

God At Work

The last chapter of Joshua describes Joshua renewing the covenant at the end of his life, after the people had conquered and settled in the land of promise. Joshua 24:1 reads, “And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.” For the next 23 verses, Joshua reviews what God had done for Israel. This address gives us concrete evidence how God worked among His people.

First, there is the grace of God. Joshua 24:2-4 says, “And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac. And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.” God, in His grace, called Abraham out of idolatry to serve Him (Genesis 12:1-3). The Lord had a plan which would ultimately come to its fruition in Jesus Christ. God also allowed Abraham to wander in the land of Canaan, the land his descendants would possess (Genesis 23:4). God then gave Abraham Isaac and the seed promise began to be fulfilled (cp. Galatians 3:16).

Second, there is the greatness of God (Joshua 24:5-12). God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, plagued Egypt, brought Israel out of Egypt, delivered Israel at the Red Sea, rescued them from the evil intent of Balak the king of Moab, gave military victories over the inhabitants of the land (the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites), and sent “the hornet” which drove out the two kings of the Amorites — Sihon and Og. Time and time again, the Lord showed His greatness by performing works that demonstrated His power and love. Now the Lord has given the most that can be given — His only begotten Son (John 3:16). What do you think the proper response is? The psalmist pondered this question when he wrote, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?” (Psalm 116:12).

Third, there is the generosity of God. Joshua 24:13 records, “And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.” God gave Israel all these blessings for which they did not work. We know that throughout their history, the Israelites failed to appreciate Him for all this great generosity. Could any Christian ever neglect to show the proper gratitude (cp. Luke 17:11-19)? May it never be! Are there blessings you have received from God for which you are not worthy? God forbid!

Fourth, there is the gift to God (Joshua 24:14). It says, “Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.” In appreciation for what God had done, Israel had three responsibilities: fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away false gods. Are you willing to render to God what He de-

serves? If not, why not? “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3). Is there really any requirement of God that is too difficult to perform? Can we not offer back to God what is due Him?

God is at still work in the same way today. Through Christ and His redemption, we still behold His grace, greatness, and generosity. As a result, we obey Christ’s gospel and offer up “gifts” and “sacrifices” to God through our faithfulness and devotion. Hebrews 13:15-16 reads, “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” If you are not in a righteous relationship with God, repent of your sins and obey His prescription, for He is a God that works!

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