

Remembering and Teaching

The Lord has been very gracious to us.

1. **Spiritual Freedom:** He has bought us with His own blood so that we could be free from the shackles of sin - free from the power of the second death.
2. **Citizenship and Adoption:** He has not only granted us citizenship in His kingdom, but adoption into His family.
3. **The Scriptures:** He has given us the Scriptures so that we can better know Him and His requirements.
4. **The Way:** His mitzvot (His precepts) are equally blessings and commands. We do not need to be rewarded for our submission to His ways because to obey the Lord is to be blessed.
5. **Culture of Joy:** Adonai has given us many festivals that we can celebrate. Ours is not a culture of gloom and doom. Our lives are not characterized by religious bigotry or isolationism but by joyful service motivated by humble gratitude for what the Messiah our King has done for us. Our celebrations mark us. They identify us as a unique people – God’s People. A new nation of royal priests whose goal is the spread of this joy.
6. **National Liberty:** He has allowed us to spend our earthly pilgrimage in a free country where we may worship Him openly and without fear of persecution.
7. **Spiritual Family:** He led our people together and helped us form a little tribe here in Aledo.
8. **Church Health:** Through the power and direction of the Spirit, we have grown both spiritually and numerically.
9. **Spiritual Ministry:** The teachings of His Word have helped us mature to the point where we are now reproducing ourselves throughout the world! Through the internet the influence of our little congregation is presently being felt in 65 different countries.
10. **Enriched Fellowship:** The Spirit has granted us spiritual gifts and many of us have chosen to faithfully practice those gifts by serving our family here. Thus we enjoy music, drama, sound teaching, craftsmanship, elder leadership and pastoral care. We enjoy these things not because we are anything in and of ourselves but because the Ruach’ ha Kodesh, the sweet Holy Spirit, has deigned to grant us those gifts along with the commensurate faith to practice them.

However, as always with Hashem’s economy, those gifts come with responsibility. As we celebrate our anniversary today we need to keep in mind the nature of our purpose here. Why are we here? What is the purpose of our congregation? Is it to enjoy music or drama? Is it in order to feel safe or good about ourselves? Is it to restore order to our families or save our marriages? Is it to build famous programs or to gather huge sums of money? Is it to build buildings?



Let’s go back in history and learn from unchanging God what He views as our purpose.

Our spiritual ancestor Abraham was specifically chosen because the Lord God, in His prescience, knew that Abraham would not only personally love the Lord and keep His commands but would pass that passion on to his descendants.

- **Genesis 18:19 HCSB** For I have chosen him so that he will command his children and his house after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just. This is how the LORD will fulfill to Abraham what He promised him."

History shows that he did in fact teach his children ahavat Adonai which is love of God. Abraham’s descendants examined their forefather’s life and faith and determined in their hearts to follow his God. In Genesis 32:9, we hear Jacob addressing the Lord as...

- [Genesis 32:9 HCSB](#) Then Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, 'Go back to your land and to your family, and I will cause you to prosper,'"

To name Abraham's immediate descendents is to name the patriarchs of the faith. Do we not recite "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" when we want to name the fathers of Israel? Even the Lord God took to identifying Himself by His association with them.

- [Exodus 3:6 HCSB](#) Then He continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

So our purpose, our goal, our raison d'être is to remember the Lord our God, to give Him His rightful place in our lives and to teach our children to do the same. What is it going to take for us to succeed in this mission?

1. Hard work and Imagination: That kind of multigenerational success does not just happen. It takes faithful consistency, hard work and imagination. Moses taught us that we are to find imaginative ways to teach our children ahavat Adonai which is love of God.

- [Deuteronomy 6:5-9 HCSB](#) Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (6) These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. (7) Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (8) Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. (9) Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- [Deuteronomy 11:18-21 HCSB](#) (18) "Impress these words of Mine on your hearts and souls, bind them as a sign on your hands, and let them be a symbol on your foreheads. (19) Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (20) Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, (21) so that as long as the heavens are above the earth, your days and those of your children may be many in the land the LORD swore to give your fathers.

2. Regular Bible Study and Submission to God's Precepts: This is why we regularly meet to study the Scriptures. We must not look to the world for ways to teach the otherworldly Gospel. We cannot look to Mammon to teach us about Adonai. Why trust our limited intellects when we have omniscience as a potential resource? No one is above the Scriptures. Even the king himself had to submit himself to them!

- [Deuteronomy 17:18-20 HCSB](#) (18) When he is seated on his royal throne, he is to write a copy of this instruction for himself on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. (19) It is to remain with him, and he is to read from it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to observe all the words of this instruction, and to do these statutes. (20) Then his heart will not be exalted above his countrymen, he will not turn from this command to the right or the left, and he and his sons will continue ruling many years over Israel.

Our goals – as a church, as a congregation, as a community, as a tribe, as a family – our goals must be dictated by the Scriptures. Our means and methods must be equally governed by them.

3. Making God and His Congregation a Priority: If we are to pass a love of God on to our children we must make God a priority in our lives. How can we teach them to make God a priority in their lives when we teach them that He is an option?

"Go to church – unless you feel sleepy."

"Worship God – or...worship sports."

"Go to youth group – unless you'd rather go to your friend's house to play."

"Attend the Bible study – unless you'd rather stay home and play video games."

"Do what's right – unless you'd rather 'sow your wild oats.'"

In the name of liberty (or rather in the name of household peace), we are killing our own children's spiritual lives. I just said that we need to allow the Scriptures to dictate our goals. Let's see what our Master requires of us.

- **Matthew 5:6 HCSB** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, because they will be filled.

