

Honour God by Honouring the Son (Pt 1 Honour)

Today we begin a new series on the word *honour* in the Holy Scriptures. There are 179 occurrences of the word in all of its various forms, in the Holy Scriptures. One hundred and forty six of those are for the word *honour*, 30 for *honourable*, 9 for *honoured*, 1 for *honourest*, 9 for *honouresth* and one occurrence of *honours*.

According to the Oxford dictionary, *honour* as a verb means "Respect highly; confer dignity upon", the on-line Oxford dictionary as a verb says, "fulfill an obligation or keep an agreement", and as a noun means, High respect; glory; reputation, good name; nobleness of mind...exalted position."

But what does it mean in the context of Scripture? In this study will find that *honour* has the sense of respect (see Lev.19: 15 & Judg.4: 9), it has link to a humility (see Prov.18: 12, 29: 23), a has a sense of obedience (see Ex.20: 12 cp. Col.3: 20), and an association with truthfulness (see 1Sam.9: 6), and in Ps.8: 5 is linked with the word glory.

In this teaching we will look at four points which include:-

1. God gave *honour* to Israel
2. Israel were to *honour* God
3. God the Father gave *honour* to the Son
4. Christians *honour* God the Father, through His Son

Let us add a little more detail to each of these 4 points:-

1. God gave *honour* to Israel

Deut 26:19 *And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.*

God gave *honour* to His people Israel, before they reached the promised land, whilst they were in the wilderness. But what do we mean when we say, that God gave *honour* to Israel. The clue is in the words 'make thee high' in our verse from chapter 26 and a similar phrase 'set thee on high' in Deut.28: 1. In these verses God is doing the work, He is making, He is picking Israel up from where they were as slaves to the Egyptians, to destroying those nations that were before them in the promised land that was flowing with milk and honey. He required their obedience to His laws, so that not only would His mighty works, His outstretched arm beat their enemies in war, even with insurmountable odds, but their keeping of His law was to put a difference between the surrounding nations and their abominations and the chosen nation of Israel (see Lev.21: 23). Just by being God's chosen people, the nation of Israel received *honour* by His grace. And so, in the works of His mighty hand (see Ex.32: 11 & Deut.4: 34) and in them obeying His voice, He *honoured* Israel, He gave them high respect amongst the surrounding nations, a reputation and a good name.

Did the Lord *honour* just the nation of Israel or individuals as well?

I think both.

In our verse in Deut.26: 19 the Lord *made* Israel to be high above all nations, in praise and in *honour*, that they would be a holy people unto Himself. So firstly, it was the Lord that gave them *honour* and second it was for the people as a nation.

Then in Ps.15: 4 the Lord promises to *honour* them that fear him. It is clear that at the time David was writing his audience were Jews, but as part of the Christian Scriptures, this passage could apply to us today. God will *honour* those who fear Him! And so the Lord will *honour* both the nation of Israel and the individuals who fear Him.

Thinking back to our meaning of the word *honour*, we can now say that God will elevate our position (in the same way that, when we humble ourselves he will lift us up - see Jam.4: 10). But remember if our position is elevated, if we receive any *honour* because of our wisdom, or our strength, or our understanding then the opposite is likely to happen, where we will be brought down a peg or two, we will be *dishonoured*.

Consider the example of Hezekiah; the Scriptures say that Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and *honour* and that the inhabitants of Jerusalem *honoured* him at this death. But was his exceeding *honour* given to him from God? Well it was likely that it was, because after he had sinned and the Lord promised to pour out His wrath upon Jerusalem, and Hezekiah was sick unto death (see 2Chro.32: 24) then Hezekiah humbled himself (see verse 26), then the Scriptures say that he had great *honour* (see 2Chro.32: 20, 26 & 27), and he feared the Lord (see Jer.26: 19). So God gave the nation of Israel honour and He gave individuals honour when they fear him (see Ps.15: 4).

