

Diffused to Focused (Momentarily, That Is)

What got this article underway was a really special occasion. The time was shortly after Christmas day but within that season which continues right up to Epiphany. We can extend Christmas out even further, semi-officially, to 2 February, Feast of the Presentation. As for the special-ness involved, one early morning or two hours before dawn I was sitting in a nicely heated corner of a large glassed-in garden that formed a rectangular enclosure. The center had four neatly trimmed small-ish evergreen trees decorated with white and blue lights. Because of the snow, these lights were encrusted with semi-melted ice thereby giving off a more diffuse glow.

To make this special...and I mean really special...around midnight a substantial snowstorm started promising about a foot of snow. It was light and fluffy, no wind, which made it cling to the branches. Every once in a while a light breeze would blow some snow off the branches momentarily transforming the zillions of snowflakes into minuscule blue-white glowing lights. Anyone would have given a million bucks for the privilege of viewing this. Literally. And to think I had it all for my very own enjoyment while tucked away in a corner. At the same time it was close enough to people passing by in the corridor. However, at that hour, the traffic was practically non-existent. I wouldn't have wanted to be completely alone. Nearness to people yet at a distance was an added feature to the experience.

Upon further reflection, perception of such beauty runs the risk of being not so much lost but clouded over where the essence remains but is obscured with...well...a lot of stuff totally unrelated to it. At first glance it looks as though we're the ones responsible. A closer look reveals that some other force...an impersonal one...is pulling the strings pretty much behind the scenes. That's something we need to take a look at later on. Perhaps these influences are not unlike the puppeteers responsible for projecting images on the wall of the cave in Book Seven of Plato's **Republic**. The word for puppeteer is interesting, maker of wonders...wonders to grab our attention and keep us fascinated with what essentially is a whole bunch of you-know-what.

Sitting in that magical-mystical place made me wonder why this is so. Despite the vast difference between the immeasurable beauty and projections we put on such experiences, we can't but help wonder if they are two sides of the same coin. For example, during the first hour someone walked by and took notice of the sight I was beholding. Without a doubt, I could feel that he was overwhelmed by the same beauty I was beholding. Not in the least did he detract from the overall atmosphere. I sensed that the passer-by was equally enthralled by my presence as I was sitting in the corner

barely illuminated by the light. By sheer accident I was contributing to this other person enjoying the mystery. And so it ended up with two of us delighting in the experience. Speaking of myself and perhaps projecting on to that person, at the same time I was subject to a multitude of absolutely useless thoughts and the like. Yes, useless, not necessarily malicious. The only difference...the enormity of which we fail to appreciate by reason of the regularity with which we're overcome by these things...is that we know we're being hijacked. That theme, of course, will be taken up shortly.

In contrast to the blue lights encrusted with an icy mix, in the inside it was a whole different story, and by inside I mean what's going on inside our heads. At first I thought the oft-felt discrepancy between where I was and what was going on within was applicable to me alone. That other fellow by default was exempt. Not true, but that's how we tend to think. I'm the one seriously lacking, nobody else. We can overcome this chiefly by interacting with other persons of interests similar to our own, so having consulted several friends, I was met with plenty of support. As one of them told me, I was describing to him almost verbatim what he was experiencing yet fearful to admit it. Later on we shared some good laughs, that always being a good sign.

Reflecting upon the beauty in front of me which alternated with the sudden emergence of less than desirable thoughts, I was not so much discouraged but curious as to explore this strange state of affairs. This didn't happen right away but after having spent several days at the same time in the same place being stationary. Actually it wasn't long before I realized putting a stop to the incessant flow isn't the solution. I've tried that in the past, have read about how futile it is as well as having gotten reports from friends who said the same thing. Forget-about-it. Instead, I preferred to watch from where these disjointed thoughts came, that being the overriding desire. This seems to have validity because it's a frequent topic of discussion in article and books. Anyone reading this who has some familiarity with prayer, meditation and mindfulness will know it's a problem as old as the hills. What surprises me is that despite the mental and spiritual contortions we put ourselves through with little or no results, we keep at it. Something deep within us must be at work.

