

Is The Lord's Hand Waxed Short?

Numbers 11:23

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FOCAL Read Responsively Numbers 11:23 And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

I was talking with a dear lady the other day who said, once she heard I was “Baptist” - “I’m Baptist, too. “ My natural response was “Where is your Church?” She then told me she doesn't go to Church anywhere, but stays at home and watches television on Sunday.

God has commanded His people to ...

Hebrews 10:24-25 ... let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: {25} Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,...

You can't “**provoke one another to love and good works**” sitting at home watching television. You can't “**assemble ourselves {Christians} together**” watching Charles Stanley on television. Jesus didn't promise His disciples “**where you gather in front of the television, there am I in your midst**”. No dear friends, our Lord said “**where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them**” (Matthew 18:20). Christ didn't say, “Come, watch Me on television, or listen to Me on radio, and I'll make you fishers of men”. No, His command was “**follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men**” (Matthew 4:19).

God's method for reaching a lost and dying world has always been His people. God blesses through His believers, through the people who are willing to serve

Him and yield to His command. God cannot use a people who are self-willed. God will not share His deity – His godhood – with an idol, and He certainly won't bless me if I set myself up as “a little god”. God wants to bless the land through His people, but His people have to be willing to honor and worship Him as God. We who love the Lord should make it our number one priority that we *please the Lord and not ourselves*. This is the Way of God. The Lord lowered Himself to save us. He stooped from eternity – coming from the splendor and beauty of Heaven – that He might come to this earth and give Himself to us. Jesus Christ stood in the gap for us, laying down His life so that we who believe might live. It is written:

Romans 15:3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

“**Even Christ pleased not Himself**”. Jesus put you and I ahead of Himself, ahead of His comfort, ahead of His own dignity. “**Jesus gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world**” (Galatians 1:4). When I was unlovable, a cursing evil man, the Bible says “**He gave Himself for me**”. Jesus loves His people. He loves Israel and will raise her up one day. He loves His local Church because He “**gave Himself for it**” (Ephesians 5:25). His Blood became the ransom required that we who believe might be saved (1 Timothy 2:6). He “**gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every evil work, and purify us unto Him a separated and holy people, willing to follow Him in good works**” (Titus 2:14). In short, dear

believer, you were saved not just to sit on a pew or in front of a television screen. You were saved so that you, in the company of other disciples, could go into the world carrying the message of the Gospel with you. You were saved so that you could take the land for Jesus – not at knife point nor by violence, but by sharing what Jesus Christ has done for all who will believe.

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. {17} For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

It is God's desire that many be saved. You cannot lead someone to Christ sitting in front of your television pleasing yourself. You need to please the Lord Who saved you – if you are saved – by joining and working with your local Church to spread the good news. **God loves the world. God wants to save the world. Salvation will only come to the life surrendered to Jesus Christ.**

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

1. The Normal Christian Life Centers On Pleasing God

FOCAL Numbers 11:23 And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

God was not pleased with Israel. Look at verse 1:

CONTEXT Numbers 11:1 And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD ...

He had saved these people with a mighty hand. By His right hand of power He had parted the **Red Sea**, carrying this nation across intact. God showed Himself powerful and immense by leading His Israel *through* the waters. He provided them water *out of a rock*, and turned the bitter waters **Marah** *sweet*. When Israel cried for bread the Lord fed them **manna** every day.

Numbers 11:7-9 And the manna was as coriander seed, and the color thereof as the color of bedellium. {8} And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil. {9} And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

God's hand is mighty because God is mighty. The Lord went before His people, speaking **to Moses face to face like a friend**. The Lord lowered Himself so that He could bless these *people face to face*. Like an adult playing a game with a child the **Lord got down on His knees so He could bless His Israel**. But Israel forgot one thing. They forgot that,

Though God gets down on His knees to bless us, He can always get back up again. He is still God!

We can see a wonderful example of God's long-suffering *and of God's disciplining hand* in the life of Israel. God loves Israel – that's why He saved her. God loves you – that's why He saved you. But listen, Beloved,

God expects us to love Him back.

