

Shale Fragments™

a division of Flower Girl Greetings, LLC
writings by Beth Ann Phifer



Rewards?

He Remembers

Written May 2014; revised October 2024

When I was little, I was a Camp Fire Girl. We would earn varied-colored, wooden beads for successfully completing tasks like community service, self-improvement, and learning. The brown, log-shaped beads represented outdoor accomplishments, and the orange, cylindrical beads were given for domestic endeavors. There were red beads for health, blue beads for nature learning, and green beads for handiwork and crafts. Each spring, our leader conducted a ceremony around a campfire where she passed out plastic eggs filled with the beads we had earned. The girls would string the beads and loop them around their necks. Sometimes, when I didn't earn many beads, I compared myself to others and felt inadequate and behind in the race. Have you ever felt like that?

Fast forward to age 23 (after I met Jesus personally), the concept of rewards in heaven left me wondering, had I done enough? Was I keeping up o.k.? At the same time, I knew that God's word encouraged rest in His love and salvation by His grace alone. So, I released a prayer up to my Father as one tosses a dove to the sky. I asked Him to explain His "reward system" through the lens of His love and grace. I clearly remember that week in May ten years ago. As I went about my work, He began to slowly speak the answer with Scripture, memories, and impressions of His love. He is such a good Father!

Over a few days, He unfolded these three verses:

- **Matthew 6:3-4**

³ But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing ⁴ so that your giving will be in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

- **Hebrews 6:10**

¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

- **Psalms 139:17-18a**

¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You.

When we are given rewards in heaven, it will not be because we have piled up points from our good works, but because God has tenderly remembered our life lived in His Spirit, deeds we had forgotten. God is not *keeping a record* of wrongs and rights; He is *remembering the details* of our journey with Him. We only remember a little, but our Father remembers it all, like a parent who puts memories in a scrapbook.

Not only has He remembered our kindness to others and our trust in Him, but He has forgotten our failures. The failures, wrong choices, and yes, the most horrible sinful behaviors don't show up in His scrapbook. In our new birth, they are gone, covered by the blood of the Lamb, and cast out forever!

Our Father remembers when you stroked your child to sleep, when you put in that eighth load of laundry, when you persevered through the care of an aging parent, when you loved in the face of

rejection, when you persevered through lonely days, and when you trusted Him during your greatest heartache and pain. He remembers every prayer you prayed; in fact, He has saved them in bowls as incense that delights His senses. (Revelation 5:8) He remembers every smile of encouragement as well as when you shared His salvation to the cashier or the lonely teenager on the bike path.

Our rewards are His remembrance of the Holy Spirit's working in our lives.

You may be asking, "But what about the verse, 'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for his deeds done through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.' in 2 Corinthians 5:10?" For more understanding of this verse in its context, please see Page 4 of my writing *Behold, He is Coming in the Clouds!* at ShaleFragments.com in *The Book of Revelation* category.

Yes, it's true... As He remembers us, we remember Him. Hebraic *remembering* is action. We listen to Him, abide in His word, follow in His steps, rest in His love, and rejoice in His grace... and He remembers.