It's nice that what I and people are going through consists basically of the same thing. Furthermore, this has been documented down the ages. One thing is for certain, the evidence is not just overwhelming but in many ways tiresome. The same ol' same ol' regardless of the century. And as noted, these thoughts are nothing special, neither murderous, lustful nor hateful. In essence, they are simply junk passing by as we see on a river in a third world country. Getting back to the experience of being in the above

mentioned magical-mystical place by the enclosed garden, the contrast between that and what transpires within one's head couldn't be sharper.

The really bothersome thing is that these thoughts are incessant. Again, the question arises as to whether they belong to the same reality I was beholding. That's an enigma known only to the gods (and goddesses). Here the slowing down of time is important because as everyone knows, we want quick results. However, a situation like the one I'm describing brings home in a special way the contrast between what we want and what we see in ourselves. And to think I was pondering these things smack in the midst of a place and circumstance beyond the reach of most people, something you only read about in an exotic travel magazine or see in a You Tube video. So in a way, such an experience as this must be transitory. In that way it can register better in our heads so we can access it at times when we're in the need of support and encouragement.

Staying in that blessed place or the enclosure...blessed initially but not so much as time went on!...had the advantage of thoughts diminishing on their own as they streamed in. In other words, it went from a river to a trickle. Such is the advantage of the passage of time. What started out as a struggle gradually toned down in intensity without completely coming to an end. In other words, returning to the same place at the same time...the enclosure in the predawn hours...for an extended period of time worked its magic. In the meanwhile I was quite literally doing nothing. Of course, you continue to greet and interact with anyone who happened to come along. More precisely, such encounters now are perceived as simply happening and are no longer perceived as bothersome. They're part n' parcel of everyday reality. Perhaps the following famous statement from the Desert Fathers of Egypt has direct bearing on all this: "Stay in your cell, for it will teach you everything."

Later this brought to mind the distinction between two types of time familiar to anyone with some basic knowledge of the New Testament Greek text, *chronos* and *kairos*. The latter is, well, chronological time or the awareness of the usual rise and fall of successive events. I.e., one thing after another and so forth. *Kairos* is a term thrown about a lot by scholars meaning a specific event, due measure as well as that which is in season. Thus *kairos* has an expanded sense where *chronos* is suspended. Perhaps that's behind the biblical notion of forty days (usually for forty nights). So you can say that I had taken up my position at the same *chronos* each morning for several days in a row. I might add that awareness of the Christmas season...*kairos*...had something to do with all this as well. Surely when within this *kairos* I didn't do a thing to effect a change which on its own worked out for the better.

When you've engaged in an activity that's both common and usual...both *chronos* and *kairos*...as the one just described, you gain a better appreciation how our normal focus works. What strikes you pretty much right off the bat is that our attention is diffuse by nature. I distinguish diffuse from scattered which can be misunderstood. Diffuse melds with the object of attention without it being registered negatively in our head. In other words, no memory is left between the one melding and that which is melded. Scattered...the more familiar state of affairs...is the negative side of all this where our attention becomes absorbed in what's before us. Here a favorite theme comes into play, namely, being hijacked. Favorite in the sense that I started developing it about two years ago using images from around the mid 1970s when plane hijackings were fairly common. As we all know, since then they've taken a more deadly turn.

Being hijacked is a great image because as applied to our mental condition it means our normal behavior can be overthrown before we know it. Most of the time we haven't a clue as to how, let alone why. After wringing our hands (and heads) for a while, we give up simply out of exhaustion. For this reason I decided to insert in parentheses within the title **Momentarily, That Is**. It gives the impression of an after-thought...true...but one meant to give a little enhancement and mystification to the title. As for diffuseness, it seems to be the natural state of affairs, something permanent within us, so no need to get flustered over fear of losing it. In reality we do, but no problem. We can't lose what we are. I found this insight comforting because when the idea of hijacking comes up, we tend to think of it as a kind of end-of-the-world event. However, there are degrees of bigness, the smaller ones being far more common. Being attentive to the small stuff is important, for this enables things fall into place more easily.

The reason I had mentioned remaining in one place without doing a blessed thing for a time longer than normal is that it offers a direct way of appreciating this natural diffused state. A huge discovery is that when in this state we're perfectly fine. Instinctively we know this is how and why we were made. However, we roll along until something from somewhere somehow assails or hijacks us. Talk about this happening in a nanosecond. We haven't the slightest idea what this about and are led this way and that by some kind of invisible yet all too real rope. Indeed, we feel like monkeys. A friend of mine told me that he has such reoccurring dreams and can't get them out of his head. With this image in mind, we see that a time gap exists between when we've been hijacked and when we're being led by the nose. However, we don't have a sense of interval. Recognizing this, it seems, is Step Number One. It's that important.