What was the First Commandment that God gave to us?

Exodus 20:2-3 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. {3} Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

God said “**I am your God – none other. Honor Me and Me alone!**” God expanded this great truth later in the *Shema Yisrael*¹ or the *daily prayer* each Jew was to recite:

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: {5} And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. {6} And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: {7} And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. {8} And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine

¹ Shema Yisrael is the first two words of the prayer, “Hear, O Israel”

eyes. {9} **And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.**

Loving God is so important that the Orthodox Jew is suppose to recite and focus on this prayer *in both morning and evening services.*

The Shema is the *most important prayer* in Judaism, and is recited twice a day. God's people must – first and foremost – love God.

Jesus taught His Church the exact same thing when He repeated **the Shema – Deuteronomy 6:5** in this command:

Matthew 22:37-40 **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. {38} This is the first and great commandment. {39} And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. {40} On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**

God's people *must love God*. God's people *must love one another*.

ILLUSTRATE Going back to the woman I used in my introduction. You remember, the woman who told me “**I don't go to Church any more – I stay at home and watch Charles Stanley**”. What was her reason for this? Was she unable because of infirmity to come and be a part of Christ's Church? No, that wasn't it. She told me,

“I've visited several Churches, but they were all too **big. I like a small Church.**” There's several problems with that statement, because **God likes a big Church**. It was not His intention that Jesus die for the whole world so that three or four could be saved. The Bible says:

Matthew 5:14 **Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.**

You are not a *night light* you are **the light of the world, a CITY that cannot be hid.**

Night light Christianity will not change the world. I've stubbed my toe trying to find my way down the hallway by the light of a night light. The Lord wants His Church to be a bright and shining **city set on a hill**. He wants people to clearly see Jesus at work in us, and to see the Light of His love shed abroad in our hearts. **The love of God shed abroad in our hearts is a Divine Love that cannot be quenched.** The message we have been given is that ..

Romans 5:5-6 ... **hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. {6} For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.**

Christ died for the ungodly. He died for you, He died for me, He died for that wino and that drunkard, He died for that whore, He died for the homosexual, He died for the drug abuser, He died for the money grubbing, He

died for the womanizer, He died for Israel, He died for all. This is the message that the world needs:

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

How dare we *pick and choose based on our own wants and desires*? How dare we be so arrogant as to say “I like a small Church. Do you not know that the first Church on the day of Pentecost had **three thousand souls saved in but one day**? Hear me, Beloved: “**God's hand has not waxed short – nor can you or I make it shorter than it is. He is able to save – and wants to save – all who will come unto God by Christ.**

2. You Will Please God More When You Stand TOGETHER Pleasing God

It is possible – dear friends – to be saved and *still live like the lost*. Israel is a good example of that. Israel was saved from Egypt. The armies of Egypt lay dead and decomposing at the bottom of that deep and dreadful sea. Israel had no enemy standing before her. God was leading her by pillar of fire and pillar of cloud. And, dear friends, if I saw 6 million people raising a dust cloud through the desert, and in front of them a Pillar of Fire – I'd get out of the way!

But Israel kept **looking backward to Egypt**. Though

saved, she never followed Jesus. Everything that she chased was her own satisfaction. She sought to please herself and not God. Because of that she died in the wilderness under the judgment of God.

It is dangerous for the Christian to stay more focused on the creature than on the Creator.

Listen to Israel:

CONTEXT Numbers 11:4-6 And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? {5} We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: {6} But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

How terribly ungrateful this is! The Lord – in great graciousness – gave Israel manna in the wilderness. Now they mock the Lord's bounty by saying “**there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes**”.

When you were saved by faith in Christ your *soul was saved* – you were *given eternal life*. Hasn't Jesus said:

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

You *have* eternal life – but you also *still have an Old Sin*

Nature. Dear friends:

You must, as believers, spend time feeding your new nature and starving your old nature. If you will be blessed you must grow in your relationship with Jesus.

Israel was never satisfied because they never grew from a “grocery store mentality”.

