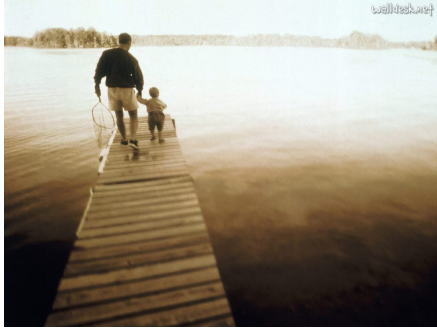


Loving Hashem with Your Mind

Luke 2:19 HCSB But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them.

1. To treasure is to keep in one's memory.



Today's passage says that Mary "treasured all these things".

Our spirits must decide to put God and God's kingdom first, regardless of the personal cost. This is "volition" – "will" at its best and most righteous. We must deliberately choose what is important to us in the long run regardless of what discomfort it may bring in the short run.

When we decide that something is important, our minds automatically recall it. If we have a hard time remembering people's names, it is because people are not that important

to us. If we have a hard time remembering mathematical theorems, it is because we fail to see their critical function or benefits in our lives. If we fail to remember God's commands and blessings, His "*mitzvot*", then this sad fact reveals that God is not important to us.

Treasuring someone means that you are instantly able to recognize them when you see them. A lover's heart is able to see even beyond costumes and various masquerades. To treasure God and remember His voice means that we should be able to recognize God when we see Him in our day to day lives. We should recognize His voice whether it comes in the guise of our parent's advice or the instructions of a wise friend or the counsel of a church elder.

If we treasure God we will remember:

Our times with Him

Our lessons from Him

Finally, to treasure God and keep Him in our memory means that we will take steps to not only personally retain the memory of God but to pass that memory on to future generations.

2. To keep in one's heart is to keep in one's affections. (Ephesians 4:26; Psalm 42:2; 63:1-2; Matthew 7:22; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3; Psalm 84:2-4; 119:130-131)

Today's passage says that Mary treasured these things "in her heart". This brings us out of the area of the spirit and into the area of the human soul, the first half being the emotional life. I call it the "first half" because we feel before we think. Our brains give us emotional impressions before the object of our consideration comes to the attention of our front lobes, the seat of consciousness. That is why the Bible says,

- **Ephesians 4:26 HCSB Be angry and do not sin.**

Don't let the sun go down on your anger,

You are allowed to be angry; you can hardly stop your first, subconscious impression anyway! But once that thought hits the front lobe you must consciously decide what to do about that irritation. But back to the main point.

Adonaic Christianity must not become an intellectual pastime. It is not a social organization seeking to lift the human spirit through better education or more ethical works. Adonaic Christianity is the cultivation of a personal relationship between the human and the divine spirit. It is about the two principle requirements that God makes upon us, *ahavah* and *yare*, loving and fearing Him.



Feeling – emotion, is not something to be feared or “stifled”. It is something to be cultivated and disciplined. Undisciplined emotion will destroy you just as surely as stifled emotion will.

We are to grant emotional weight to our experience of God.

We are to develop the full range of emotional expression. We shouldn't be emotionally “flat”. Fear/awe; Love; Humility; Gratitude; Joy; Appropriate hate; Jealousy. All these are rightly found in the range of righteous human experience.

This means we need to develop an intuitive appreciation and understanding of God.

- **Psalms 42:2 HCSB** I thirst for God, the living God. When can I come and appear before God?
- **Psalms 63:1-2 HCSB** ...God, You are my God; I eagerly seek You. I thirst for You; my body faints for You in a land that is dry, desolate, and without water. (2) So I gaze on You in the sanctuary to see Your strength and Your glory.

To have a right view of God and even to do right things FOR God is not enough. Love must take hold of us.

- **Matthew 7:22-23 HCSB** On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, drive out demons in Your name, and do many miracles in Your name?' (23) Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you! **Depart from Me, you lawbreakers!**'

These people were DOING many amazing things – things that I personally long to be able to do. Yet, they were denounced! Why? Because they weren't known by the Lord. They did not have a personal, emotional life with Him.

- **1 Corinthians 13:1-3 HCSB** If I speak the languages of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (2) If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. (3) And if I donate all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Again the Apostle Paul reiterates the point. It's not enough to be empowered with great charismatic gifts. We must love – not only the Lord but also our fellow man.

- **Psalms 84:2-4 HCSB** I long and yearn for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh cry out for the living God. (3) Even a sparrow finds a home, and a swallow, a nest for herself where she places her young--near Your altars, LORD of Hosts, my King and my God. (4) How happy are those who reside in Your house, who praise You continually. Selah

David longed and yearned for the courts of the Lord. He experienced this longing as both an emotional and a physical need. He was jealous of the birds who got to nest in the *Beit ha Mikdash* (The Holy Temple)! He wished he too could just live in the Temple.

We must be careful to not lose God in the wilderness of ministry. We must not allow the multitude of *mitzvot* that we both read and attempt to obey to swallow up this central fact: God is neither an idea nor a moral code but a Person. We can never hope to fully know a fellow human being through a single encounter. How could we ever dream of gaining sufficient insight into divine Personality in even one hour a week? It is only after long and loving time spent with the Lover of our Souls that the full ramifications of *d'vekut* can be realized. We need to develop a strong yearning to be in God's house, to be learning from God's Word, or to be conversing with fellow Believers about God.

- **Psalms 119:130-131 HCSB** The revelation of Your words brings light and gives understanding to the inexperienced. (131) I pant with open mouth because I long for Your commands.

3. To meditate on is to use one's intellect to dig deeper. (Ephesians 5:26; Psalm 119:11; Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12; Luke 2:19)



Today's passage says that Mary "meditated on these things"

This brings us to the second half of the human soul. Thought – Mind – Cognition. Once we have decided to put God first in our life, and have developed a passion for the Lord, the next (and never-ending) step is to deliberately engage our intellects.

1. We need to exercise our minds to improve or increase this experience.
2. We must develop our understanding of our relationship with God within the context of various situations.
3. We must develop an ability to not only recall but aptly apply the lessons we have learned.
4. We should use our imagination to consider potential issues and proactively provide biblically and ethically appropriate solutions.
5. We should regularly spend time trying to store as much of the Bible in our minds as possible. Especially if we believe that merely handling God's Word "washes" our minds as the Apostle Paul teaches in Ephesians 5:26.
 - [Ephesians 5:26 HCSB](#) to make her holy, cleansing her in the washing of water by the word.

And as David taught in Psalm 119...

- [Psalms 119:11 HCSB](#) I have treasured Your word in my heart so that I may not sin against You.

If we still struggle with sin and temptation it is very likely because we have not been studying and memorizing the Scriptures enough. As Dwight L. Moody once said, "The Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible."

Isn't that how Jesus kept the devil at bay? In each occasion of temptation in the wilderness the Lord quoted Scripture in response.¹ The Scriptures are our only offensive weapon². Unfortunately, most of us are walking around unarmed.

Conclusion

[Luke 2:19 HCSB](#) But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them.

Mary engaged her spirit, and her soul's emotions and intellect. She demonstrated her true passion for the Lord not just when she yielded, saying

"I am the Lord's slave. May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

But she demonstrated her passion when she treasured this act, cultivated an emotional response to her encounter with God, and meditated on its meaning.

May each of us today have that same response to God's Word.



¹ (1) Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4 (2) Matthew 4:7; Luke 4:12 (3) Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8

² Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12

