

Keep God First

Shalom,

Va'etchanan is the Hebrew name for this week's study portion, or "I implored" in English. It begins with Moses' plea that He might be allowed to cross the Jordan River and lead the children of Israel into the promised land. It is found in **Deuteronomy 3:23—7:11**, and it also includes the restating of **the Ten Words** from Deuteronomy 5:6—18, and is the point in time when YHWH provided mankind with **Words to focus their attention and actions upon Him** by confessing the verses called the **Shema** (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5) which is a **perpetual reminder that there is only one God, that we are to have a love relationship with Him by confessing His Words with our own voices. It is through hearing and hearing His Words spoken with our own mouths that faith comes and grows in our lives.** Furthermore, when we teach those Words to others, they benefit from hearing and we grow even more in our trust for God as we share. This is His gift to us to help us guard our focus upon Him and His loving relationship with us.

*Sh'ma, Yisra'el! ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI echad [Hear, Isra'el! ADONAI our God, ADONAI is one]; and you are to love ADONAI your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources. **These Words, which I am ordering you today, are to be on your heart;** and you are to **teach them carefully** to your children. You are to talk about them when you sit at home, when you are traveling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them on your hand as a sign, put them at the front of a headband around your forehead, and write them on the door-frames of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 CJB)*

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah. (Romans 10:17 TLV)

Remembering is a challenge for all of us when you consider all the noisiness, diversions, and activity around us, much of it designed by the enemy to cause us to forget.

It is impossible to maintain a good relationship with God while allowing other things: making a living, getting all the things done that are on our bucket lists, entertaining ourselves, and just generally inundating ourselves with the cares of this world. **We deceive ourselves when we become casual about our relationship with our Savior. Failing to keep foremost in our minds Who He is, what He has done for us, and the instructions in His Word, is a recipe for failure. Forgetfulness** of what He tells us to guard and take care to remember will inevitably cause us to lose our focus on Him, and even forget the miracle of our salvation by the shed blood of Yeshua. If we allow

other things to become central in our lives, we allow ourselves to become calloused, and lose our sensitivity to His reality in us. **It all hinges on our attending to and remembering what it means to have relationship with the Creator of the Universe, our Lord and Savior, never forgetting Him nor all His benefits.**

Watch out for yourselves, so that you won't forget (h7911) the covenant of ADONAI your God, which He made with you, and make yourself a carved image, a representation of anything forbidden to you by ADONAI your God. For ADONAI your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. (Deuteronomy 4:23-24 CJB)

Bless ADONAI, my soul! Everything in me, bless His holy Name! Bless ADONAI, my soul, and forget none of His benefits! (Psalms 103:1-2 CJB)

Forget: h7911. שָׁכַח *sākah*; or שָׁכַח *shakeach*; a primitive root; to mislay, i.e. **to be oblivious of, from want of memory or attention**: — x at all, (cause to) **forget**.

We have been hearing reports about Christian people who are no longer attending congregational meetings, or who rarely take part in worship services, and an alarming number of them report that they have not been watching online or television teaching that is available. It is obvious if you believe the Word of God that this reflects disobedience to, **“Watch out for yourselves, so that you won't forget...”** Scripture tells us that **little foxes spoil the vine** (Song of Songs 2:15). Often, it is **small areas of inattention that allow big problems to grow**. There is a simple solution: **Put first things first**. Guard your relationship with God. Make use of that which He has provided to keep our hearts trained on Him. It is easy to justify ourselves and our decisions by pointing out the necessity of being responsible to get things done but remember the promise that putting God and His Word first will cause every other necessary thing to be accomplished.

But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33 CJB)

My son, pay attention to what I am saying; incline your ear to my words. Don't let them out of your sight, keep them deep in your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to their whole being. Above everything else, guard your heart; for it is the source of life's consequences. (Proverbs 4:20-23 CJB)

In remembrance,
Terry

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