ILLUSTRATE What do I mean by that? **When you go to the grocery store, your purpose in going is to satisfy yourself.** You go to purchase something that you want. You go to satisfy your craving for a certain food or a certain product. You go to the store because you perceive a *need* and think that this store can fill it. Think about this: how many times have you went to the store with the intention of pleasing the store manager? Do you ask yourself as you pass through those automatic doors - “**What can I do to please Mike the Manager or Sally the Store Supervisor?**” No you do not. **A store – whether department, goods, or groceries, always exists for the express purpose of satisfying its customers. Not so the local Church.**

Before you met Jesus Christ and turned to Him as Lord and Savior you may have went from Church to Church looking for something. You treated the local Church much like you treat a grocery store. You had a spiritual need. You knew you needed Something more in your life. You went to the local Church searching to be

satisfied – and there's nothing wrong with that. The Bible says:

Proverbs 8:17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

The Lord loves you and wants you to seek Him. Perhaps you didn't surrender to Him that day, but for some reason held off. We all had our reasons for holding off, for waiting. For some of us we had to hit rock bottom before we turned our lives over to the Lord. We needed to be thirsty, to **come thirsty** as Jesus said. Only a right relationship with God by faith in Jesus Christ can satisfy your spiritual hunger and thirst. Jesus said:

John 6:35 ... I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

We who are saved *initially* treat the Lord and His Church like a grocery store, but after salvation we are called to a higher life.

After you were saved you became a part of the local Church. The Holy Spirit indwells you. God wants you to grow to where you can step out in faith and – like Israel of old – help take the land for Jesus.

Prior to Jesus – **grocery store**. After Jesus – **you are the Church**. Sadly we have many in our local Churches all across America who are *lost and on the membership roll* or who, like Israel, have never grown beyond the “make

me happy, Lord” mentality. There are the occasional Christians who pop in and out, thinking that they should be the center of attention. Ask people on the street “Why don't you assemble with a local Church” and listen to their answers:

- **The Church is too large**
- **The Church is too small**
- **The preacher shouts too much**
- **The preacher is too quiet**
- **The music is too traditional**
- **The music is too contemporary**

and so on and so on. Now put yourself in the place of God and ask yourself - “How would I feel if I were God and someone told me this?” Think of Jesus hanging on the Cross – God in the Flesh – tears streaming from His eyes as tears of Blood stream from His wounds. The Lord expects the lost to jeer. He expects the Roman soldiers to cast lots at His feet. The Lord expects their mocking – for they do not believe -

Luke 23:35-36 ... the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. {36} And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

The Lord expects the lost and undone to be hateful – but not those whom He has saved. Dear Christian – if you be a Christian,

Christian, you are a New Creature in Christ. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17)

ILLUSTRATE The old ways of doubting God are to lie in the dust of the empty tomb. Jesus has risen, and it is He that leads you to new and victorious life. Jesus is alive – and you are alive with Him. Like Lazarus of old you came at the call of Jesus. But it was to **His Church He said “take away the stone” (John 11:39)**. Jesus shouted into your life, **“Lazarus come forth” (John 11:43)**, and you – dear Christian – came hopping out of that old dead way of life. But Jesus told His Church **“Loose Lazarus, take off his grave clothes, and let him go”**. We who are His work together to preach Jesus as **“The Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6)**, and then we work together to keep one another *out of Egypt*.

Remember dear ones – **Eve alone was tempted, and fell, to Satan**. Adam followed when he did not stand *together* with his wife. Bind together in one accord to serve the Lord thy God. What a terrible thing to begin to doubt your God! The devil can defeat the believer when doubts arise. Satan said in the Garden of Eden **“Hath God said”**, then stood back and watched doubt lead Adam and Eve into destruction. When Satan says **“hath God said”** you respond, **“Yes, you Old Liar and Thief. My God has said – and I believe Him!”** Remember His promise:

Psalms 84:11-12 For the LORD God is a sun and

shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. {12} O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

God's hand has **never waxed short**. Magnify Him, praise Him, and seek to know Him better.

Psalms 69:30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED