

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, June 12, 2011
Pentecost Sunday - Remember

I saw a video of a duck that followed a person because it was the first living thing it saw when it hatched. I Googled it and found that Konrad Lorenz, an Australian zoologist performed an experiment on Graylag geese to see the effects this phenomenon that he called “imprinting.” While we don’t as humans have the same degree of imprinting, there is a knowledge that gets passed on from generation to generation. This creates societal norms. When Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land they had to cross the Jordan at flood stage. God opened the waters so they could go across on dry ground. He then told them to choose 12 leaders, one from each tribe, and have them take a rock from the middle of the Jordan and place them where they were staying that night. **Joshua 4:5-7 (NIV)** ⁵ *and said to them, "Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, ⁶ to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' ⁷ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."*

We must remember what happened and pass it along to the next generation so it will not be forgotten. I was recently at a friend’s birthday party where I met up with a friend I hadn’t seen in over 20 years. As we sat together he shared with our table the story of how he came to the Lord at the farm we lived on back in 1972. We were all gripped by the story of how he silently prayed to God, “If you are real and you really love me, then have the mother bird come and feed this baby bird that is on the ground in front of me.” Immediately this mother bird came and fed the baby bird and they flew off together. It was just as fresh for him 39 years later as it was when it happened. I sensed the Lord’s presence in the power of that testimony. The Hebrew word for “testimony” has a root word that means “to do again.” There is something very powerful in a testimony that carries with it the potential power to reproduce itself. **Revelation 12:11a (NIV)** ¹¹ *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.*

In **Psalm 78** Asaph speaks about this subject: ³ *what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.* ⁴ *We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.* ⁶ *so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.* ⁷ *Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.* ⁸ *They would not be like their forefathers-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.* ⁹ *The men of Ephraim, though armed with bows, turned back on the day of battle; ¹⁰ they did not keep God's covenant and refused to live by his law.* ¹¹ *They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them.*

Today is the Day of Pentecost and represents the birth of the New Testament church of Jesus Christ. Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father, the precious Holy Spirit. Acts 2 recounts the story of how they were baptized with Holy Spirit and were given the power to be his witnesses. As we reflect on what God did in the past and pray for a fresh touch from him we can enter into a greater intimacy with the Lord and be used by him to make a difference in our world. Our testimony should be one of an ongoing hunger for God and to operate in the gifts he has given us and continues to give us. The next generation needs to see us as real and genuine Christians that exemplify something worth pursuing. If you are living a dull and boring Christian life, nobody is going to want it. All we need to do is go back and remember what God has done for us. Read it. Meditate on it. Pray it. Ask for a fresh outpouring of his Spirit. Then live it and share it. Let’s not be like the Ephraimites who forgot what he had done.