Since this hijacked state is characterized by such a tight grasp, the opposite, of course, comes to mind: how to effect a loosening of these super-tight bonds. Generally we do

this by realizing the tightness of the grip followed by relaxing it as best we can. This is effected by the simplest of all means, just being aware of it. It should be kept in mind that this is a grip which encompasses our whole being, the loosening of which must come from within, not from without which often is how we perceive it. Again, *chronos* and *kairos* enter the picture to rescue us, conventional time and a special event. Naturally when bound we're keenly aware of "how long" it's going to continue. That, of course, is the hijacker's biggest asset. The hijacker...and I think of it here more as a circumstance...dangles the prospect of our release before us without letting on how long or short the *chronos* will be.

However, it's within our power to turn the tables. Our being aware of that tantalizing bait directly in our sight with *chronos* as the hijacker's ally turns out to be its downfall. We see the bait for what it's worth and say something to ourselves, obviously this is a manifestation of *chronos*-type time. However, I opt to see it as a *kairos* or event which in an instant enables me to dissolve the bait which until now so entranced us. Such is the weakness of the hijacker. Somehow I see it tying in with the saying quoted a few paragraphs above, "Stay in your cell, for it will teach you everything." The most important word is "stay" in the sense of abide. In other words, don't move through thick and thin.

On second thought, perhaps "staying" as not moving from one place may be an alternate term than focused as used in the title. Also the two are better than being stationary which suggests not going anywhere. "Stagnant" isn't too far off the mark here. Thus emphasis upon staying (as in one's cell) involves being both attentive as well as relaxed. A concrete example? Again, that experience of staying by the glassed enclosure with the lights and snow giving off a mysterious presence in the darkness. While that staying was for a short time, I'm thinking here more in terms of one much more extended, even over the span of one's life.

With this in mind the idea behind "staying" might apply to our recollective faculty called *anamnesis*, a subject matter I had touched upon in a good number of other essays on this home page. Actually I find this term pretty much a source of endless insight, so here we are again considering it from a different angle. Both "staying" and *anamnesis* connote presence as well as stability, something that's constant in our daily lives. The opposite, of course, is forgetfulness. By this I don't mean the run-of-the-mill forgetting; the same with regard to any physical condition relative to old age.

I looked around to find an example of forgetfulness and then realized I had touched upon it albeit briefly when working on Plato's **Phaedo**. One passage is particularly worth taking time out to examine:

If, having acquired (*lambano*) this knowledge in each case, we have not forgotten (*epilanthano*) it, we remain knowing (*eido* with *aei*) and have knowledge (*eido*) throughout our life, for to know (*eido*) is to acquire knowledge (*lambano* and *episteme*), keep it and not lose it (*echo* and *apoluo* with negative). Do we not call the losing of knowledge forgetting (*lethe*)? [75d]

This excerpt begins with *ei* or "if" which sets up a situation with regard to having acquired knowledge (not mentioned here but concerns a discussion on equality). The verb is *lambano* also as to take as well as to receive and seems to apply to both an active and passive stance. It refers to each instance of equality, *ekastote* also as on each occasion. *Lambano* is similar to the negative of *epilanthano*, the preposition *epi-* or upon indicative of a more comprehensive forgetfulness to be avoided (*me* or not). And so *lambano/me epilanthano* imparts to us a constancy with regard to knowing, *eido* and *aei*, the latter term inferring perpetuity. To this is added *eido* as remaining throughout one's entire life.

The text moves on with regard to knowledge (the verb *eido*) which is dynamic by nature insofar as it acquires knowledge, *lambano* with *episteme*. This noun connotes professional skill and consists of the verbal root *histemi* (to stand) prefaced with the preposition *epi-* or upon. Contrast this with the above mentioned *epilanthano*, literally as to forget-upon. Also involved is keeping and not losing *episteme*, the verbs *echo* and *apoluo* with the negative, that is, to have and not to loosen from or *apo-*. This excerpt concludes with a rhetorical question where the *apoluo* of *episteme* = the act of forgetting or *lethe*.

