

Some Specific Directives that many take as Mitzvot's

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This article is updated after rereading the book of Judges and reflecting upon what it tells us. That book is very startling and disturbing in the degree that the Israelites changed in abandoning the covenant they made with God. This change occurred in a relatively short time period. It was basically the new generation that went their own way and not the way of God. Without a specific person, Judge or King, to Sheppard them, it did not take very long for them to become lost. The chief priest was not able to keep them walking forward properly. Being lost without a spiritual compass, each person went forward doing what he thought was right in his own eyes.

Jdg 17:6 In those days *there was* no king in Israel, *but* every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes.

Now it is understandable why God told them to make themselves reminders to keep the memories and commands alive in their minds. Why they were to recite the Shema morning and night. These historical things of God's mighty arm were to be passed down generation to generation. When the worlds troubles and way forward through life takes over, it more often than not works in us in forgetting and not following Gods directions to us. We cannot be too critical looking at these Israelites as at that time, they did not have the advantages we have today. Each of them did not have a copy of the Bible or the Torah. Today we have a copy of both the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament we have extra guidance directly from Yeshua on how we are to walk forward. Our life is much easier in obtaining the necessities for life, giving us extra leisure time, time we should be using to study and learn God's word. The importance of the Torah in both early times as well as in today's time is that it is a map, showing us the path we are to follow in our walk through this life. Unfortunately today the shepherds that guide their flocks are no better than the chief priests in earlier times.

In today's time we have the Bible readily available to be held in our hand and to be read and studied. We have major advantages that help us keep focused upon God. This happens only if we are focused on going forward in obedience to God. It is human nature to become distracted and lazy, that is a free will choice each person makes.

An examination of some specific commands in scripture that are directed to the heart, that often new Messianics struggle with is whether they are to be kept in the mind or with physical tokens. The following looks at the Bible scripture and also discusses the Jewish customs that are followed pertaining to these. It is up to each person individually to decide on each of these directives as whether they keep these as a mental direction placed upon the heart or a physical token reminder or in some specific combination.

One needs to be careful and not get caught up in these scriptural commands at the expense of following the main or key commands of how we are to go forward.

An examination of scriptures and discussion follows;

1. Tefillin, a small box with ties that contain a scroll.

[Exo 13:8](#) And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that *which* the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.

[Exo 13:9](#) And it shall be **for a sign** unto thee **upon thine hand**, and for a **memorial between thine eyes**, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.

[Exo 13:10](#) Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.

The above scriptures tells us the intent is to remember the Lord and how He took the Israelites out of Egypt with a mighty hand. It says that it is to be carried out in the correct season from year to year as a memorial. It is to focus on keeping the Lord's law in our heart and in our mouth. The right season is Passover or Pesach.

[Exo 13:14](#) And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *is* this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage:

[Exo 13:15](#) And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.

[Exo 13:16](#) And it shall be **for a token upon thine hand**, and for **frontlets between thine eyes**: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.

When one's children ask about Pesach, one needs to relate the story of the Lord and His might in taking the Israelites out of Egypt. A token is a physical symbol. Overall this token symbol is directed to pesach, one day a year.

[Deu 6:6](#) And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

[Deu 6:7](#) And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

[Deu 6:8](#) And thou **shalt bind them** for a **sign upon thine hand**, and they shall **be as frontlets between thine eyes**.

The words of the Lord are to be kept in ones heart at all times, meaning throughout the entire day, never losing sight of them, The words are commands and laws as well as history of

God's actions on our behalf. We are to bind them upon our hand and deep in our mind between our eyes. This could be taken as physical attachments or as mental focus. When we use our hands to do things it would make us reflect on the Lord's Mighty hands working to lead us out of sin and put us on a new path forward in life. Similarly what we see with our eyes now is different than what we would have seen or would be before us, if we had not been set on a new path forward by God's might.

Deu 11:16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;

Deu 11:17 And *then* the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and *lest* ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

Deu 11:18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, **and bind them for a sign upon your hand**, that they may **be as frontlets between your eyes**.

Deu 11:19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Again the above can be taken as either physical reminders that we see to keep us focused on God's words in going forward in life, or as mental focus of remembering so that our heart and soul is filled with God's words. If physical they were to be kept distinctly in view by the eyes as well as on the hand, not so easy to do normally but will be explored later.

