

In a few short weeks, it will be Remembrance Day and I thought I could give you a message on some of the things which we are called to remember as believers. In the annual festival cycle of Judaism, in the build up to Passover, there is a special Sabbath called Shabbat Zachor (Remembrance) where there is a list of things which we are supposed to remember and not to forget and I modified the list to put it in a Christian context, because remembering and not forgetting is a discipline which applies to all believers, both Jewish and Gentile.

I arbitrarily selected seven things to remember, both because seven is the number of G-d and because these seven things represent a good core of the kind of things which believers should be remembering. Well here is my list:

(1).Ex. 13:3 remember this day when you came out of Egypt. Passover is the main festival in Judaism because it was the birth of freedom and showed the supremacy of G-d over the false Egyptian gods. As believers we have to remember that before coming to faith, we were slaves to the Egypt of this world and we were set free to become the servants of the L-rd. We need to remember who He is and what the nature of our calling is. He is to be our L-rd and we are to be His servants. Do you remember that you have been set free?

(2). Ex. 20:8 remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. I am not going to make a case for Saturday Sabbath observance, although I am prepared to show anyone that Saturday, not Sunday is the Day of the L-rd. The principle behind the Sabbath is that the L-rd must be the L-rd of our time because He is the L-rd of all time. Taking a day to rest and to worship is an important discipline for believers because ultimately we do not belong to this world or to this life and the Sabbath rest is intended to be a weekly heaven break.

It is a remembrance of three things: (1) the wonderful creation by G-d. (2) the rest He wants to give us in this life – so we rest in what He has done for us – and as believers, Jesus is our rest because of what He has done for us (3) it is also a remembrance of the eternal rest which is to come. Are you resting in what He has done as we wait for what He will one day bring our way? If you are going to keep Sunday as your day of rest, remember how to keep it holy. It should involve three things: rest, worship and Bible Study. This so that the important things remain the focus of our lives, week by week, so that we do not lose our heavenly focus.

(3). Deut. 8:11 Do not forget the L-rd by failing to keep His commandments (Jos. 1:8) Our faith is not a do it yourself buffet where we pick and choose what we want to believe or how we want to live. The entire Bible is based on the Ten Commandments which speak of our need to have faith in the L-rd G-d alone and to practice a level of obedience based on the basic morality He outlines in the commandments.

Obedience does not constitute legalism, because none of His commandments are grievous (burdensome) and John says that the love of G-d is to keep His commandments (I John 5:3) and our Messiah said that the one who keeps the commandments is great in G-d's kingdom, but the one who doesn't is tiny in the kingdom. Faith and obedience are two sides of the same coin and should always be in tandem and never in competition. We should not forget the L-rd by forgetting to keep His (Ten) commandments.

(4). Deut. 27:17-19 Amalek. The children of Israel were bushwhacked in the wilderness on their way to Mount Sinai. We need to remember that our enemy is a bushwhacker who can be defeated. We need to be on the alert because we dwell in enemy territory and are only pilgrims and strangers who are travelling through this life on our way home. Be careful and

when you are bushwhacked – remember what Moses did – he lifted up His hands as the people fought. Prayer is a mighty weapon. Do not forget. We have to fight the enemy, but our greatest weapon will always be prayer, especially when we are bushwhacked. Do not forget to be on the alert and do not forget that prayer is our best weapon.

(5). Luke 17:32 remember Lot's wife. When the Bible says that Lot's wife looked back, it means she went back. Sort of the same kind of idea as when someone says: I quit smoking years ago and I have never looked back. Backsliding is always a possibility because the pull of this world is strong – it is a combined action by the evil trinity – the flesh, the world and the enemy. However we need to always remember that we are called out of a world that will be destroyed as thoroughly as Sodom and Gomorrah were. So, for us, there can be no going back, unless we want to share her fate and be destroyed with the world we are called out of.

(6). I Cor. 11:25 do this in remembrance of Me. Communion is a mini judgement day where we surrender our sins to the L-rd who died for us, so that we can be forgiven on a regular basis as we wander through this life on our way home. There are many approaches to what happens when we celebrate this remembrance, but all of them are based on remembering Calvary and His death and resurrection, so that we can constantly be forgiven and walk in newness of life and not crumble under the condemnation of sin and guilt. It is also a call for repentance, where we let go of sin and learn to break its power in our lives.

It is the place where Jewish believers and Gentile believers stand as equals, because we were all delivered from the Egypt of this world and we can renew our deliverance and find forgiveness together whenever we observe this ceremony of remembrance. Remember that you can be forgiven and that we should keep short accounts with G-d and live lives of intimate communion with Him, based on forgiveness and repentance.

(7). Gal. 2:10 remember the poor. I added this last one because it comes from the testimony of Paul as he learned how to practice his new faith. He went from a hostile persecutor to a gifted defender of faith in the Messiah and the apostles wanted him not to forget the poor as he preached his new found Saviour. We are told not to forget the less fortunate and to share our goods so that the needs of the whole community can be met and so that we can remember other communities of believers who may need our help. Do you remember the poor in our midst, as well as the poor in the world?

I have given you seven remembrances because we are called to exercise this discipline as an essential part of our spiritual lifestyle. Are you prone to remember or to forget? One of the annoying side effects of my perfume allergy is regular memory loss and I have to constantly remind myself because I am prone to forget. I am not embarrassed or annoyed when people remind me and most of the people in my life are good at reminding me. Are you good at reminding yourself? Are you good at being reminded and at reminding others?

Here is my list again:

Remember your deliverance (and that you were released to be His servant).

Remember to rest in the L-rd (to give Him one day a week for worship, study and rest).

Remember not to forget His commandments and there are ten (do you know them?)

Remember to be on the alert against our bushwhacking enemy.

Remember Lot's wife and do not return to the world.

Remember the L-rd's forgiveness and seek it regularly.

Remember the less fortunate.

This is not a complete or an exhaustive list, but it is one which I put together for you as a reminder that there is a discipline of remembering that we need to exercise on a regular basis so that we do not wander away from the L-rd or from His Word. So don't forget to remember and keep reminding yourself so that you do not let Him or His Word slip out of your life.

As we age, we have more and more things to remember and at times we have more and more things that we forget, but as believers we need to remember that there are important things which we have to remember and that we have to be on the alert against forgetting and that we have to constantly remind each other of.

Lets pray.