



The Importance of Remembering

By Pastor Haywood A. Robinson, III

*This is a day to remember.
Each year, from generation to generation,
you must celebrate it as a special festival to the Lord.
This is a law for all time.
Exodus 12:14 (NLT)*



“Don’t forget to remember.” Sound silly? Not when we consider just how important remembering is. Remembering is foundational to every aspect of life. Without it we simply cannot thrive. It is critical to learning. Remembering alphabets is a precursor to learning words. Remembering word spellings and meanings is a prerequisite to reading and comprehending sentences, paragraphs, chapters and books. Remembering digits is fundamental to reading prices, tallying figures and measuring flour, fabric or floor dimensions. **Remembering** is important.

Remembering is critical to our social and professional development. It’s important to remember people and places, triumphs and tragedies which alter the trajectory of our individual and collective pilgrimages -- people like Representative John Lewis; and pivotal events like the election of President Barack Obama and the murder of Brother George Floyd. Our skill in remembering names, faces, birthdays, anniversaries, appointments, deadlines, directions, commitments, manners, protocols, etc., significantly impacts the opinions people form about us. Regrettably, many of us don’t use our memories at the level we once did. Calculators, artificial intelligence (e.g., Siri, Alexa, Google) and other technological advancements have reduced the dependence upon our own ability to remember addresses, directions, phone numbers, special days, etc. Some argue that many advancements have come at the expense of adverse impact on our bodies. Look around: Memory Centers, like Cancer Centers, abound these days. Remembering **is** important.

Remembering is critical to our spiritual growth. When it comes to our citizenship in the Kingdom of God, remembering is of paramount importance. It impacts the whole of our relationship with God, including our responsiveness to Him and representation of Him. This is at the heart of God’s commands to and criticisms of His people throughout the Bible. It’s also at the heart of His instructions to Moses for the Israelites recorded in Exodus 12:14. Essentially, God is saying, “Make sure that you never *forget to remember* this day.” So, he instructs them to prioritize remembering the events of that particular day. In fact, they were to memorialize the day...forever. Do you remember your day of exodus? Do you recall the day God brought you out of a situation that seemed impossible to endure or escape? Have you marked that day? Set a reminder on your calendar?

Although the children of Israel set a reminder by way of the annual Passover Festival, a casual reading of the Scriptures reveals their failure to recognize the true importance of remembering. Genuine remembering, beyond mere ritual, would have resulted in increased reverence for God and obedience to Him. As we celebrate the 42-year journey of this ministry, may we be encouraged to retain the high value that *remembering* holds for the people of God. Remembering is **important**. Consider these reasons why.

Remembering the words and works of God **connects us**. Isolation only exacerbates the fears and feelings we often have when traveling uncharted paths. For the inmate, solitary confinement worsens an already traumatizing experience. Quarantine heightens the anxiety within the person identified as a “carrier” of a virus. Shut out from fitness facilities, restaurants, houses of worship, sporting arenas, many become claustrophobic or depressed over time. We are designed for interaction and interdependence. By reviewing the Scriptures, we are reminded that we are not alone. Instead, we see our connection with God’s consistent *past*, His covenant *people*, His central *purpose* and His comprehensive *promises*.

Remembering the word and works of God also **comforts us**. Uncertainty will be the plight of all people at one time or another. If, when facing such perplexing times, God’s people reflect upon His previous actions, feelings of anxiety often melt away. Simply recollecting how God exhibited His *presence*, exerted His *power*, expressed His *passion* and executed His *protection* in times past fosters a confident expectation that He will act in like manner amid our immediate circumstances.

Remembering the words and works of God, furthermore, **cautions us**. Isaiah writes, “We all like sheep have gone astray,” (Isa. 53:6). In his cherished hymn, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” 18th century pastor, Robert Robinson, noted that we are “prone to wander...; prone to leave the God [we] love.” Because there are consequences for every action we take, good or bad, we do well to re-read portions of the Wisdom Literature, the Gospels, the Epistles, the Prophetic or Historical Books. Recalling God’s *perspective*, His *priorities*, His *precepts*, and even His *punishments* can help steer us in the right direction. We also learn to trust Him more, not only as One Who sovereignly governs us, but One Who safely guides and securely guards us as well.

Remembering the words and works of God, finally, **cheers us**. When disappointment, discouragement, disillusionment and doubt begin to crowd in on us, a trek down memory lane can have the incredible power to trigger a personal praise break before you realize it. Peruse the pages of Scripture and you will find several instances of people taking that very stroll. By the time they’ve finished *remembering*, like David, they’re asking themselves, “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence” (Ps. 42:5 NASB). One of the most inspiring songs I remember my mother leading the Diamond Hill Baptist Church Senior Choir in singing, “He’s the Joy of My Salvation, Yes, He Is,” still sets a fire within me today. Just thinking about the *privileged*, *purchased*, *protected* and *perpetual* relationship we enjoy with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is enough to break strongholds and turn our mourning into dancing.

Sure, you may have issues. We all do. But we, the children of the Most High God, are in an enviable position. Without physically creating space between the problem and ourselves, we invariably begin to distance ourselves by shifting our focus upon the problem solver, our Way Maker. When we rally our

thoughts and emotions around the remembrance that He is with us, that He is for us, and that He is All-knowing, that He is All-powerful, and that He has planned out a future for us ...with Him, Game On! Where's my tambourine? Hallelujah!

So...Don't forget to remember!! **Remembering Is Important.** HAPPY 42nd ANNIVERSARY!