

1st April 2012

The Glory of the heathen is their shame (Pt 2)

This is our second study on the word *shame* in the Holy Scriptures. In our first study we looked at the dictionary meaning of the word and considered some of the Greek words behind the English word *shame*. We found that *shame* in the Scriptures can mean humiliation, guilt, dishonour, disgrace and confound. In our previous study we covered three (3) points which included:-

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*

In this our second study we will consider 4 additional points, which include:-

1. The heathen are clothed with *shame*
2. The false gods of the heathen are a *shame* unto them.
3. The glory of the heathen is their *shame*
4. It is *shameful* for a man to answereth a matter before he heareth it.

Let us add a little more detail to our four points:-

1. The heathen are clothed with *shame*

Job 8:22 *They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.*
See also Ps.35: 4, 26 & 109: 29.

The unbeliever is clothed with their own *shame*, their own guilt, humiliation, dishonour and disgrace whilst the believer is clothed with salvation *from the Lord* (see 61: 10) and encouraged to be clothed with humility (see 1Pet. 5: 5). Our verse in Job has Bildad saying that those who hate Job (a believer) shall be clothed with *shame*. I would suggest that those that oppose and hate Job are similar to the non-believers today who hate the Christian because they hate God's Only Begotten Son (see Jn15: 18). The non believers today may not say they hate us, but the god whom they serve (Satan, the devil) hates us and he hates the God whom we serve, and therefore we summarize that they who reject the Lord will hate us. And as with Job, those who hate us are the heathen and they are clothed with *shame*.

Incidentally, when we turn to our verse in Ps.35: 26 it confirms the meaning of *shame* to include ashamed and dishonour. And David refers to them (his adversaries) as those who would rejoice in his hurt, hence they are similar to those whom Job spoke about, they are likely to refer to the non-believers, those who reject God.

Do ever look at the heathen and see them clothed with *shame* metaphorically speaking, in the same way God looks on you and sees you clothed in the righteousness of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ?

If you were to wander down Queen street and see those who live on the street you would see something of what it means to be clothed in shame, as I am sure that none who find themselves in that situation feel good about their circumstances, they all no doubt hope for something better. Perhaps any family where the Dad is a well respected member of the community one moment and the next he goes off the rails and finds himself without money, without a roof over his head and living on the street. The son or daughter who looked on their Dad in such an instance may recognise our metaphor, of *shame* being the only clothing that their Dad wears.

In our previous study we mentioned that the heathen feels no *shame*, but then in this point we note that he is clothed with *shame*. How can that be? It again comes down to their blindness. They do not feel *shame*, but they are clothed with *shame* they just do not recognise it or know of it.

Let us pray for opportunities to talk with the lost and share the gospel of Christ, that through God's grace, He would cleanse their sin shed their clothes of *shame* when they believe the gospel of Christ crucified.

2. The false gods of the heathen are a *shame*.

Hos 9:10 *I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time: [but] they went to Baal-peor, and separated themselves unto [that] shame; and [their] abominations were according as they loved.*
See also Jer 11:13

When you read Numbers 25: 1-5 you will establish who Baal-peor is. Verse one says that Israel went to Shittim and committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab, then in verse 2 it explains the whoredom. Israel joined herself to those who made sacrifices unto other gods, and bowed down unto those false gods (in disobedience to

the first two commandments - see Ex.20: 3 - 5). The fierce anger of the Lord was provoked against the children of Israel for their rebellion and whoredom, for they had separated themselves unto that *shame*. Who was that shame? Baal-peor, the gods of the Moabs, the gods of the heathen, the god of this world today. Hence my point from this verse in Hosea 9, that the false gods of the heathen are a *shame*!

That includes Allah, Budha and Krishna!

All the gods, which the heathen worship, they are a *shame*, they are a disgrace. In a similar way that Baal was a *shame* to his worshippers in the book of 1st Kings, chapter 18. Baal was deaf, dumb and blind to the requests of his worshippers. Elijah mocked the worshippers and said "Cry aloud for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or preadventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked" (see 1Kg.18: 27).

