

REMINDERS OF GOD'S PAST WORKS

Joshua 4:1-7

Introduction: Not always, perhaps seldom is a person aware that God is at work in his/her life or around him/her. Finding out what God is doing is a big help and seeing things as God sees them enables a person to better understand what God has in mind. Anytime God is doing something or about to bring a change in a person's life, it will almost always be a continuation in what He has already been doing. It helps tremendously to know what God has already been doing in that life for choices will have to be made and knowing what God is doing will help between choices of good and bad and good and best. If one could put up visible markers along one's life where God had intervened and worked, it would be most helpful in remembering as well as knowing the direction God is moving.

I. ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD ALWAYS LEAVE SOME VISIBLE MARK/SIGN

1. Joshua was having a stone representing each of the 12 tribes put in a pile to be a reminder years later to whomever saw the stones that it was God who brought Israel through 40 years of wilderness travel and into the land of promise and it was at that very spot that Israel had crossed the flooded river into that land.
2. Throughout the Old Testament some kind of marker was set up as a memorial of something God had done.
 - Noah erected an altar after the flood, a marker where the ark had landed.
 - Abraham built many altars through his lifetime after visits from God.
 - Isaac dug a well after an encounter with God and named it such.
 - Jacob had a dream in which he encountered God. He left the rock he had used as a pillow as a reminder, a marker of that encounter and gave the place a certain name.
 - Gideon erected an altar on the spot where he encountered the angel God had sent.
 - Samuel had an encounter with God and afterwards left a stone in memory and gave that place a particular name.
3. In the New Testament Peter, James and John wanted to erect a memorial at the place of Jesus' transfiguration.
4. Places, names, altars, stones, etc., became visible, physical reminders of experiences people had with God through the years. Whenever anybody passed those places, they learned about what had happened there and how God had met with somebody just like them.

II. REASSURANCE COMES WHEN ONE KNOWS THAT GOD IS AT WORK AROUND HIM/HER

1. From Adam to Jesus all that was done was according to God's plans and purpose. Every single act of God was built upon a previous act and all moving toward something yet to happen.
 - When God called Abraham, God was starting to develop a nation.
 - Isaac was told by God what was happening.
 - Jacob was told by God what He was doing through history.

2. When Moses encountered God, God told him of His plans for Israel (*Exodus 3:6-22*)
 - God had started with Abraham, then Isaac and Jacob and now He was going to use Moses to bring the nation into being, the nation of Israel.
 - God had promised Abraham that Israel would one day come out of bondage into a promised land.
 - Through all the years, God had been watching over them, even while they were enslaved.
 - When God was ready, He chose Moses to deliver Israel.
 - Moses would do just what God wanted him to do and bring Israel out of Egyptian slavery.

3. YOU need to realize that like these others, God has also been working in your life since you were born, even before you were born. God has been working out His purposes for your life.
 - Think back through your life, look at what has happened, look at the people in your life, look at where you have been, each year of your life has prepared you for the next.
 - No matter WHO you are or what God has for you, ANYTIME God is ready to take you another step in His plans for you, a new direction or whatever, it will ALWAYS be in sequence with what He has already been doing in your life. Take a look at your life.
 - God has a divine purpose for your life and He builds and works in your life with His plans for your life. God does not jump here and there but all is in an orderly fashion.

III. TAKE A SPIRITUAL INVENTORY, LOOK AT THE VISIBLE SIGNS OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE

1. Every time God has brought about a time of transition, decision or direction in your life, there will be an indicator, a visible sign and you can clearly know that it was God who guided you.
2. Look back through your life and find those times when you encountered God. Look at the circumstances, look at the result, which direction did God take you? None of this was chance, luck or just happened.
3. From now on, whenever you face a decision, a choice of what is good or best, take a look back and review the direction God has been bringing you, then look at your choices, which is similar to what God has already been doing in your life?
4. If you cannot see a connection in a present decision and your past direction, go back and talk to God and ask Him to show you what you are missing and then WAIT FOR GOD.

CONCLUSION:

1. There are spiritual markers, signs in your life when you encountered God. Look for them for they are there.
2. God is always at work in your life if you are ONE of His Children for He has His plans for you.
3. When God is ready to bring change into your life, it will be in harmony with what He has already been doing, look for it.
4. Sadly, most Christians are not even aware that God has been working in their lives.