A note with regard to *lanthano* or to forget; it also means to escape notice, avoid attention, be hidden and ties in with the noun *aletheia* meaning truth as well as reality. In essence it and the adjective *alethes* (true) derives from the verbal root for *lethe*, *lanthano*, the alpha privative being attached. In light of this a fuller meaning of *aletheia* infers not forgetting...having no *lethe*...which means it's sustained over a period of time.

So what does being hijacked have to do with the reality symbolized by *anamnesis* and *lanthano*, remembrance and forgetfulness, when we're suddenly overcome by a power stronger than we can resist? First of all, *anamnesis* is our very selves, something you

don't hear too much nowadays by reason of having drifted away from our classical roots. As spelled out in other essays, *anamnesis* is one of those things we recognize, like looking in a mirror and recognizing ourselves, yet notoriously difficult to define. Actually that turns out to be its beauty...something we both know and don't know operative at the same time. The Number One Problem is forgetfulness of this faculty, in other words, *lanthano*.

Because we go through life with this *lethe* constantly dogging us yet for the most part unaware of how it came about, *anamnesis* can be as distant as the far side of the moon. In fact, it's so well concealed that we deny its reality even when someone points it out to us. Shades of the negative of Jung: "The psyche is not real" to be discussed shortly, a key insight. In such a circumstance we are living not in accord with the truth which as pointed out above is *aletheia* or not-forgetfulness. Thus our dilemma can be described by forgetfulness overshadowing *anamnesis* and restored by truth-as-*aletheia* or that which is uncovered.

As far as hijacking goes, we can take it as a virulent yet common form of *lethe*. Situating this *lethe* within the context of *anamnesis* and *aletheia*...remembrance and truth or not-forgetting)...puts it in a wholly new light, easier to comprehend and easier to slip out from under it's insidious hold. Once aware of the mechanism involved, it's far easier to untie now when earlier for us it had been a Gordian knot woven tight beyond belief. Not only that, it can be done at once. Strange to say, that's hard to accept, denial of which keeps the Gordian knot tight as ever. In fact, I'd say that's it's chief advantage over us, our inability to recognize we that we can undo it at once. Thus understanding the notion of the mechanism at work as something blind and operative means we've looked beyond the fearsome facade and see nothing is there. The notion of a mechanism is helpful because it's something essentially operative in such-and-such a circumstance which likewise is operative in another such-and-such circumstance.

Even should we loosen the knot just a tad and allow our innate faculty of *anamnesis* to function naturally, it's sufficient enough to makes us appreciate that our normal focus is diffuse. We take in what's around us without being compelled to run after one thing and then another. Compare this when something hijacks us; worse if it's a someone which makes it more deadly by reason of introducing a personal element. That means we don't just focus in on something and don't let it go but have become incapable of letting go. Thus we exchange our innate diffuse awareness for an attention that's concentrated, and concentrated is another word for being cramped. I omit saying focused because that connotes we're attentive to an ideal that's high or noble, not suited for being hijacked. So despite the discomfort of being hijacked, we prefer to

maintain its tight grip because it endows us with meaning and purpose. Besides, it can give us an opportunity for heroic action and, of course, recognition.

One positive feature of being un-hijacked, if you will, is that no longer are we compelled to speak in conformity with our inner shopping list. That list often structures people, things and events in accord with awareness of our self-induced perception of being special compared with everyone else. Here without know it we move into a reality discussed elsewhere and noted earlier, a nullification or inverse of Carl Jung's bland-appearing statement, "the psyche is not real." We don't acknowledge this outrightly but in private, if you will. Even then this acknowledgment has the capacity of unraveling us completely. It takes a first class, genuine type of intervention, one commonly put as coming from on high and reminiscent of the demon possessed man of the Gerasenes. At once he had recognized Jesus as Son of the Most High God (cf. Lk 8.28) while the disciples who lived with Jesus failed to do so.

To un-hijack oneself is to recognize that for a time embarrassingly long we've maintained that "the psyche is not real." Better put, we're not the agents doing the recognizing but resemble someone who has won the lottery, another idea I had been working on recently. On the natural level, the lottery works as such. I buy a ticket (or tickets; there are a number of variables), go home and wait for a given day, usually in the early evening. At that time the winner of the Big One is announced along with a host of lesser prizes. You see that you have in your very hands the winning number, this being too good to be true. Even though you might know you are The Winner, compulsively and understandably you can't help but verify it over and over again. Once you know You Are It, you contact the proper authorities who, I guess, run you through a whole bunch of hoops to make sure you're legitimate. The last step is deciding whether to take the winning lottery in one lump sum or to have it meted out over X number of years.

