

Remember to Forget—God's Daily Memorial in Your Life

As human beings, we spend a large portion of our lives in a mental wrestling match between trying to remember things and trying to forget things. Most of us have piles of stuff in our homes not because we use them, but because they have the innate value of triggering a memory. We have a cupboard full of coffee cups, even though most of us use only one of them. In our closet remains clothing that we will never fit into again and even if we did, the garments are far out of style so we wouldn't even consider wearing them. We have photo albums filled with pictures of events that we periodically open in order to punish our children as we retell the story of our exciting youth to them for the "zillionth" time.

We have T-shirts, hats, postcards and shot glasses filling up space in our homes that serve only one function. They assist us in remembering those things that we too often forget, until one of our reminders comes into view and suddenly, as if it was a full-screen feature film, our past comes into focus before our minds, and we are reliving moments long past, as if we were transported back in time to the actual event. Then, as quickly as the movie began to play, those thoughts are driven from our minds by the here and now of our real-time life.

While we have piles of items saved to help us remember the good things of our lives, we also make concerted efforts to get rid of anything that bring up memories of failures and pain. Yet, with all of our efforts to forget, it only takes a simple sight, sound, or smell and bam—all of our efforts at forgetting are forgotten and we have now returned, even for only moment, to stand in the middle of our most painful experiences.

It was with this understanding as our Creator that G-D

instructed His people in the Bible to set up memorials in order to remind them of His covenants and the great and terrible things they experienced.

The Passover Seder is a reminder of the covenant G-D made with Abraham and the promise that He would deliver Abraham's descendants from bondage. The Seder also reminds us of the power of G-D's strong arm and the terror of His wrath. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder of creation (Ex. 31:17) and deliverance from Egypt (Deut. 5:15). The Feast of Tabernacles reminds us that Israel lived in temporary dwelling places while they journeyed to the Promised Land and is also a reminder be thankful for the Fall harvest (Lev. 23:42-43).

As a matter of fact, every Biblical holy day is a memorial designed by G-D to remind us of something that has happened, or to remind us of something that is going to happen, or both.

Most people have no problem understanding that each of these memorials, as well as the hundreds of others, provide a reminder and even command us in the Scriptures to remember either to do something or to not do something. But, there are many who do not understand that most of the memorials are not just so that we will remember what we have forgotten. They are also provided by G-D so that we will remember what He has forgotten.

Each and every reminder, from the appointed times or holy days to the naming of Mount Ebal and Gerizim to the commandment in Numbers 15:38 commanding the attaching of the tzitzit, or fringe, to the garment of Israelites, is a memory device to help us remember what G-D has and is forgetting: our sins. The truth is that the Bible may be the only book ever written with the purpose of reminding the readers of the author's intention to forget something. G-D knows we need reminders, regular reminders, so He provided daily, weekly, monthly and yearly visual and tangible reminders of His promise to not only forgive, but to forget. {eo}

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