

# **"God is not ashamed to be called their God."**

Sunday, September 24, 2006

**"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:16.**

**"And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. Ye therefore do greatly err." Mk. 12:26-27.**

**"Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Ex. 3:6,15.**

Why is God not ashamed to be called their God? (Note: The text does not say God is not ashamed to be their God – but to be called their God – i.e., that he would be so styled, named, called – that he would take that name and title unto himself, to wit: "this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Ex. 3:15, above. John Owen: "He assumes unto himself this title, whereby he will be known and called on, as by his own name. And this was the greatest honor that they could be made partakers of. He who is the great possessor of heaven and earth, the God of the whole world, of all nations, of all creatures, would be known, styled, and called on in a peculiar manner; and he distinguisheth himself thereby from all false gods whatever.")

Again, why is God not ashamed to be called their God? Because they did gladly forsake country, kindred, and father's house, and thereupon "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Heb. 11:13. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." Gen. 12:1. Abram "obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Heb. 11:8. This was a bold, open, notable and conspicuous confession of faith – likely to inspire hatred and resentment. Openly and dramatically forsaking and denouncing these three things – country, kindred, father's house – was dangerous in the extreme. For these three things comprise all that is pleasant, useful and desirable to unregenerate mankind. We have experienced the wrath of these murderous flag-worshipping idolaters. John Owen: "As man is naturally inclined to the love of them (country, kindred, father's house), to adhere unto them, to value them and delight in them, these are things which, by all sorts of circumstances, do from their nativity (i.e., earliest infancy) insinuate themselves into the minds and affections of men, (considered to be most useful and beneficial unto life and the comforts of life), so as that they cannot be separated from them without the greatest convulsions of nature."

Yet again, why is God not ashamed to be called their God? Because they “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God...they declare plainly that they seek such a country...and they desire that better country, that is an heavenly.” Heb. 11:10, 14, 16. The operative word is desire. It is a strong word – translated coveted in 1 Tim. 6:10, where it speaks of a strong craving for money: “For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” This kind of earnest desire – a holy craving – for heaven includes a sense of want and unsatisfiedness in all things present and visible in this present evil world. It includes a just and Scripturally-informed appreciation of the worth and excellency of heaven – “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” 1 Pet. 1:4. And it includes a Scripturally-informed understanding of the way and means whereby heaven may be attained: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ – even “the blood of the everlasting covenant.” 1 Pet. 1:2 and Heb. 13:20. The faith of God’s elect holds right notions of immortality and glory after this life, and that is to be in heaven above with God himself, who prepared it for them. And, heaven – and their earnest desire (a holy craving) for heaven – occupies their minds day and night, 24/7.

## **Again, why does God delight to call himself – i.e., name himself – the God of Abraham (et al.)?**

This is the greatest privilege, honor, advantage, and security that anyone can be made partakers of, that God will bear the name and title of their God. So it is with all the elect, by virtue of their relation unto Christ: “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” Jn. 20:17. “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Cor. 6:16.

To say that God was not ashamed is the equivalent of saying that God took this title to himself as his honor and glory. If it be asked, how this title could be any glory unto God; I say, it was so, in that by virtue thereof, and to fill it up, he glorified his grace, his goodness, his truth, and his power – more than all else that he did besides in the world. Each of God’s elect is a shining trophy of his grace, power, love and faithfulness. The captain led each of the children to glory. Heb. 2:10. In being thus their God, he does such things in them and by them and for them, that they shall be a glory to him. Their graces, their sufferings, their obedience, were his glory. As it is written, “he will be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto his people,” Isa. 28:5, – his owning of them shall be their crown and diadem; so is it also said that they “shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of their God,” Isa. 62:3. He will, by his Spirit and graces in them, make them his crown and diadem; which he will hold up and show to all the world.

“It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13. The mystery now revealed is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Col. 1:27. “Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight.” Heb. 13:21.