The Jews respond to the above as using physical tokens when praying and when studying God's word (even when it is using the Talmud instead of the Bible for studying). Note also the physical tokens are not attached as commanded, they are placed on the forehead and on the arm by Orthodox Jews, rather than between the eyes and on the hand.

Originally from above, it was specified to be a physical symbol in some fashion on the first day of Pesach, the rest of the time it was to be placed on the heart and in the mind..

Note that there are 4 different sets of scriptures describing this commandment.

2. Tzitzits, fringes that hang down from the bottom of the four corners of garments.

Num 15:37 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 15:38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make **them fringes in the borders of their garments** throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a **ribband of blue**:

Num 15:39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

Num 15:40 That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your

God.

Num 15:41 I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD your God.

Deu 22:12 Thou shalt **make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture**, wherewith thou coverest *thyself*.

The above two sets of scriptures describe the placement of 4 fringes with a blue cord in them, placed upon the four corners of garments. These are to be reminders of remembering and doing all the commandments and to walk forward in righteousness. Recognize these are for the benefit of the wearer, not for the benefit of others.

The Orthodox Jews began to place these on prayer shawls when praying. Some also attach them to their clothes as specified and wear them at all times. Early garments were made with four corners, not the way garments today are made. Now days, some Messianic Christians wear looped fringes on their belts, they were not told to do this, rather the instruction was to add them onto their garments or vesture by which they cover themselves. A belt is not a garment.

3. Mezuzah, a container that contains a scroll and is attached on door posts.

Deu 6:8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

Deu 6:9 And thou shalt **write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates**.

Deu 11:18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

Deu 11:19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Deu 11:20 And thou shalt **write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates**:

Deu 11:21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

Deu 11:22 For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;

Deu 11:23 Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves.

The mezuzah's are given to us in two scriptures and are good reminders both to us and to others as we or they enter our houses. They are easily obtained and used by many messianic's and Jews.

4. Bind them on your neck and fingers and the table of your heart

Pro 3:1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

Pro 3:2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Pro 3:3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: **bind them about thy neck**; write them upon the **table of thine heart**:

Pro 7:1 My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Pro 7:2 Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Pro 7:3 **Bind them upon thy fingers**, write them upon the **table of thine heart**.

The above scriptures are generally not quoted or observed, yet they are easy to put in place and are in keeping with the theme of all the other scriptures above. They cover the same theme of remembering the commandments and God's words. Ways of keeping the above will be looked at shortly.

Summary:

Overall, the above scriptures give instructions to not forget the Lord nor His directives to us. Physical reminders are good and can be simple such as placing a scroll in a container on the door posts of one's house and on the gates, or putting fringes on the four corners of one's garments or attaching boxes etc to ones arm and forehead, or tying a string on ones finger to remind them. It is all tied together with the same theme of remembering and doing the commandments and keeping focus on the Lord and not forgetting or losing sight of walking in the way of the Lord.

The important thing in going forward is to use whatever technique works for one in helping one to continually keep God's directives to us in our mind. We are not to forget and go astray. The Mezuzah's remind one as they enter in their house or yard, the tzitzit's remind one as they get dressed in the morning and undressed at night if they are on their garment, the tefillin's are cumbersome and only good at specific times and are not exactly as God directed in scripture, however they are repeated four times in scripture, twice as often as the tzitzit and mezuzah. They are directed to Pesach. One never hears of the last scriptures above of binding them on your finger as a way forward. A way of keeping these reminders as tokens could be such as wearing a special ring, a promise ring as the bride of Christ, placed on one's finger or a necklace with a specific charm with God's name. For the tefillin between ones eyes it could, if one wears glasses be used as reminders especially if they were engraved with God's name as his name would always be between the frontlets of your eyes. In the house a plaque with select scripture that can be read and placed in a conspicuous location is another good reminder. The key thing is that the reminder is to be placed upon our heart. It always helps to have some physical tokens to help us remember and not forget. Reciting the Shema always reminds us, providing one reflects on what is being spoken.

The choice is ours, taken as to whatever works for a person, is fine. Some will have no feeling of the necessity of having a token, others will incorporate one or a number of tokens in their life. It is up to each person individually as to whether they will use a token or not. Never judge others on these scriptures as you do not know what is on another person's heart, just focus on your own heart and make sure it is right with God.

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