

Sunday, September 29, 2013

## Remember (10)

**Seventh Verse:** *“Remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Jude 17).

This verse came in the epistle of our teacher Jude [Judas Thaddaeus] the apostle, as a warning from false teachers and to encourage us to be steadfast in the upright faith that is delivered to us by the Apostles. This verse has many beautiful meanings, but before we delve into these meanings, let's answer the following question: **Why does the Apostle say remember the words of the Apostles of the Lord Jesus rather than remember the words of the Lord Jesus Himself?**

The fact is: **Our Fathers the pure Apostles did not speak their own words, but the words of Jesus Himself; they handed down what they heard. Additionally, the Holy Spirit reminded them with the words of the Lord Jesus, taught them all things, and guided them to explain the divine truth** (John 4:16). We should not forget that the Lord Himself said to them, when He sent them to minister, *“He who hears you hears me.”* (Luke 10:16). This means that **He will put His words in their mouths such that they become a means of conveying His belief, teachings, and love to the people.**

Let's now contemplate up on some of the meanings of this verse:

1- **The Apostle Judas encourages us to continuously ponder upon the word of God** for it is the fountain of living water that truly quenches the thirst of the soul. The longing for the word of God is the desire of every heart that tasted the love of Christ.

2- **When we keep the divine word within our hearts, it strengthens our resolve to do good deeds** and rectifies our path to be according to the will of God. The same was with our mother St. Mary; she kept all words, pondering upon them in her heart. When the word is kept in the heart, it strengthens the weak willpower and leads it in the path of light.

3- **It is important to place the divine word before our eyes at all times, not behind us.** The headlights of a car is used to light the road ahead, likewise the words of the Bible lights our path. If we neglect the headlights, we would be at risk of serious accidents if we drive in the dark. These headlights that light the road are the ones described in the psalm: *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”* (Psalm 119:105). He also said: *“Unless your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction.”* (Psalm 119:92).

4- **Our Coptic Orthodox Church lives this verse in its daily communal worship.** We find that there are various readings from the writings of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is as though the church calls St Paul to give us a sermon (Pauline), then she calls St. Peter, John, James, or Jude to give us another sermon (Catholic). Similarly, all liturgical prayers include various passages chosen from the words of the Apostles of the Lord Jesus by guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our role then is to always come early, listen attentively, and contemplate on what we hear so that the eyes of our hearts are opened to understand the divine mysteries. In these words we have treasures saved of Life, light, wisdom, knowledge, comfort, strength, hope, nourishment, joy and Peace.

Let's place these words before us and remember them at all times as God commanded His people in the Old Testament: *“These words shall be in your heart, you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates”* (Deuteronomy 6:6-9).

May the Lord anchor His words in our hearts to the last breath, Amen.

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