

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Aug 9th 2013

In today's first reading, Moses exhorts the people to think, to reflect, to open their eyes and hearts to the miracles in their midst.

He begins with, "Did anything so great ever happen before? Was it ever heard of?" and goes on to enumerate specific examples of God's power, mercy and love that they have been privileged to experience.

This type of reflection, looking back to see the wonders I have experienced in my life, is not only healthy and right, it is mandatory to see the hand of God in my life. Like the Israelites, I tend to get caught up in the everyday trivia and travails of my life and forget the big picture and the many times I have been saved from physical danger, my own and others' ignorance, and my mistakes and sinfulness.

If we set aside time periodically to remember – even writing down the miracles in our lives, the prayers that were answered in amazing yet perhaps unexpected ways, the "coincidences" that dot our lives and direct our paths – we will see God's guiding grace. We will be awed enough to say, like Moses, "Did anything so great ever happen before?"

And then we must be moved, as Moses was, to understand that we have been granted these graces, this guidance, so that we "might know the Lord is God and there is no other." (Dt. 4: 35)

When I feel that my life is just in my hands, or perhaps in the random hand of "fate," I feel anxious, confused. But when I realize the wonders God has done and the places through which and into which he has brought me, my faith soars.

I find another bit of great wisdom in Moses' exhortation and really the key to building and sustaining my faith. In verse 39 it is stated, "This is why you must now know, and fix in your heart, that the Lord is God in the heavens above and on earth below, and that there is no other."

The key as I see it is "fixing" these truths in our hearts. That way, I will remember God's provisions for me throughout my life and I will be moved to respond with gratitude and increased love. I will

remember that God is God and he is in control. I need not fear what may appear to be chaos. Writing down my personal "faith stories" whenever I recall them makes it even easier to "fix them" and the truth they reveal in my heart.

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