

“REMEMBERING”

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(Vs) Joshua 4:1-7 ... So, these stones shall be to the Israelites a memorial forever.”

The Old Testament saints often demonstrated the importance of this practical kind of remembrance.

- The Israelites were often instructed to set up all kinds of memorials, and many of the Jewish feasts were designed to remember and celebrate God’s deliverance.

(Vs) Deuteronomy 4:9 says, “Be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.”

(Vs) Psalm 103:2 says, “Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

Keeping the faith often requires remembering what brought us to faith in the first place.

- When we praise God, we remember His past goodness, and that makes it easier to keep trusting Him now.
- Practically Speaking: God wants us to be intentional about remembering the things He has done in our lives.

(Vs) Hebrews 12:1b-3 says, “Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

- This means remembering the wonderful gift of God’s salvation and following the example of our Savior, who “endured” the trials of this life.

We must “fix our eyes” and so Remember Jesus in all things.

- All of this brings us to our symbol for today... the Shofar.

- Some Facts: The Shofar is one of the oldest biblical musical instruments, that is still in use, and can be blown by anyone and everyone, and for any purpose. The shofar is a beautiful symbol of social equality and unity.
- The Shofar has been used as an alarm signal, a war trumpet, a call for help, an instrument for celebration, an instrument for lamentation, as a time signal, and is blown around the Holy Days. Calls are distinguished by note length, inflection, and articulation.
- Every shofar sounds different, just like every community, and every listener, is different.
- A Shofar's Cry is supposed to Remind Us to be Present and Remember

"The shofar cries give a signal to our collective memory, national consciousness and identity and create a link between heaven and earth." - Rabbi Judith HaLevy

In the words of the great rabbi, Abraham Joshua Heschel...

**"Judaism does not command us to believe, it commands us to remember...
Recollection is a holy act; we sanctify the present by remembering the past."**

- But there is deeper meaning behind this ancient instrument...

(Vs) Gen Ch 22:1, 2 "After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

- *(Vs) Gen Ch 22:3-8* Abraham and Isaac discuss... Why is this happening?
- *(Vs) Gen Ch 22:9-14* Abrahams Faith and Gods Provision...
- The Shofar usually made from a Ram's Horn, reminds us to remember the Provision God provided on that mountain.
- But, in this way, "The Shofar is not just tied to remembering the things that God has done for you, but also to those times when you didn't understand what God was doing around you."
- It's about remembering how common it is to ask... "Does God the Creator really hear my plea? Does the God of History intervene in my life?"

No better example: Yom HaShoah (יום השואה) Holocaust Remembrance Day.

- Israel's day of commemoration for the approximately six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.
- It's held as a national Memorial or "Day of Remembering."
- Once a year at 10 am all across the country, a 2 Minute Siren Sounds...

The Siren is asking a profound question... "Does God Remember Us?"

- What happens when God's face appears to be hidden?
- Or, to restate the overarching question of twentieth century Jewish believer, "Where was God in the Holocaust?"

One Rabbi Says... "As the siren sounds simultaneously all over the country, people step out of their cars and stand by the side of the road to remember the 6 million who perished. It is as if a holy shofar has been sounded to pierce the hearts of all who are living. The sound cuts across religious barriers; no one dares to ignore the siren's sound at this utmost moment of sanctity."

"We sound the shofar to invoke not only God's Kingship and God's memory, but to the open possibilities of the future, even if we do not yet know the words that the future will bring. The bridge that floats between us is carried on this sound. Together, we take a step forward into the unknown." - Rabbi Judith HaLevy

- This touches us because we are all people united by memory and history.
- In Re-Membering, we are putting something back together as it really is... It's in this way the opposite of Dismembering something...

As we "Re-Member" God's promises and truth, we are putting back together the true character and nature of God, not just as I am experiencing it, but as it really is. As I do this, I am also re-membering my beloved self as an image-bearer of God in Christ.

- The Siren summons us to be present, and to pay attention to God's "re-attaching" presence, from earliest creation until this moment.
- Proclaiming together that we remember, and, in turn, ask God to remember US with compassion and mercy.

(Vs) Psalm 106.4 "Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;" KJV