

## “Neither Could They Blush”

Jeremiah 6:15

### I. INTRODUCTION: I

I. 2 Let's recall a bit of Old Testament history:

- A. In the time of Moses, God fulfilled the promise to make from Abraham a “great nation” (Gen. 12:2) as He transformed Israel from a rag tag group of slaves into a nation (Exodus).
- B. God gave the nation of Israel its own law(s) on Mount Sinai (Ex. 20:1-17).
- C. God also promised Abraham that this “great nation” would possess a “land” (Gen. 12:1).
  - (1) However, Israel refused to enter the “Promised Land,” Canaan, due to “evil report” of the 10 faithless spies (Num. 14).
  - (2) As a result, God sentenced them to 40 years of wandering in the wilderness (Num. 14:20-38).
- D. Just before his death, Moses warns Israel about the blessings of obedience and the cursing of disobedience (Lev. 26; Deut. 7:12-24; 28).
  - (1) Blessing of obedience: Deut. 28:1-14  
**Deut. 28:1-2:** “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God.”
  - (2) Cursing of disobedience: Deut. 28:15-68  
**Deut. 28:15:** “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.”
- E. After the death of King Solomon (931 B.C.) Israel split into the Northern Kingdom (Israel; 10 tribes; Jeroboam) and Southern Kingdom (Judah; 2 tribes; Rehoboam).
  - (1) In its ~209 year history, not one of the Israel's kings was righteous; God fulfilled His promise if they were disobedient by allowing the Assyrians to carry them into captivity in 722 B.C.
  - (2) The Judah mostly had evil kings, but a few were righteous (e.g., Josiah, Hezekiah).
- F. Sadly, Judah (Southern Kingdom) failed to learn the lessons they should have by the evil example of the Northern Kingdom, Israel.
- G. This brings us to the time of Jeremiah the prophet.
  - (1) Jeremiah began his prophetic career ~627 B.C.
  - (2) He lived in Jerusalem and prophesied for some 40 years.
  - (3) 3 Jeremiah is called the “weeping prophet of Israel,” as he lamented over God's people.
  - (4) God uses Jeremiah as His mouthpiece as He is about to bring an end to the holy city and send His people into the furnace of affliction in Babylonian Captivity.
- H. Sadly the people of Judah, through their own arrogance and pride, grew further and further away from God and they refused to accept the corrective message of Jeremiah's preaching.
- I. And that brings us to the text of our lesson.

- (1) In Jeremiah chapter 6 the prophet announces the impending doom God is about to send upon His disobedient people.
  - (2) They were about to suffer a “disaster” and a “great destruction” (6:1). Why? “...they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them; they find no delight in it.” (6:10)
  - (3) God further accuses them: “Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely.” (6:13)
  - (4) The false prophets and the people thought everything was just fine, “Saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ When there is not peace.” (6:14)
  - (5) Then finally they refused to admit their sin: “‘Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down,’ says the LORD.” (Jer. 6:15, 8:12)
2. **4** These were the words the Lord uses to describe the doom of Jerusalem and Judah, they would be cast down for their rejection of the righteousness of the Lord.
    - A. Judah had chosen to commit abomination in preference to following the way of the Lord.
    - B. In describing her attitude toward these crimes, it is stated that the people “were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.”
  3. These words indicated the depth to which they had fallen in rejecting the will of God.
    - A. Normally sinners experience “shame” (i.e., their consciences bother them!).
    - B. There is hope for the sinner who experiences “shame” over his sin! Shame indicates one has not totally seared their conscience; they feel some level of remorse over their sin.
    - C. Not so with these people! They had fallen so low they “were not at all ashamed” of their sins.
    - D. As evidence of their lack of shame; God says, “neither could they blush.”
      - (1) Webster defines the word blush: “1. to become red in the face from shame, embarrassment, etc. 2. To be ashamed (at or for).”
      - (2) That these people experienced no shame, then it is no wonder that they could not blush.
      - (3) So, being able to blush is a very complimentary thing.
      - (4) Rather than it being something one should attempt to hide or conceal, it is on many occasions a badge of honor.
      - (5) Perhaps, the most outstanding make-up a young girl can wear are rosy cheeks that have become that way from blushing at improperly spoken word or a suggestive glance.
  4. **5** For a few minutes let us consider some important lessons we can learn from these people (claiming to be God’s people!) that “Neither Could They Blush.”
  5. May God help all of us to abhor sin and flirtations with sin to such an extent that we can blush when we are confronted with evil.

## I. DISCUSSION:

### 1. **6** Blushing is an index of character:

- A. People taught and trained in the righteousness of God, recognize the shame of sin.