2. Israel were to *honour* God

Judges 13: 17 *And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when they sayings come to pass we may do thee honour.*

See also 1Sam.2: 30

In 1Sam.2: 30 we see that God asks His people to *honour* Him and those that do, He will *honour*. In our first point we saw that God gives *honour* to Israel as a nation and as individuals and like Hezekiah.

How were Israel to show their God *honour*?

By their action and words, by their obedience to His word. Proverbs suggests that *honouring* the Lord was done with a person's substance, and with the first fruits of all their increase (see Prov.3: 9). The Levites were to offer a heave offering of a tenth part of the tithes from the children of Israel (see Num.18: 26), and by their giving they showed *honour* to the Lord.

Christians today are not required to give a particular percentage of their income or their time, but we read that God loves a cheerful giver (see 2Cor.9: 7) and so on that basis let every man give according to his heart. But perhaps we today *honour* God with our tithes and offerings. And how much we *honour* God is shown by the abundance we give back for the work, for the ministry. And so it is that a man shows *honour* to God by his deeds. The Scriptures have numerous examples of someone *honouring* the Lord, but there is also the example of Saul where he recognized that God had removed His *honour* from him. When Saul rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord rejected him from being King (see 1Sam.15: 25-35, specifically verse 30) and the following verses suggest that Saul recognized that his sin caused God to remove His *honour* from him.

Can we today make an application from the account of Saul, for those who, today claim to be Christians, but reject the Holy Scripture, they reject the Authorized Bible? Does God take away his *honour* from those who reject the word of the Lord?

My answer would be yes, but my answer is not saying that a person can loose his salvation, as we are not talking about salvation, but God's *honour* that He gives to a person.

Is there any Scriptural evidence for this; turn to 2Tim.2: 21, which is for the believer today and encourages us to depart from iniquity (see verse 19). Verse 21 says that *if a man therefore purge himself of these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work*. Again, this verse is not saying a man can purge himself of his sin, but rather when he departs from sin, and seeks not to dwell in his sin, he shall be a vessel unto *honour*, which suggests that if he (the Christian) does not seek to depart from his iniquity, (we know he does not loose his salvation) he is vessel that is not *honouring* God. Just as not all children *honour* their parents, so not all of God's children *honour* the Lord.

For this teaching, it is clear that God's children are to honour Him. Let us pray for our brothers and sisters in the Lord, that each would *honour* God in all that they do.

3. God the Father gave *honour* to His Son

Jn 8:54 *Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:*

See also 2Pet.1: 17 & Pss 8:5

We know from Jn.1: 32 that the Holy Spirit of God abode on the Lord Jesus Christ and then God gave His Only Begotten Son *honour*. But when did God bestow His *honour* on the Lord Jesus Christ?

It was not during the events recorded in Jn.8: 54, but rather at His baptism recorded in Jn.1: 32 or when He was transfigured at the top of a high mountain (see Matt.17: 2 & Mk.9: 2). The clue as to when He received *honour* from the Father is in 2Pet.1: 17, which says, *For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the exceeding glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. And these words were spoken to the Lord Jesus on these two occasions. Matt. 3: 17, Mk1: 11 & Lk.3: 22 record the baptism of Jesus and the subsequent words, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, and Matt.17: 1-5 records the transfiguration where the same words were spoken. Given that the Lord's ministry began after He received the Holy Spirit and that His whole ministry was one of showing *honour* to the Father, and the transfiguration event was some time into His ministry, I would suggest He received *honour* from the Father when He received the Holy spirit. This event is foretold by David in the book of Psalms (see chapter 8 verse 5) and then recorded in the book of Hebrews (see chapter 2 verses 7 & 9). In each account the *honour* is linked to glory (see also 2Pet.1: 17). God the Father sought to glorify His Son in giving Him honour.

Now read Jn.8: 54 again and you will see that the Lord Jesus Christ says His *honour* is nothing. So even though the Father sought to glorify His Son, the Son attributed none of the *honour* or glory to Himself. A man who was born of a

virgin, was perfectly sinless (see 1Pet.2: 22, 1Jn.3: 5), never broke one of the Old Testament laws, said that He had no *honour* of himself but the only *honour* He had was given to Him by the Father! And if he was given *honour* by the Father at His baptism, then His Father exalted Him and showed Him high respect! Yet the Lord Jesus did not take pride in His honour, He did not boast of His exalted position but was throughout His ministry meek and lowly (see Mat.11: 29).