They need to see that we hunger and thirst after **righteousness** – not trophies and rewards or comfort and relaxation. Pursuit of Adonai's kingdom and His righteousness must come before public acclamation or petty personal pursuits.

- **Matthew 6:33 HCSB** But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.

Do we want true success as a congregation? Do we want power with God and influence with men? Then let me show you the way.

- **2 Chronicles 31:20-21 HCSB** (20) Hezekiah did this throughout all Judah. He did what was good and upright and true before the LORD his God. (21) He was diligent in every deed that he began in the service of God's temple, in the law and in the commandment, in order to seek his God, and he prospered.

Day after day after day, we need to consistently choose to do what is good and upright and true before the Lord our God. We need to be diligent in every deed that we begin in the service of God's house; diligent about obedience to His laws and commands; diligent about seeking out His presence and His favor. Then and only then will our tribe truly prosper.

4. Development of a Godly Culture: How can we make Adonai a priority in our lives? How do we demonstrate to our children the centrality of our faith to our lives? How can we repeat those lessons to them again and again "as we sit down, walk along the road, lie down or get up?"

Observance of Hashem's feasts such as the Passover is one way that we can do that.

- **Exodus 12:26-27 HCSB** When your children ask you, 'What does this ritual mean to you?' (27) you are to reply, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, for He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and spared our homes.'" So the people bowed down and worshiped.
- **Exodus 13:6-10 HCSB** For seven days you must eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there is to be a festival to the LORD. (7) Unleavened bread is to be eaten for those seven days. Nothing leavened may be found among you, and no yeast may be found among you in all your territory. (8) On that day explain to your son, 'This is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' (9) Let it serve as a sign for you on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead, so that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for the LORD brought you out of Egypt with a strong hand. (10) Keep this statute at its appointed time from year to year.

My family has freely chosen to build God's presence into our lives throughout the year. In March, we remember the Messiah's sacrifice on the Passover. In April, we explain to the children the nature of sin through the metaphor of yeast during the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. Then we come with a special offering for the First Fruits in April to say thanks to God for His provision and in June we celebrate the Festival of Weeks known as Pentecost to hammer that point home. In September, we party on Rosh Hashanah, because the Lord God is our King and in October we grieve over our sins on Yom Kippur. We can spend some time eating in a tent outside on the Feast of Booths and explain to our kids that just as the people of Israel wandered through the wilderness entirely dependent on the Lord for subsistence, so we are wanderers and nomads in this world and we cannot look to Mammon to take care of us.

5. Maintenance of the Apostolic Traditions: However, as we continue to find new and imaginative ways to teach our children and to pass our love for the Lord on to the next

generation we run the risk of losing our way if we do not remain faithful to and grounded in the traditions as the apostles passed them on to us.

- [1 Corinthians 11:1-2 HCSB](#) (1) Be imitators of me, as I also am of Christ. (2) Now I praise you because you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.
- [2 Thessalonians 2:15 HCSB](#) (15) Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions you were taught, either by our message or by our letter.

It is as we try everyday to work those doctrinal and practical traditions out into our lives that our children will note our devotion to the Lord. It is on the testing ground of our homes that our true adoption will be demonstrated. It is when we practice chesed or loving kindness at home that they will know that the Lord God is kind. It is as we discipline our children fairly and consistently that they will learn yare Adonai or fear of the Lord.

We need our children to understand the joys of being a bondservant of the Master. They need to see that obedience to God's will is not a burden but is instead the only true freedom Mankind will ever know. We must be joyful slaves to righteousness.

- [Romans 6:16-18 HCSB](#) Do you not know that if you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of that one you obey--either of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness? (17) But thank God that, although you used to be slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching you were entrusted to, (18) and having been liberated from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.

6. Constant Watchfulness: This slavery to righteousness implies constant watchfulness. We need to not only demonstrate the positive, joyful and healthy aspects of the Adonaic Christian faith but to also be ever on the alert for the devil's saccharine sweet substitutes.

- [Matthew 7:15 HCSB](#) "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves.
- [1 John 4:1 HCSB](#) Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- [Colossians 2:8 HCSB](#) Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elemental forces of the world, and not based on Christ.
- [2 Thessalonians 3:6 HCSB](#) (6) Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother who walks irresponsibly and not according to the tradition received from us.

We need to be careful lest the lure of human tradition overtake our love for the mitzvot of the Lord.

- [Matthew 15:2-3 HCSB](#) "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they don't wash their hands when they eat!" (3) He answered them, "And why do you break God's commandment because of your tradition?"

7. Christ Centered: Last in this list but first and foremost in our hearts, we must be Christ-centered. All of our attempts to place God at the center of our lives, all of our attempts to remember His ways, all of our attempts to teach our children ahavat Adonai will be for nothing if our labors are not rightly placed.

- There is only one God and one Mediator between God and man – the man Christ Jesus.
- He is THE way THE truth and THE life.
- He is the Head of the church, which is His body.
- Everything has been created through Him and for Him.
- Without Him we can do nothing.

If this congregation ever forgets Who its true Shepherd is, then we will be lost.

- Our lives must be Christ-centered.
- Our worship must be Christ-centered.
- Our conversations must be Christ-centered.
- Our marriages must be Christ-centered.
- Our families must be Christ-centered.

Anything and everything that we can do to remember that fact and to impress it upon the hearts of the next generation is healthy. Commanding our children and our house after us to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just is the way to life as a Church. It is the way ahead. It is our hope. That is how the Lord will fulfill what He has promised us.

- [Psalms 71:17-18 HCSB](#) God, You have taught me from my youth, and I still proclaim Your wonderful works. (18) Even when I am old and gray, God, do not abandon me. Then I will proclaim Your power to *another* generation, Your strength to all who are to come.