



“THEN GOD REMEMBERED”

Good morning and welcome to Let the Bible Speak. It's a joy to be with you today and we appreciate you for taking a few moments to study and meditate upon the word of God. I want to speak today about the infinite memory of God. I claim no originality in the lesson today. Rather, I am borrowing it from a late friend and evangelist, Brother Ronny Wade. Bro Wade was a good friend, a tireless worker for the Lord, and an impactful preacher for nearly 70 years. He passed away in 2020. He preached this sermon many years ago and I would like to try and present those thoughts to you in our time together today.

Our reading comes from Genesis 8, the first four verses. Beginning in verse 1 the record says: ***“Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.”***

It's a beautiful statement Moses makes when he writes: “Then God remembered” Noah and all the living things that survived the terrible flood. This suggests several thoughts we should consider today.

Many of us are prone to forget things from time to time, and as we grow older, our memories tend to fade. Many events either become blurry in our mind or we forget them altogether. Some of us forget what we should remember and then remember things we would be better off to forget. With God, it is not that way. In fact, God is often the exact opposite of what many wish He would be: He remembers the things we want Him to forget, and, in some cases, He purposefully forgets the things we wish He would remember.

The bible tells us that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a light in a very dark world. And while the rampant wickedness that filled the earth caught the attention of God, so did the unusual

righteousness and upright life of Noah. The bible goes so far as to say that it repented that He had made man. God determined to destroy the entire human race because of their evil and start anew with this godly man. God spoke to Noah one day and instructed him to build an ark to carry his family through the coming flood. It took 120 years for Noah to complete it while, in the meantime, he preached and warned the sinful people around him. Most people didn't listen to him and most probably thought he had lost his mind, but he continued to build, and he continued to preach.

The day finally came that God told Noah to take his family and get inside. The hand of God then reached down and closed the door of mercy, and it began to rain. The skies opened and the fountains of the deep were broken and a mighty flood began to cover the earth. It didn't take long for people to realize that Noah knew what he was talking about. They scrambled for higher ground but inch by inch and foot by foot, the waters rose until all of them were washed away. Suddenly, a world that had been populated with multitudes of people fell strangely silent, save for the sound of the waters. Just eight people remained alive inside the ark.

While, on one hand, Noah had the comforting knowledge that he and his family were saved, he also had to face the startling reality that all the other millions of people on earth had suddenly perished. Brothers, sisters, cousins, friend, and neighbors had all chosen to go their own way without God and he had now been forever separated from them. What would now become of Noah and his little family aboard this giant ark? There was not a patch of ground in sight for them to place their feet upon. There was no land to farm, not even a place to build a house. How lonely and frightened Noah and the seven others with him must have felt as the days wore on and the ark aimlessly drifted upon the deep. He seemed utterly helpless, but then the bible says, "God remembered Noah, and every living thing..." (Genesis 8:1-4) Noah had not been forsaken. When there was literally no one else to depend upon, God was still there, and God remembered. What if God had forgotten about Noah? What if God had set about plans for the earth and forgotten about that little speck of an ark floating atop a world of water?

Much later, the bible tells us about the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that became rife with perversion and wickedness. God saw them and determined to destroy them with fire. Genesis 19:29 tells us "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt." God knew the tender feelings Abraham still had for his nephew Lot who lived in that place, and He remembered how Abraham had pleaded for God to spare the cities if he could find enough righteous souls within. There were not even ten godly people to be found there but God remembered Abraham and his nephew Lot and brought them out of the city before it was destroyed. And we could go on and on through the bible and find where God remembered His people when everything seemed against them. Not only that, but we can also read where God remembered the people who had turned against HIM and He could remember their words and their deeds. Nothing nor no one escapes the all-seeing eye and the infinite memory of Jehovah God. We want to think about some things that God remembers even today.