Why would the Baal prophets and worshippers, spend their time talking, praying, fasting and bowing down to a dumb, blind and deaf god? Such is the blindness of the devil. Baal was a *shame*, a disgrace and a dishonour to his worshippers, just as his worshippers and prophets were a disgrace and *shame* to the God and the prophets of the living God. Hence, in the account recorded for us in 1Kgs 18, both Baal and his worshippers are *shamed*, they are disgraced.

What is difference between the Baal-Peor of the Old Testament and Allah, or Buddah or Krishna, or any other false god? NONE!

They are all a *shame*, they are all a disgrace and dishonour, they are all deaf, dumb and blind!

Wouldn't it be amazing to prove their *shame* to their worshippers as Elijah did in the account of 1st Kings?

How can the believers today prove to the Muslim that his god, is no god, that his god is deaf, blind and dumb, that his god is a *shame* unto him?

How about showing the Muslim the truth of the Holy Scriptures? To show them that in the Authorized Bible (AB) God has done a miraculous work and provided His children with a pure, perfect, preserved revelation and within its pages is the truth of the gospel of Christ crucified. And unlike any other god, when the Lord Jesus Christ HEARS and SEES a penitent sinner to save him from his sin, and he believes in his heart that the Lord Jesus Christ died for his sin, and that he was raised from the dead, the God of the Bible does a miraculous work in his heart. The blood of Christ washes away their sin (see Rev.1: 5) and they become a new creature. NO other god, hears the prayers of his worshippers and no other god, sees their sin, and no other god has provided a one off sacrifice for everyones sin to be cleansed, as the Bible promises. ALL other gods are false, all other gods are a *shame*!

The closest a believer can come to understand the shame of other religious followers is decried by Paul in 1Cor.15: 19 "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." And note, he says, of ALL men, we would be most miserable. Perhaps most ashamed, if only in this life we have hope in the Christ. But Praise and Glory to God, for according to the Scriptures, Christ was resurrected from the dead, and therefore our hope in Him will be in this life and the next and so, once saved, we will never feel the *shame* of those who worship false gods. So, let us pray for their worshippers, for the god of this world has blinded their eyes and their hearts from the truth of the gospel.

3. The glory of the heathen is their *shame*

Php 3:19 *Whose end [is] destruction, whose God [is their] belly, and [whose] glory [is] in their shame, who mind earthly things.*)

See also Is.22: 18 & Hab.2: 16

Our verse from Philipians does not specifically use the name heathen, but if you read the preceeding 2 verses, especially verse 18, it suggests that there are so-called brethren amongst us that walk not according to the Scriptures but whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly and who mind earthly things. I suggest to you that such are unsaved heathen who have crept in unawares (see Jude 1: 4) and are the enemies of the cross of Christ (see Phil.3: 18). The glory of such men, is their *shame*, their dishonour and their disgrace. Whereas the glory of the saved man, is his God. Hence the saved man is the opposite of the heathen who is the enemy of the cross of Christ. The glory of the believer is the cross of Christ (see Gal.6: 14).

What does Paul mean when he says, *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?*

To glory according to the Oxford dictionary, means to "exhalt renown, honourable fame; subject for boasting, special distinction, ornament, pride; adoring praise & thanksgiving". Paul is boasting not in his works, but in the word of Christ on the cross, this is confirmed in 2Cor.11: 10, Paul is giving special distinction not to himself, but to the work of Christ on the cross.

Similarly the heathen boast of their *shame*, their guilt, their humiliation, their disgrace and dishonour. The heathen give special distinction to themselves, their *shame*, their guilt, their humiliation, their disgrace and their dishonour!

Have you ever been at a 21st birthday party where the young man celebrating his birthday gets blindingly drunk, where his best friends, those who care for him, encourage him to drink the full contents of beer from the yard glass? What is the end result? The young man vomits up his 1.42 litres of ale. Have you ever heard the banter, the discussion that goes on after such parties? If it was anything like my brother's 21st the young men will talk of the night before with joy and glory in the one who vomited up the ale...such is their glory! Yet, before God, such is their shame, their humiliation, their disgrace and their dishonour! That is a picture of the heathen, whose God is their belly, whose end is destruction and mind earthly things, who glory in their shame.

