

18 March 2012

## Shame of the Heathen (Pt 1 Shame)

This is our first study on the word *shame* in the Holy Scriptures. There are 100 uses of shame, 4 of shamed, 1 of shamefacedness, 2 of shameful, 4 of shamefully and 1 of shamelessly. The word shame is closely related to ashamed and humiliation and so we will also consider their usage in Scriptures. There are 122 occurrences of the word ashamed and a 1 occurrence of the word humiliation.

The word *shame* in the Oxford dictionary means; "Feeling of humiliation excited by consequences of guilt or shortcoming, of having made oneself or been made ridiculous, or of having offended against propriety, modesty or decency".

In this study we will consider the meaning of the word *shame* in the Holy Scriptures, and look at three introductory points, that include:-

1. The feeling of *shame* is often seen in a person's face.
2. For those resurrected to damnation it is a *shame*.
3. The unjust feel no *shame*

Let us look at the meaning of the word *shame* from the Scriptures and then add a little more detail on our 3 points:-

i) In the Holy Scriptures *shame* is a feeling of humiliation

Ex 32:25 And when Moses saw that the people [were] naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto [their] shame among their enemies:)

See 2Sam 13:13, Isa 20:4, 47:3, Nh 3:5, Jer 13:26, Mic 1:11 (passages include a reference to nakedness),

ii) In the Holy Scriptures *shame* is a feeling of guilt - Judg 18:7 Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that [were] therein, how they dwell careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and [there was] no magistrate in the land, that might put [them] to shame in [any] thing; and they [were] far from the Zidonians, and had no business with [any] man.

See also Eze 16:52

iii) In the Holy Scriptures *shame* is a feeling of loss of respect or honour

1Sam 20:34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month; for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

See 2Sam 6:20, 2Chr 32:21, Pss 69:19, Prov 13:18 and Hos 2:5

iv) In the Holy Scriptures *shame* is similar to reproach, and hence linked to the feeling of disgrace.

Prov 19:26 He that wasteth [his] father, [and] chaseth away [his] mother, [is] a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

See also Pss 69:7, 19, Prov 19:26, Isa 30:51, 54:4, Jer 23:40, 51:51 and Eze 36:15.

If we consider briefly the Greek behind the word *shame*, we find that *shame* is associated with the words dishonest, disgrace and ashamed. See Strong's no. 152 - *aischune* (from 153) which according the Strong's Greek dictionary means "shame or disgrace :- dishonesty or shame." Strong's no.153 - *aichunomai* is common between the word *shame* and ashamed, as identified in the meaning from the Strong's dictionary, "from *aischos* (disfigurement, i.e.: disgrace) to feel shame (for oneself) be ashamed,"

The suggestion that shame is associated with the word disfigurement makes sense when we consider a disfigured person. Take for example the young model who had acid thrown at her face and end up badly disfigured. There was a documentary on TV where the woman explained how she felt ashamed of her disfigured face, such that for a long time she stayed inside. No doubt it was a combination of feelings like fear, distrust of men and *shame* caused by her disfigured face. Another Greek word common to *shame* and *ashamed* is Strong's no. 2617 - *kataishchuno* which according to the Strong's dictionary means "shame down, disgrace, put to the blush - confound, dishonour, shame."

When we conclude our look at the meaning of the word *shame* in the Scriptures we find that the word means, humiliation, guilt, dishonour, disgrace and confound.

Let us now examine our 3 points;

1. The feeling of *shame* is often seen in someones face.

Eze 7:18 They shall also gird [themselves] with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them; and shame [shall be] upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

See 2Chron.32: 21, Ps.44: 15, 69: 7, 88: 16, Jer.13: 26, 51: 51 & Ez.7: 18.

A person who feels *shame*, could very well have a signal on their face, perhaps the same as a person who is lying. According to the experts a trained observer can tell if someone is lying by the way they look when they are answering a question. According to our verse, the feeling of *shame* is no different in this respect. When we look at Scriptures like Jer.51: 51 we find that *shame* can cover the whole face (see also Ps.44: 15 & 69: 7), so perhaps it is easily detectable when a person is feeling shame, or a sense of guilt, humiliation, disrespect or disgrace.

Have you ever noticed in yourself, or has anyone ever picked up your facial expressions at the moment you were feeling *shame*?

It would also appear that before a person seeks the Lord they feel *shame*, they are ashamed of their sin and such feelings are seen in their face (see Ps.88: 16 says *Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O Lord*). Which indicates that if we are preaching or sharing the gospel with a lost person and they are convicted of their sin, and in righteousness and in judgment (see Jn.16: 8), that they will have a feeling of shame come across their face and we *may*, Lord willing, be able to pick that up because, as we have seen, when a person feels *shame* it is likely to cover the whole face. This should not surprise us, because we know at the point of conviction, a lost man feels guilty of his sin before God (as did the publican in Lk 18: 13), and guilt is a feeling that is associated with the word *shame* as we have seen in our meaning from the Scriptures.

Hence when we preach the gospel it is often the case that we first preach the law (it is recorded that when Surgeon went to a new town he would spend the first 1 week preaching on the law) that those who have ears to hear, would have the knowledge of sin (because without the law, there is no knowledge of sin - see Rom.3: 20). And it is only when a person has a knowledge of their sin that they feel ashamed, guilty and from such a heart comes belief in the Lord Jesus Christ having our sin placed on Him at the cross, from such a belief comes salvation! Praise God!