After all this is done, and the lottery is deposited into your bank account or wherever you choose to have it placed, get ready for the trouble to begin. At least that's the common consensus I've heard with most people who've hit it big. However, this is a pale image of The Lottery involved here. As with the physical one, both are characterized by a certain randomness. Your name is simply chosen from among a gazillion others. How this works is hopelessly beyond our comprehension. The only thing we know is that we've won and everyone else who played had lost out.

Using this example of a lottery, it applies to what can be perceived as The Big One. From on high it swoops down and nullifies all the hijacking we've ever experienced and will

experience. It seems to fit in well with Book Seven of Plato's **Republic** where one man among many gets up and walk out of the cave. Although he does so on his own power, the text doesn't say who-what--why effects this. We can exhaust every explanation possible but always come up empty handed. Nobody can explain it's mysterious workings except in terms of a random choice.

Here, if you will, we have the positive side of *lanthano*, of forgetfulness. It's reminiscent of a quote (cited below) from Ps.45.10: "Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house." The person who most likely had been born and raised in the cave with his fellow simply leaves. He hears, considers (*ra'ah* or to see), inclines and forgets, all in that order and all at once. Those in the cave continue their fascination with images projected on the wall by the master puppeteers mentioned earlier. Thus the initial negative side of *lanthano* and *lethe* are transformed for being put to work in a positive way. Better put, it enables us to live in accord with that which is *alethes* or true, of being in a condition of not forgetting. And that not forgetting, of course, is as noted above ties in directly with *anamnesis*.

Realizing all this by no means makes us bullet-proof. That would be flirting with unreality. With the passage of some time we start to realize that we're participating in a reality that doesn't stop, if you will, but keeps on going. Like The Lottery at hand, this reality is something we still can't grasp nor are we ever intended to do so. Don't forget. Though the regular lottery metes out our winnings either in one lump sum or gradually, it does come to an end, one that unfortunately can come all too prematurely and tragically. However, when it comes to The Lottery, we're entitled to enjoy something far better and continuously without causing harm. The best part? No taxes.

Some follow up if you will...

Because forgetfulness is so endemic yet unfortunately so little discussed (perhaps in part we're forgetful!), it might be helpful to examine some references to it in the Psalter. I single out that book from scripture because it sums up our common experience when it comes to relating to God. Please keep in mind that the verb *shakach* is the verb for forget. It's straight-forward and seems to have no other meaning.

Ps.9.12: For he who avenges blood is mindful of them; he does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

Here **avenge and not forgetting are more or less equivalent**. *Darash* also means to seek, fundamentally to tread as one would tread down a path and is used with respect to blood. This brings to mind the first murder, Cain of Abel: "The voice of your

brother's blood is crying to me from the ground" [Gn 4.10]. The direct object of not forgetting by the Lord is with respect to the cry or *tshaqah* of the afflicted or the so-called *hanayyem*. Implied is that these afflicted keep on crying out and don't stop the same time God is not forgetting. It's as though the Lord has a natural tendency to forget and requires constant attention so as not to do so.

Ps 9.17: The wicked shall depart to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.

Shuv rendered here as depart also means to return which suggests the wicked have been in Sheol beforehand. *Reshahym* can also apply to those who are unjust. The same applies to all nations...those other than Israel...which had forget God. Such forgetting here implies that their attention was elsewhere, notably worship of false gods.

Ps.10.12: Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted.

Two verbs with regard to upward motion: *qum* and *nasa'*. The former applies to a going forth as on one's own whereas the latter, taking something and then lifting it. Both apply to the Lord as well as his hand, *yad* often an image of divine power. Both work together in order that the Lord does not forget the afflicted or *hanayyem* as in Ps 9.12.

Ps.13.1: How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

Three rapid fire questions uttered in desperation, not really expecting an answer due to the near hopelessness involved. Note the three instances of *had-'anah* relative to the passage of time which add to the desperation at hand. *Satar* or to hide as well as to conceal is with regard to the Lord's face presumably which was visible until this crisis, this intimating his presence. "You cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live" [Ex 33.20].

