

## Remembering and Forgetting

There is a rather surprising statement, made in the book of Genesis, concerning God's ability to remember.

It occurs just after Noah and his family came out of the ark.

In Genesis 9:13-16, God said---"**I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. "It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; "and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh."The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting**

**covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* on the earth."**

Does God need a string on His finger to remind Him about His promises?

Certainly not!

No, God didn't need that bow as a reminder, but man needed it as an assurance.

Every time it rained, that bow would be a welcome reminder to Noah's nervous family that God was also looking at it and wouldn't forget to turn off the tap.

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No, God would not forget them, but would man forget God?

In fact, many of them did.

And when God created the nation of Israel, He was very careful to guard against this tendency to forget.

First of all, He provided a weekly reminder that He was the Creator.

It is included in the 10 Commandments.

Ex 20:11 **"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."**

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And then, He provided an annual reminder of their deliverance.

Exodus 13:3-4 **"And Moses said to the people: "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten. "On this day you are going out, in the month Abib."**

And along with observance, there was the memorial feast of Passover.

Deuteronomy 16:1 "Observe the month of Abib,  
and keep the Passover to the LORD your  
God, for in the month of Abib the LORD  
your God brought you out of Egypt by  
night."

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Even their clothes were to be a reminder  
that they were God's people.

Num 15:38-40 "Speak to the children of  
Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the  
corners of their garments throughout  
their generations, and to put a blue  
thread in the tassels of the corners.  
"And you shall have the tassel, that you  
may look upon it and remember all the  
commandments of the LORD and do them, and  
that you *may* not follow the harlotry to  
which your own heart and your own eyes  
are inclined, "and that you may remember

and do all My commandments, and be holy  
for your God."

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And when He had settled them in the Promised  
Land, He warned them about the danger of  
prosperity.

Deut 8:12-14 "lest--*when you have eaten and  
are full, and have built beautiful houses  
and dwell in them; "and when your herds  
and your flocks multiply, and your silver  
and your gold are multiplied, and all  
that you have is multiplied; "when your  
heart is lifted up, and you forget the  
LORD your God who brought you out of the  
land of Egypt, from the house of  
bondage;"*

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Nevertheless, they did forget, and they  
became like the heathen, and they were  
driven from their land.

But even in exile, God did not leave them without hope.

Lev 26:40-42 "***But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me, and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt-- then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.***"

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And the Lord Jesus was very careful to provide His disciples, and His church, with appropriate reminders.

After the Passover feast, as they sat around the table, He picked up some of the bread that remained and--- **"gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

And then He chose the beverage, that had been provided to go along with the meal, and said **"This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."**

They were reminders that would last throughout the ages.

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And part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus had prayed for, was to remind the disciples of Jesus' teachings during those 3-½ years.

John 14:26---**"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and**

**bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."**

And once their memories had been refreshed, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were enabled to set down Jesus' Words in black and white, or should I say black and beige.

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And certainly Peter saw the value of such a ministry.

2 Peter 1:12-13 **"For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you,"**

And Paul was very careful to impress Timothy with the importance of this ministry.

1 Tim 4:6 (and here I will use the old King James translation) **"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."**

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However, both in the case of Israel and the church, there are some things that are better forgotten.

For instance, when things got tough, Israel remembered **"the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic,"** completely forgetting that they had been slaves during that time.

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And for the Christian, there are some things that are better forgotten.

Paul gave us a good example of this---"**one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**"

Don't let your old regrets cancel out your future victories.

There are some things that are better forgotten and put under the blood of Christ.

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And not only that, but our foundation is entirely based upon God's ability to forget.

Yes, because of Christ's sacrificial work on the cross, God is able to say--- "**I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.**" Heb. 8:12.

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And when God is able to once again restore His Chosen people, it will be on the basis of Israel's ability to remember and God's ability to forget.

Jeremiah 33:33-34 **"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."**

