi 1:6*; etc.

- B. The Old Covenant teaches that our status as God’s children defines our relationships to each other.
- Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another? *Malachi 2:10*
- C. Jesus takes our relationship to God to the next level.
1. Jesus does more than refer to God as our father, he addresses God as “Daddy” and teaches us to do the same.
 2. Jesus prays to God as “Daddy in Heaven,” speaking both to God’s intimacy with us and his holy supremacy to us.
- D. Paul teaches us that we may call God “Daddy” because Jesus is our redeeming brother, who has provided for our adoption as God’s children.
1. Paul tells us that it is the Holy Spirit within us that causes us to see God as our Father.
 2. Paul tells us that we need have no fear because we are children of God.
 3. Paul tells us that we are not God’s slaves, but his heirs because we have shared in Christ’s suffering.
- III. We Live to Please Our Heavenly Father by Holy Living.
- Do not love the world or anything in the world. If you love the world, love for the Father is not in you. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful people, the lust of their eyes and their boasting about what they have and do—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever. . . See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. *1 John 2:15-17, 3:1-3*
- Conclusion: Abba is our Heavenly Daddy who sent Jesus at the right time to claim us as his children through adoption. As Abba’s children, we are also his heirs, having inherited his Kingdom for eternity. As long as we live in this world, our sole purpose is to please our loving Father.