Ps.44.24: Why do you hide your face? Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

Two rhetorical questions, the first as in the entry just above but with *lamah* being used, "to what?" It's carried over to the second sentence though not expressed. In sum, forgetting and hiding are pretty much equivalent to each other. The psalmist presents to the Lord not only his affliction and oppression but that of the people, hence "our." *Hony* (as with *hanayyem*) and *lachats*, the latter implying being squeezed or pressed.

Ps.45.10: Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house.

Reference is to the daughter of the king who is to do the following three before forgetting her people and house of her father, this reminiscent of Abram: “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you” [Gn 11.1]. The three are hear, consider and incline (ear): *shamah*, *ra’ah* and *natah* or bend. The first and second are similar; the former more as a simple paying attention as for the first time and the latter as giving oneself over to this *shamah*. The second verb is the common one to see and mediates between the first and second.

Ps.50.22: Mark this, then, you who forget God, lest I rend, and there be none to deliver!

A sharp reminder to those who forget God yet have time to mark or *byn* fundamentally as to understand and from which comes “between.” I.e., to *byn* suggests being able to stand in between two things and moderate them. Failure to *byn*? *Taraph* or to snatch away as prey where no human being can deliver, *natsal*.

Ps.59.11: Slay them not, lest my people forget; make them totter by your power and bring them down, O Lord, our shield!

By not slaying the psalmist’s enemies (the psalmist presumably King David), the people will not forget, *harag* also as to slaughter. Instead of this, the Lord is to first make these enemies totter and then be brought down: *nuah* also as to sway followed by a crash, *yarad* also as to go or to come down. Both are to be effected by the Lord’s power or *chayl* also as strength and can connote virtue, integrity. As for the Lord, (King David) addresses him as shield, *magen* proper to both him and the people.

Ps.74.19: Do not deliver the soul of your dove to the wild beasts; do not forget the life of your poor forever.

Soul and life, *nephesh* and *chayath*, the former animating the latter. *Tur* or dove is singular whereas *hany* or poor is plural. The contrast between *tur* and *chayath* or wild beasts is as extreme as it gets, this intended to get the Lord’s immediate attention.

Ps 74.23: Do not forget the clamor of your foes, the uproar of your adversaries which goes up continually!

Shakach or to forget has two objects. The first is *qol* or the noun for clamor, usually as voice and here associated with *tsar* or foes, also as adversary as well as affliction. The second object is *she’on* or uproar fundamentally as pride, arrogance. Both ascend to heaven and therefore to God unceasing, *halah* and *tamyd*.

Ps.78.7: so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God but keep his commandments.

This is part of a long, extended sentence beginning with vs. 5 and running through vs. 8. What gets this sequence going is the establishment by God of a testimony in Jacob along with a law in Israel. The verb is *qum* or to arise, that it will continue throughout Israel's history. Here we have three uses of the conjunctive v-. The first comes across as "so that" with regard to *sum* or to set, to place *kesel* which also means the opposite, folly. The second conjunctive is with regard to *shakach* or not to forget God's works or that which is performed or accomplished, *mahalal*. The third is as "but" which offsets forgetfulness of God's works and leads to the keeping of his commandments, *natsar* also as to observe with regard to *mitsvah*.

Ps.88.12: Are your wonders known in the darkness or your saving help in the land of forgetfulness?

A rhetorical question as to the Lord's concern for his people which take two forms: wonders and saving help, *pele'* and *tsedaqah* or something admirable and righteousness. To the psalmist both are hidden in darkness and forgetfulness, the latter not the expected *shakach* as in the other Psalm verses but *nesyah*, the only such word in the Bible and possibly from the verbal root *nasa'*, to lift up, to take away. In the verse at hand, *nesyah* is associated with *'erets* or land which is more as a populated area, an associated of those who are forgetful.

Ps.103.2: Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all his benefits.

Barak and (not to) *shakach* are one and the same which here the psalmist warns himself with regard to divine benefits or *gemul*, also as recompense.

Ps.119.16: I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

Shahah and (not) *shakach* are equivalent, the former having the notion of overspreading. Thus *shahah* = *choq* or statutes, that which is appointed and (not) *shakach* = *davar*, word as expression.

Ps 119.61: Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law.

Chevel or cords restrain the psalmist made worse by being associated with those who are wicked or *rashah*, also as being unrighteous. Despite this restraint (*hod*, also as to affirm or to testify), the psalmist does not forget the divine *Torah*.

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