

# REMEMBER

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REMEMBER! Yes! Many of the commandments of the Torah direct us to remember! We are to remember the act of creation and we are to remember the exodus from Egypt. A good portion of the prayers for the Jewish New Year (Rosh HaShana) direct us to remember (Zikhronot in Musaf).

*"OK, I got it! I am supposed to remember, God did this and God did that! OK, praise be Him, amen. Now, we can move on with things and get to something else a little bit more interesting?"* I am sure that almost everyone would agree that such an attitude is disrespectful. However, let the truth be told, I know a lot of people who while they are not willing to say these words, surely agree fully with their sentiment.

For them, remembrance is an academic exercise of merely reciting words in literal fulfillment of a Divine edict. But is this what God really wants? Are our words all there is to it? Is there maybe something more to remembering, that maybe, we are not remembering? If we really want to get God's message, maybe we have to start paying closer attention.

If we want to remember things in the way that God wants us to remember things, then we had better reinterpret our very narrow interpretation of what it means to remember. Remembering is not an academic exercise. It is not a mere recital of words. Remembering is not something performed in the brain or mouth. No, remembering is performed in the heart and in action.

Remembrance is an emotional attachment that motivates one to specific physical action. Unless one remembers a thing in their heart, then in God's eyes, there is no remembrance at all. Therefore, essentially, most of us, in spite of our daily academic recitals remember nothing about those important things that God directs us to always remember.

We live in a perpetual state of forgetfulness. We have even forgotten that we have forgotten. We believe a lie. We live a lie. We believe that we remember because we have an academic acknowledgment of certain information. We live a lie in that we have forgotten the fundamentals about God and creation, all the while we deny our forgetfulness. We cannot remember, because we have forgotten what it means to truly remember. In this, God is not pleased!

Throughout the Bible, we find numerous mentions of God remembering something. We find written that God remembered Noah in the Ark and the Children of Israel in Egypt. Now, God is All-Knowing, there is no such thing as forgetfulness before Him. If God cannot forget, then how can He remember? One cannot remember something that has not been forgotten in the first place. How different God is from man. For when it is written that God remembers something, such a remembrance is always followed by action! God's remembrance is not an intellectual academic exercise. God's remembrance is His call to action.

Are we not commanded to imitate God in all ways humanly possible? Yes, we are! Therefore, if remembrance to God means a call to action, then remembrance to us mere mortal humans should be no different. When God calls us to remember, His call is not for us to recite words, think about a mental concept or perform, what for many, are meaningless rituals. No! God's call to remembrance is a call to action. Like God, we are commanded to act upon that which we are remembering.

How are we supposed to act? It is not enough that we put a thought into our minds. We have to make all necessary efforts to manifest such thoughts into deed! In other words, talk is cheap, thoughts are even cheaper. Only actions speak louder than words.

God commands us to remember our exodus from Egypt. Yet, unless we embrace freedom, fight for it and live in it, we are not free!

Unless we are actually, physically and psychologically free, then we are still in slavery.

If indeed we are still in slavery then every time we proclaim God's command to be free or to remember our freedom, we are in a perpetual state of disobedience. In this God is not pleased!

The New Year is a time for remembering. Remembering is an essential portion of the day's prayers (Zikhronot in Musaf). While we can only remember the past as an academic exercise, we are also obligated to remember the lessons of the past and apply them to the present and to the future.

If we fail to implement and act on the lessons of the past and to fight and struggle to make them our reality today, then we will have to suffer the repeat of past lessons, with all the sufferings that they entailed. This can be avoided, but if it is to be avoided, it will require of us to take action! This alone is remembrance in God's eyes. Action alone is how we are to fulfill the commandments, the Will of God.

Talk is cheap and action is precious! As the New Year approaches, we enter into the traditional Ten Days of Repentance. Yet, one who waits for these ten days to repent misses the point. Repentance means returning to God. This is supposed to be done every moment of every day. Those who wait to focus on repentance for just ten day, forgetting the other 355 days of the year may not achieve the expected blessings from Heaven that they seek.

You want God? Then bond with God. When? Now! Everyday is repentance day. Everyday is "remembrance day." Everyday we must remember our exodus and our freedom. If we do not live freedom, then we are not free. If we are not free, then we are slaves, living in defiance and rebellion against the Word of God that commanded us to be free and to remember freedom!

Be like God, live in remembrance. Be like God, live free! In this alone is God pleased!