

Remember and Do Not Forget

“Beware that you do not forget God, your God . . . and you say to yourself, ‘It is my strength and the might of my hand that has accumulated this wealth for me’” (Deut. 8:11, 17).

We live in a world where a person can be blind to the truth in Scripture and take credit for that which duly belongs to God. Humility is the foundation of any relationship with God. To the extent that a person lacks humility is the extent to which he ascribes greatness to himself, and to others whom he admires, instead of recognizing that it all belongs to God. In our society people routinely take that which belongs to God and give it to men. Some people have gone so far down this road that there is little hope for them to change in our lifetime. No matter what God does to wake them up to their mistaken way of thinking they do not get the point. They are left to wallow in their confusion, becoming pawns in God’s master plan for Creation. But thank God there are exceptions. This week I got a call from a one of the people that helped start *Kol Simcha* in the early 90’s. For years, he really did not get it until one day at the Aruba Inn in Daytona Beach and one of our KS retreats, he accepted the Lord. His choices at the time were very difficult – he had to come clean with his wife and it could cost him his marriage. But he did it... Fast forward to this month where he contracted COVID-19 and given his health conditions he had very little chance of survival. But with the inhalation treatment in the video I shared with KS and God’s grace he is fully recovered. He called to thank me for all I have invested in him over the years and to say that he was now living every day as if it were his last day and evangelizing everyone he comes in contact with. We talked about how proud his parents (especially his mom Ramonita who helped us start KS) would be about the fact that his entire life now is fully dedicated to God.

¹¹“(Beware)Take care that you do not forget Adonai your God by not keeping His mitzvot, ordinances and statutes that I am commanding you today. ¹²Otherwise, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and lived in them, ¹³and when your herds and flocks multiply, and silver and gold multiplies for you and all that is yours multiplies, ¹⁴then your heart will be haughty and you will forget Adonai your God. He brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery. ¹⁵He led you through the great and terrible wilderness – fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where there was no water. He brought forth water for you from the flinty rock. ¹⁶He fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, in order to afflict you and test you, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷You may say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand has made me this wealth.’ ¹⁸Rather you are to remember Adonai your God, for it is He who gives you power to make wealth, in order to establish His covenant that He swore to your fathers – as it is this day” (Deut. 8:11-18)

This week’s *Torah* reading is *Ekev*, which can be translated “*as a consequence of*” or “*on the heels.*” This word shares the same root as the name of our father Jacob (*Ya’akov*). Recall that when Rebecca’s twins Jacob and Esau were born, Jacob’s hand held onto Esau’s heel.

Have you ever heard a loving parent sharing his concerns with his older son or daughter about his/her own welfare? It is usually not loud and you do not hear harsh words. Instead, you can almost sense the tears in the parent’s eyes as he pleads with the son or daughter, exhorting them to follow in the parent’s ways. You know that they are listening, or at least giving the appearance of paying attention. But, more than all else, you can sense, hear, and see the parent’s compassion and graciousness. Somehow, all of this seems to ooze out of the parent’s words and expressions toward their offspring. In the end, you are confident that if the progeny follows the parent’s teaching and pleas, life will be happy and productive for him/her. But if they do not, you are afraid that the warnings the parent gives will, in fact, somehow come to pass and the son or daughter will once again be in the presence of the parent. Only this time, the tears will be in the child’s regretful eyes as well as in the sensitive and broken eyes (and heart) of the loving parent. This is in fact a very good summary of the context of this week’s *Torah* Reading: *“¹²This shall be the reward when you shema these instructions (ordinances), and you guard and perform them...” or as the TLV renders it: “¹²Then it will happen, as a result of your listening to these ordinances, when you keep and do them, that Adonai your God will keep with you the covenant kindness that He swore to your fathers...” (Deut. 7:25)*

The times we live in will demand a new paradigm – a new methodology and a new strategy. Webster’s dictionary defines *paradigm* as ‘a philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated.’ Not a bad definition for the approach associated with our KS ministry. We are already experiencing some of the “rewards” of these types of commitments in *Kol Simcha*.

In this week’s *Torah* Reading the Father told His children to be careful to remember and do not forget, e.g., “Remember how Adonai your God (Elohim) led you all the way in the desert...” In fact He told them specifically to “remember” five times (Deut. 7:18, 8:2, 8:18, 9:7, and 9:27) and “do not forget” four other times (Deut. 8:11, 8:14, 8:19, 9:7). Doesn’t it seem to you like Adonai wants His children to keep something fresh in their minds? In essence He said: (1) “Remember from Where You Have Come,” (2) “Remember Your Inheritance,” (3) “Remember The Way (HaDerech),” (4) “Remember Me (The Lord!),” and (5) “Remember What I Have Said – My Word.”

There is a reminder that He wants me (and KS) to remember and do not forget? I dare say that the Lord still has a cry in His heart toward His unsaved children. He wants us to look beyond their faults and see their need. Yeshua said: “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). We are to be agents of love, especially toward His unsaved people. This is how they will know that we are the disciples of ‘The Father of The Son’. *Kol Simcha*, we need to model that we are His disciples because we have such great love for one another. Please pray about our new roles and opportunities that are coming in reaching all people including His chosen people. Ask the Lord to give you (and us) His Heart toward all unsaved people including His people. Can we put their need in front of their fault? I believe we can.

♪Something beautiful, something new, all my confusion, He understood. All I had to offer Him was brokenness and strife. But He made something, beautiful (out) of my life”♪