

## When The Name Meets a Lost Cause

*Deut 12:1-5*

*12 These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.*

*2 Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:*

*3 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.*

*4 Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.*

*5 But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:*

### I. Introduction

1. Yesterday our nation celebrated our national independence looking back to July 4, 1776 when the state governments of the 13 original British colonies declared independence from Great Britain. Those colonies were Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia.
2. It was an unlikely victory for these American colonies, because the British Empire was in control. And this was a period when the British Empire had a slogan, “The empire on which the sun never sets.”<sup>1</sup>
3. Meaning it controlled colonies all over the world, which also meant it had the resources to conquer and rule all those territories. And those 13 colonies in America had far less manpower and finances, so for some, that **Declaration of Independence [image]** from King George III and the British Empire, was more of a joke than something to be taken seriously.
4. And for many, this declaration looked like a lost cause. It was a nice idea, but how could it happen against such great odds?
5. But the colonists didn’t feel it was a lost cause. These colonial territories had had enough of the tyranny of King George and declared their grievances in their Declaration of Independence proclamation, and sent it to King George. This was a matter that the colonists were ready to fight for, and fight they did.
6. We celebrate July 4, 1776 as our Independence Day, but independence was not gained on the day the Declaration of Independence was signed. That day was more of a declaration of war. It wasn’t until the Treaty of Paris was signed on September 3, 1783, following around 8 years of battles, that the American Revolution formally ended with independence for what was now the United States of America.
7. This morning on I want to speak on the thought, When The Name Meets a Lost Cause. I will point to a little known fact of our history to support that title.

### II. U.S. History and the Name

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_empire\\_on\\_which\\_the\\_sun\\_never\\_sets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_empire_on_which_the_sun_never_sets)

- A. The Mayflower Compact
1. 156 years before the Declaration was signed, and long before there were any organized European governments controlling this area, a ship of around 130 people anchored in what is now Provincetown Harbor off Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The date was November 11, 1620. 400 years ago this November.
  2. The ship was the Mayflower<sup>2</sup> and had just completed its grueling 10-week voyage. Compare that to a non-stop flight using the same departure and arrival locations as the Mayflower: around 8 hours and 15 minutes.
  3. Since there was no government exercising rule over this area and they were starting a new colony (they missed their original destination of Virginia), those in the Mayflower, who called themselves Pilgrims, signed a document called the **Mayflower Compact [image]**, their foundational document of their government over this new colony.
  4. In fact, I read that that the Mayflower Pact ultimately influenced the writing of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution in the next century.
  5. I want to point to our title this morning: **When The Name Meets a Lost Cause.**
  6. The odds of these Pilgrims surviving their first winter were very low. Their success could have been called a lost cause.
  7. But something amazing happens when The Name meets a Lost Cause.
  8. This is how the Mayflower Compact began. And remember, this was their founding government document that was to govern this new land.
  9. THE TEXT OF THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT:  
**In the name of God, Amen.** We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, **by the Grace of God** of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc. **Having undertaken for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith** and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually **in the presence of God** and one of another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together...
  10. Their survival that first winter of 1620-1621 was not because they arrived with all the resources they needed; or because they were experts in surviving brutal Massachusetts winters. I believe they survived because their lost cause had anchored their survival by planting the Name of God over the place.
  11. And not only did they survive but they thrived. For it was merely 156 years later, the Massachusetts colony, along with 12 other colonies wrote their Declaration of Independence, boldly declaring their “lost cause” of separation from the British Empire.
- B. The Declaration of Independence
1. But something else that was very important about our nation’s history, is that Declaration of Independence signed July 4, 1776, 244 years ago, named references to God in four places:

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<sup>2</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayflower>

- a. They appealed to “**Laws of Nature and Nature’s God**,” not the arbitrary laws being enforced on them by King George III of Great Britain and the British Parliament.
  - b. And that famous sentence that most Americans can quote: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are **created** equal, that they are endowed by their **Creator** with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”
  - c. They appealed to “**the Supreme Judge of the world**” to review the actions the colonies were herewith taking.
  - d. And it closed invoking “**the protection of divine Providence**.”
2. How many times did this “American Experiment” look like a lost cause?
  3. But when the Name meets lost causes, the end result can be the protection of divine Providence.
  4. And that is the place we call the United States of America. It began with the statement, “**In the name of God, Amen**.”