When you look at the behaviour of Paul, who gloried save in the cross of Christ, then you look at the heathen who gets drunk and glories in his vomiting and how many pints he can put away. The heathen glories in his *shame*. Do the heathen see the difference, does it register to them, how *shameful* their actions are? NO! Why? As we have said in earlier studies, the answer is blindness! The god of this world hath blinded their hearts (see Eph.4: 18). And because the heathen desires to answer a matter before he has heard it, hence when a believer begins to share the gospel they often will answer them first without giving them the grace and courtesy of listening before they answer the matter. Such is the content of our final point in this study. To conclude this point, let us remind ourselves that the heathen glory in their *shame*.

4. It is *shameful* for a man to answereth a matter before he heareth it.

Prov 18:13 *He that answereth a matter before he heareth [it], it [is] folly and shame unto him.*

If a person wants to answer you before he has heard what you have to say, it is folly and *shame* unto him. We are aware of the meaning of the word *shame*, but what does folly mean? According to the Oxford dictionary folly means "being foolish, want to good sense, unwise conduct; foolish act, idea or practice, ridiculous thing..." So folly is foolishness, as we see from Prov.14: 24, *but the foolishness of fools is folly* (see also 15: 2, 14). And we find in Prov.24: 9 that even the thought of doing foolishness is sin.

So if a person wants to answer you before hearing what you have to say, such an action is foolishness, it is a sin unto him. But it is also a *shame* unto him, it is a disgrace to him and a dishonour. Yet, how many times do people shut you down or walk away, or answer you before you have finished sharing the gospel? Most want to answer the matter before they hear it, because they don't want to hear it, they don't want to hear about what God has done in Christ Jesus. The god of this world, our adversary the devil, does NOT want them to hear a concise gospel message. So the heathen will often answer before you have finished sharing it. And that is foolishness, that action is folly, it is unwise conduct and is *shameful*!

The same applies to Christian as it does to the heathen. There are Christians who when you speak to them about the Bible do not want to know, will not listen, will not hear about the errors in the text of their beloved NIV. They switch off, won't let you finish or answer you before they hear the matter. Such behaviour is folly, is foolishness, such action is a *shame* unto them.

Let us all be mindful of switching off, of answering a question before someone has finished asking it, such behaviour is of our flesh and is a *shame* unto us. A question to think about for the next 20 years:- How can we learn the truth if we assume to know the truth, and do not listen to others who want to share their version of the truth? In other words; how can we learn the truth if we always answer before we have listened to what the other person is saying?

In my youth I would score top marks for answering my Dad or my tradesman without listening to what they said, or without letting them finish their question. As an apprentice it was one of my strengths.

I would say to my Dad, "I know, I know", as he was sharing a matter.

I would say to the tradesman who was teaching me, "I know, I know".

The consequence of such action: after I became a qualified electrician and I was given my first job to repair an injection moulding machine at F&P, I got to the machine, with all the supervisors standing round and I got the drawings out, and couldn't read them nor understand the detailed wiring. Hence I was unable to begin fault finding. I remember saying to myself, "why, why why did I not shut my mouth and listen to my tradesman, why did I seek to answer the matter before I had heard it?" Well, I felt humiliated, disgraced and shameful for having to go back to my fellow electricians and ask for help, ask for someone to show me again how to fault find from the drawing. It was a *shame* unto me, all because I was so keen and eager to answer a matter before I heard it.

Let me encourage each other to take on board this teaching from the Scriptures. Let us each understand the folly and the *shame* associated with answering a matter before we hear it.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our second study on the word shame, we have covered 4 points which include:-

5. The heathen are clothed with *shame*
6. The false gods of the heathen are a *shame* unto them.
7. The glory of the heathen is their *shame*
8. It is *shameful* for a man to answereth a matter before he heareth it. Amen!