Out point is; In the New Testament, God had done something new, He had given honour only to His Son. How are we to respond?

4. Christians *honour* God the Father, through the Son

Jn 5:23 *That all [men] should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

Prior to the cross event the nation of Israel were to *honour* their God, as we heard in point two (see Judg 13:17, 2Sam 23:19 & 23, 1Chr 4:9, 11:21 & 25). Today believers *honour* God the Father, only through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ and in doing so we *honour* the Father (see Jn.5: 23)

We see this shift from the Old Testament teaching to the New Testament in the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in our verse from John and the same sentiment expressed in chapter 8: 49 *Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father; and ye do dishonour me.* Imagine being a Jew during the time of Jesus hearing that you *dishonoured* Jehovah God, by *dishonouring* Jesus Christ. And clearly this would have been the majority who heard Him speak, for only 12 were His disciples, although others did believe that he was the Christ. But up until the Lord Jesus the only way they knew to *honour* God was by obeying the law, and the Pharisees were telling the people that the Lord Jesus blasphemed the law of Moses (see Jn.10: 32, Matt.14: 63, 64 & 10: 33). What a cataclysmic shift in thinking! In other places the Scriptures record more details of this shift, where it indicates that the law and the prophets were until John (see Lk.16: 16) and it is likely to have referred to John the Baptist. So after the law came John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the promised redeemer, the one prophesied in the Old Testament. And after John was the cross event, where the Jewish nation put to death their own promised Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God. And after His death Paul, a Pharisaical Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, was called as a chosen vessel by Christ to preach His name among the Gentiles after the nation of Israel rejected the gospel. It is through His name, that a person comes to be saved today, it is through belief that their sins are on the Saviour, the Christ, that they are saved. And it is through *honouring* Him today, that we *honour* God the Father.

Therefore if a Jehovah Witness comes to your door and tells you about Jesus being 'a god' and insists that Jesus was only a man, and does not indwell the fullness of the Godhead (see Col.2: 9), they are NOT *honouring* the Son, and they who do not *honour* the Son, do not *honour* Jehovah God.

Likewise if a Mormon comes to your door and tells you that Jesus Christ and Satan are spirit brothers, they are NOT *honouring* the Son, and they who do not *honour* the Son, do not honour God the Father.

If you are talking with a Muslim and they insist that Jesus Christ was only a prophet that lived 2000 years, and He is not God manifest in the flesh (see 1Tim.3: 16), they are NOT *honouring* the Son, and they who do not *honour* the Son, do not *honour* God (and that is *not* the Muslim god Allah, but the God of the Holy Scriptures).

Likewise, if you are talking with a Roman Catholic who says they pray the rosary and to Mary, instead of to the Lord Jesus Christ (because he is the angry son, that is appeased by His mother) then they are NOT *honouring* the Son, and they who do not *honour* the Son, do not *honour* the Father.

If you get cornered by a Hari Krishna, that tells you we are to love each other, and God's prophet, Jesus has been superseded by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in 1486 A.D., they are NOT *honouring* the Son, and they who do not *honour* the Son, do not *honour* God.

And if there be any others, like friends, family, work colleagues or acquaintances who blaspheme the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who use the name of Christ or Jesus as a swear word, they are NOT *honouring* the Son, and they who not *honour* the Son, do not *honour* God!

Let us encourage each other to do all things in a way that will *honour* the Lord Jesus Christ, that in doing so we may *honour* the Father. Let us pray for ourselves and our brethren to give all the glory and all the *honour* for anything that we do that is of God, to His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, that in doing so, we may *honour* the Father.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our first study on the word honour, we have covered four (4) points which include:-

1. God gave *honour* to Israel
2. Israel were to *honour* God
3. God the Father gave *honour* to the Son
4. Christians *honour* God the Father, through His Son. Amen! Amen and amen!