### III. The land of Name

- A. The promise of the place with His name
  1. Last week we talked about the building of Solomon’s temple and how it was the place where God put His name.
  2. That idea had been rooted in their past, around 400 years before during their Exodus from Egyptian slavery.
  3. While in their wilderness journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, God gave them their religious and civil laws that also contained a promise:  
*Deut 12:1-5*  
*1 These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.*  
*2 Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:*  
*3 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.*  
*4 Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.*  
*5 But unto **the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there**, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:*
  4. Seek the place where God puts His name.
  5. God repeated this concept several times in the law:
    - a. *Deut 12:11 to cause his name to dwell there*
    - b. *Deut 14:23 the place which he shall choose to place his name there*
    - c. *Deut 16:2 the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.*

- d. *Deut 26:2 the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.*
6. No less than five times God said He wanted to set His name upon a place.
  7. And what did that mean? God wanted a place where He would be worshiped, a place where His laws would be upheld, and where His name would be honored.
- B. The temple: the place of the name
1. And last week we mentioned that at the conclusion of a great plague that killed 70,000 people, King David declared that spot where the plague ended would be that place where the house of the Lord would be built:  
*1 Chron 21:30-22:1*  
*30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.*  
*22 Then David said, This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.*
  2. And in 1 Kings 8, that place would be the location of the temple of God, and it would be the place where God placed His name:  
*1 Kings 8:20 And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.*
  3. And that spot would be the place where they would pray to.  
*1 Kings 8:29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, **My name shall be there:** that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.*
  4. But unfortunately, Israel was going to have a time of backsliding and falling away from the Name, yet even though that was to be the case, God's people could still return to and call on His Name:  
*2 Chron 7:13-16*  
*13 If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;*  
*14 If my people, which are **called by my name**, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*  
*15 Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.*  
*16 For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, **that my name may be there** for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.*
  5. God has always wanted a place where He could put His name, where He would be worshiped, a place where His laws would be upheld, and where His name would be honored.
- C. Backsliding from the name
1. But as we briefly pointed out last week, that holy place in Jerusalem where God put His name, did indeed experience a time of backsliding.

2. One notorious king by the name of Manesseh, did evil in the sight of the Lord, and filled Jerusalem with all kinds of sinful pollutions.
3. It was 300 years after Solomon built the temple to the name of God in Jerusalem, that Manesseh did this:  
*2 Kings 21 4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name.*
4. He did far more than just build altars to various idols in the house of the Lord.
5. To see the list of Manesseh's sins, you can read in 2 Kings 23:4-20, where his grandson, King Josiah listed all the vile things that had been done to that holy place where God chose to put His name.
6. There were in the temple or nearby:
  - a. Vessels for Baal, the grove, the host of heaven
  - b. Idolatrous priests ordained to burn incense to Baal, the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven.
  - c. A house of sodomites next to the temple with male homosexual prostitutes.
  - d. High places of worship
  - e. A place to "pass their children through the fire to Molech"
  - f. Statues of horses to the honor the sun god
  - g. Chariots of the sun god
  - h. Altars honoring the gods of neighboring people
7. All of these abominations were set up in and around the holy place where God put His name, and those are reasons given for the judgments of God that ended the nations of Israel and Judah by the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon.
8. Because of the destruction that came on their nation, it seemed that Israel was a lost cause and would never be a place for His name again.
9. But there was still this promise regarding the place where God put His name:  
*2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, which are **called by my name**, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

#### IV. Conclusion: The people of the name

1. Last week we read of that verse that was a turning point regarding worship. Previously, worship had been tied to that geographic location associated with one nation.
2. But when a Samaritan woman challenged Jesus about which location was right, the place where the Patriarch Jacob had worshiped, there in Samaria, or in Jerusalem, Jesus introduced a new plan:  
*John 4:21-24*  
*21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.*  
*22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.*  
*23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father*

- in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*  
*24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*
3. True worship would no longer be tied to a single physical location where God placed His name. It would not be on that mountain in Samaria where they stood, or in Jerusalem where the temple was.
  4. But now God wanted to put His name on people, not real estate.
  5. That way, it could be people from all nations seeking God where they were.
  6. It got started this way with this proclamation of placing God's name on an individual:  
*Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*
  7. When Paul was baptized, Ananias said this to him:  
*Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*
  8. That last phrase expresses the meaning of the name being called upon him in baptism.
  9. Do you want to be a place where the Lord puts His name? Be baptized in His name.
  10. That is the call for all nations and peoples, because God doesn't dwell in man-made buildings:
  11. *Acts 17:24-27*  
*24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;*  
*25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;*  
*26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;*  
*27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:*
  12. And since we are talking about when the name meets a lost cause, a topic we will explore further next week, let us look at what happens to lost causes like what you and I were, when God found us.
  13. This is an event recorded about the overcoming church:  
*Rev 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*
  14. So whatever lost cause you might have been at one time, when God wrote His name on you, it will stick and you will dwell in God's eternal temple in heaven.