At one particular passover feast recorded in 2Chron.30: 15 the priests were noted to be ashamed and sanctified themselves, hence they knew the need for forgiveness because they felt *shame*, they felt guilty of sin. Ezra spelt this out even clearer during a prayer for the nation of Israel, where he expressed to God the *shame* he felt for the sins of the nation, so much that he blushed to lift up his face to the Lord (see Ez.9: 6).

Let us be conscious when we are preaching Christ crucified, or sharing the Lord with our neighbour of how the feeling of *shame* may be visible on a lost man's face at the moment of conviction, that we would have wisdom to invite that person to believe, and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

## *2. The resurrection to damnation is a shame to them who go there*

Dan 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt.

In our previous teaching we looked at the word resurrection and it is interesting to note that in this teaching we have found a point that (as yet) is not covered under the word resurrection. We see that those who are dead in their sins, those who have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and are dead, they will be resurrected to the *shame* of everlasting contempt in hell. Perhaps this is a place where the word *shame* could reflect a sense of disgrace, such that those who reject God's only begotten Son are disgraced for an eternity to everlasting torment, to everlasting destruction, to everlasting contempt.

I am not sure if you have seen any movies like Papillon where lepers are segregated from society because they have a contagious disease? Well if you have not, imagine for a moment the *shame* you would feel being isolated on an island because you had leprosy and when any one came near you they would be horrified by your looks. Perhaps those who are resurrected to everlasting contempt feel something like such *shame*, but the difference is, the lepers are only segregated for the time they have leprosy, whereas a lost man who rejects the Lord Jesus Christ is segregated in hell for **all** eternity, a place of *shame* a place of everlasting contempt.

Okay, so none of us have seen the movie Papillon and none of us have experienced leprosy, but what effects us that *shames* us and so segregates us from others in society? Anything?

Once again, you may feel this *shame* for a short period or for a long period of time, but think about how you would feel if you were *shamed* for an eternity...that's how the heathen will feel when they get to hell, rejected by

God, put on God's rubbish dump (so to speak). The Lord will treat those in hell, as if they were never born or simply blotted out as we see is the request of David in Ps.69: 28 *Wrt them he blotted out of the book of the living* (see also Ps.109: 13). Is there any wonder that those that go to such a place of eternal suffering will feel *shame* for eternity. Such a disgrace, such a *shame* for a person to be blotted out of all existence for eternity by the God who created them.

How would Judas have felt after he had just betrayed the Lord? Matt,27: 3-5 tells us how he felt.

He felt *shame*, so he tried to give back the money he received from the chief priests and elders and then when that didn't work he cast down the pieces of silver and went and hanged himself.

How could he ever show his face again in society, having just betrayed the Just One?

The only way he thought of dealing with his *shame*, his guilt was to take his own life, in a similar way to many of our young that decide to escape out of their depths of despair. But what was the result of him hanging himself? Eternal judgment and *shame*.

Let us be ever fervant in warning those we know who are unsaved, such that they have an opportuntiy to not feel like Judas did, or any other lost person who is currently feeling the flames of hell and is weeping and wailing with *shame*.

### 3. The unjust feels no shame

Zeph 3:5 *The just Lord [is] in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.*

In our verse in Zephaniah we see that the unjust, the sinner knows no *shame*. And as we have seen in our earlier point, the unsaved, the unjust do feel shamed or guilty before the Lord, just before their conversion, just before they call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and believe that he bore their sin on himself at the cross, and that he rose from the dead. For a sinner would never repent if he did not feel guilty of his sin or *shame* because of his transgressions. But if that unjust man never comes to the point of conversion then according to the Scriptures he knows NO *shame* whilst he has breath in his lungs.

You see the truth of this in our world where standards of what is acceptable continue to degrade. The world is becoming more extravagent in the ways which the lost shamelessly uncover themselves;

Dress styles have changed away from long dresses to styles that hug the contours of the body, with no shame.

The young adolescent male who walk down the street with his underwear showing and is jeans half way down his buttocks, with no shame.

The sodomites parade (Hero parade) with no shame.

If society in any way stand up against, such standards as being not acceptable, then those involved go beyond simply having no *shame*, and point out the intolerance of our society. But if you had no standards and everyone tolerates everyone and everything, then we would all do *that which was right in his own eyes*, which is what Israel did when they had no king (see Jud.17:6 & 21: 25). She took on the idols and the false gods of the heathens, of the surrounding nations and was eventually removed from the land and shamed.

Do you stand up for biblical standards?

Have you drawn a line in the sand and said, "x" is unacceptable?

Because you can be sure that the heathen have not. They accept whatever the majority or the government tell them is acceptable without any shame, we see this in many countries around the world and in the Scriptures.

Let us encourage each other again to pray for those who have not been justified by the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they would know the feeling of shame and guilt associated with their sins, whilst they have breath in their lungs. For if they remain a heathen, if the remain unjust then they will know no *shame*.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our introductory study on the word *shame* in the Holy Scriptures we have learnt the meaning of the word within the context of Scripture and 3 poitns which include:-

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2. For those resurrected to damnation it is a *shame*.
3. The unjust feel no *shame*