- (1) They are embarrassed when confronted with immodesty of dress, off-colored stories and suggestive acts, etc.
- (2) Their blushing conveys that such is abnormal with them.
- B. On the other hand, the person who rejoices in such and seeks pleasure from such circumstances would never be expected to blush (**Prov. 3:35**: “*But shame shall the legacy of fools.*”).
  - (1) Their acceptance of sin eliminates the grounds for blushing.
  - (2) They have seared their conscience to the point that sin no longer bothers them.
- C. I am not concluding that a blushing person will always refrain from the sin or suggestive language/acts, but at least it conveys that they are embarrassed at the time and they recognize that what is occurring is not routine and is not acceptable!
- D. In our “modern” (**Eccl. 1:9**: “...*there is nothing new under the sun.*”) society, the blushing cheek is deemed naïve and old-fashioned (‘old goody two shoes’).
  - (1) Sin is “watered down” to such a degree it is very seldom referred to as sin any more.
  - (2) In fact, it is hard to find a plain, old-fashioned sinner anymore!
    - (a) Alcoholism is deemed just another illness.
    - (b) Cursing used to be considered the language of the crude and uneducated, but now it is common in all levels of society; despite educational level or social standing; it’s cool.
      - (i) It’s hard to find a movie today where the f-word is not used in nearly every sentence.
      - (ii) Remember when the word “damn” in a movie, *Gone With the Wind*, caused a great stir?!
    - (c) Pre-marital relations are not sinful anymore; they serve as a useful way for two people to get to “know each other better”; to know if they are suited for marriage.
    - (d) When I was a young man, even people that didn’t attend church knew “living together” was wrong (“shackin up”); but now even some of the modern “clergymen” are advocating trial marriages.
  - (3) A murderer is not a sinner; he killed because his parents mistreated him, or society didn’t give him “equal opportunities.” It’s society’s fault!
- E. We will quickly lose your ability to blush if we use society’s values to guide your life.
  - (1) This is why all who profess to be God’s children must stay close to the book of books and not be caught up with worldly thinking.
  - (2) Remember what happened to the Judeans when they lost their ability to blush! Babylonian Captivity
  - (3) Losing our ability to blush could cost us dearly! Hell!

## 2. **7** One must be trained to blush:

- A. I recognize that blushing may be more pronounced in some individuals than in others.
  - (1) Hereditary factors may play a part in this.
  - (2) However, I believe training plays a more important role: nature vs. nurture?
- B. As parents we have the duty to teach our children God’s Word.

- (1) We must teach them what is right and what is wrong.
- (2) We must point them to the word of God and that will train them to blush.
- C. They need to be schooled to recognize words and acts that should prompt blushing in one with a conscience trained by God's Word.
  - (1) Our society is totally fascinated with sex; every kind of sex, normal and abnormal.
  - (2) When I was in high school, if a girl got pregnant it was a badge of shame.
  - (3) Now high schools have their own daycare centers!
- D. But pregnancy out of wedlock is only symptomatic of other problems:
  - (1) Suggestive movies, TV programs, internet videos, etc.
  - (2) Immodest dress (not enough clothes to wad a shotgun shell).
- E. As parents are we properly teaching our children? Other sins also! Cursing, alcohol use, drug use, lying, cheating, stealing...
  - (1) Proper dress?
  - (2) Proper entertainment?
  - (3) Proper friends?
- F. Many of our children either never obey the gospel, or they obey the gospel then fall away and become "children of the world."
- G. Why? Because as parents many of us fail miserably in rearing our children to blush!
  - (1) What example are we setting when it comes to dress?
  - (2) What example are we setting when it comes to the entertainment we chose?
  - (3) What example do we set when it comes to the friends we associate with?
- H. They permit them to follow the fashions of the world in wearing mini-skirts, shorts, participating in mixed swimming, and displaying their nudity on every hand.
- I. Examine yourself! By the life you are living...
  - (1) Are you encouraging your children to flirt with sin?
  - (2) Is the example you are setting leading them toward God? Or, is it leading them away from God?

### 3. **8** Blushing can be lost:

- A. The Lord said of Judah "*Nor did they know how to blush.*"
- B. Was this always their condition? I hardly think so!
- C. Even though most of their kings were wicked, there were at least two notable exceptions: Josiah and Hezekiah.
  - (1) Hezekiah (716-687 B.C.):
    - (a) He reopened the temple and its worship, tore down all idols and high places.
    - (b) He restored observance of the Passover and invited all Israel to participate.
    - (c) He cooperated with the prophet Isaiah.
    - (d) I imagine there were some like Hezekiah who knew how to blush.
  - (2) Josiah (641-609 B.C.):

- (a) He “walked in the ways of his father David” (2 Chr. 34:2).
  - (b) He totally destroyed idol worship in every aspect, repaired the temple, restored observance of the Law of Moses.
  - (c) He kept the Passover in exactness, destroyed Jeroboam’s altars, burned the false prophet’s bones, and executed the priests of the high places.
  - (d) I imagine a lot of the people in Josiah’s day knew how to blush.
- D. In the innocence of their former days of faith, they knew what shame was in failing to do the will of God, but such was not the case in the days of Jeremiah.
- (1) They had sinned grievously and had reached such a depth that they could not blush.
  - (2) A condition which was brought upon themselves!
  - (3) One loses the ability to blush by consistently violating their conscience by engaging in sinful conduct! (**1 Tim. 4:2**: “...having their own conscience seared”; Rom. 14).
- E. We need to take heed! Rom. 15:4
- (1) The same can definitely happen to God’s children today.
  - (2) We need to keep our lives in tune with the will of God lest we find that we have drifted to the point that we cannot blush!

**2 Pet. 2:20-22:** *“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.’”*

## I. DISCUSSION: 9

1. May the Lord keep helping us to be ashamed of sin and being able to blush!
2. How about you? Does nudity, foul language, etc. cause you to blush?
  - A. Does it bother your conscience when co-workers, friends, acquaintances, relatives engage in ungodly behavior? Drink beer, tell dirty jokes?
  - B. Do you go along? Smile? Nod in agreement?
  - C. Or, do you “blush”? Voice your disagreement? Walk away? Refuse to participate? Make it clear you don’t agree with what’s going on?
3. If you’ve lost the ability to “blush” you can regain it by cleansing your conscience by repenting of sin (\*\*2 Cor. 7:1; \*\*Heb. 9:14).
4. Invitation

Adapted from a sermon by Bobby K. Thompson.