

Deuteronomy 32:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

Analysis

Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise?—the Hebrew naval (foolish) and lo chakam (not wise) indicate moral deficiency, not intellectual limitation. Biblical foolishness is covenant rebellion (Psalm 14:1: "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'"). To 'requite' (gamal) means to repay or reward—Israel's ingratitude repays God's goodness with evil.

Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? (ha-lo hu 'abika qaneka)—qanah means "acquired/purchased/redeemed." God is Father by creation AND redemption—He brought Israel into existence and delivered them from Egypt. **Hath he not made thee, and established thee?** (hu 'aseka wa-yekoneneka) —'asah' (made) recalls creation; 'kun' (established) means to set firmly, prepare, or constitute as a people.

This triple foundation—purchase, creation, establishment—establishes God's parental rights and Israel's filial obligations. The father-son relationship pervades Deuteronomy (1:31; 8:5; 14:1) and anticipates the New Testament's adoption theology (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5-7).

Historical Context

The Song's rhetorical questions prosecute covenant ingratitude in the style of a prophetic lawsuit (rib). The Exodus redemption (referenced by "bought thee")

occurred approximately 40 years before this song, making Israel's potential apostasy particularly grievous—they should remember their slavery and deliverance. The father-son covenant language parallels ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties where kings adopted vassal nations, but God's relationship with Israel is infinitely more intimate and gracious. This theology becomes foundational for understanding God's relationship with believers in Christ—we are 'bought with a price' (1 Corinthians 6:20), adopted as sons (John 1:12), and established as God's household (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does meditating on God as Father—who bought, made, and established you—deepen gratitude and combat spiritual ingratitude?
2. What specific ways can you 'requite' God's goodness appropriately rather than responding with foolish rebellion?

Interlinear Text

לְהִנֵּה	לְהִנֵּה	לְגִמְלֹן	זֶה אַתָּה	עַם	נָבָל	אַל אַ
the LORD	the LORD	Do ye thus require	H2063	people	O foolish	H3808
H3068	H3068	H1580		H5971	H5036	
מַכְנָה	בָּלָוָא	הָא	אָבִיךְ	כִּי	כִּי בָּ	הַא
and unwise	H3808	H1931	is not he thy father	that hath bought	H1931	
H2450			H1	H7069		
נָשָׁבֵךְ	תִּכְתַּבֵּךְ:					
thee hath he not made	thee and established					
H6213	H3559					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 63:16 (References Lord): Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

1 John 3:1 (Parallel theme): Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Isaiah 64:8 (References Lord): But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

Isaiah 44:2 (Creation): Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

Psalms 74:2 (Parallel theme): Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

Isaiah 43:7 (Creation): Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

Acts 20:28 (Creation): Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Psalms 149:2 (Creation): Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

Psalms 100:3 (Creation): Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

2 Peter 2:1 (References Lord): But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

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