First, we're told that GOD REMEMBERS HIS OWN WORD. Sometimes we have every intention of doing what we simply forget. Sometimes the details of conversations become blurry as time passes. Perhaps our memory of events and interactions with other people becomes distorted. But it's never that way with God. Throughout the bible, you'll read the phrase time and again, "And God remembered His covenant." For example, in Exodus 2:23-25, it reads: "Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. So, God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and

God acknowledged them." It probably seemed to the Hebrews that their slavery in Egypt would never end. For hundreds of years, they toiled under the heavy hand of the Pharaoh. The promise God had made to the patriarch Abraham hundreds of years before to make them a nation and give them a wonderful land seemed distant and out of reach. And so, they cried and wept and groaned. But the bible tells us that God heard, and He cared. His heart was stirred, and He remembered His covenant. He sent Moses to deliver them, telling him in Exodus 6:5, "I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered My covenant." Then in Psalm 105:8, "He remembers His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations," Then, in verses 41-42: "He opened the rock, and water gushed out; It ran in the dry places like a river. For He remembered His holy promise, And Abraham His servant." Though they were often a complaining and disobedient people, God remembered the promise He made to their father, Abraham.

When Noah and his family came through the flood, safely aboard the ark, God said in Genesis 9:11 "Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." And he then stretched a rainbow across the sky to remind Him of the covenant He made never to destroy the earth with water again. Consequently, He has promised to destroy it one day by fire, and He will keep that promise as well.

Friend, we may think what the word of God says doesn't really matter much, but I can assure God doesn't see it that way. Psalm 119:89, "Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven." And Isaiah 40:8, "The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." Jesus said "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." We may think it doesn't matter what we believe or what we do, but God remembers His word. We may think that things change with the passing of the years and generations and that what used to be wrong isn't wrong anymore, but God remembers His word! You may not be diligent to read and study and remember God's word, but God remembers every word of it and Jesus promised that we will be judged in the last day BY it. Make no mistake, God remembers His word. His remembers everything He told us to do and told us not to do. He remembers every promise He ever made either to bless us for doing His will or judge us for NOT keep His word. God remembers.

Second, God remembers His people. Sometimes that's easy to forget when we go through the pains of suffering and loss. But the bible assures us that God remembers those who are His. We've already seen how God remembered Noah and Abraham. He remembers Hannah in her bitterness of soul when we so badly wanted a child and had to suffer the cruel mocking of Elkanah's other wife. But what about His people today? Well, Jesus said, "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:28-30) Friend, God knows more about you than you know about yourself. You see only a part of the way things really are and you only see so far back into the past and are not able to look into the future at all. But God sees and knows from the beginning to the end. His word tells us that he knows the very number of hairs on your head. (Matthew 10:30). You don't know that about yourself (although for some of us it's easier to count than it is for others) but God knows the exact number. He even says that when we give a simple cup of cold water to one who is thirsty, He takes note and He remembers. (Matthew 10:42) The Hebrew writer called to mind the sorrows and patience and labors of those he was writing to and said "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Hebrews 6:10)

God doesn't forget us in our suffering. God does not forget our sacrifices. Others may never notice the things we do for Christ, but God does. He remembers your work of encouragement. He remembers when you helped that poor person – bought them a meal or gave them clothes. He remembers that lonely person you visited in the nursing home or the hospital. It should encourage those who are in Christ and living for Him that God does not forget our deeds. Neither does He forget our sorrows. There is never a time a faithful child of God cries themselves to sleep but that God is not near in that darkened room and remembers the burdens that lay on their heart.

When David was running and hiding from Saul, it was one of the most stressful and frightening times of his entire life. As he fled, he fell into the hands of the Philistines and became their captive. It was then that he poured out his broken heart in Psalm 56:8, saying: "You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?" It may have seemed to Joseph that God had forgotten all about him and his dreams as he sat in Potiphar's jail, but He had not. It may have seemed that way to Jeremiah in the pit or Paul and Silas in the stocks of the Philippian jail, but God never forgot. And when His people today feel alone, wronged, or oppressed, God puts every tear into His bottle and writes them down in His book. He hears every prayer of the faithful Christian, even though we sometimes wonder when the answer will ever come and wonder how He will answer.

There's a beautiful scene portrayed in the Book of Revelation. Revelation was written to Christians who were being severely persecuted and wondered if they would ever prevail in the great conflict against wickedness. It says in Revelation 8:3-4, "Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand." Aside from anything else this scene might portray and teach us, it should remind us of how God views the prayers of the righteous. We who are in Christ should pray with faith and confidence because God hears, and God remembers.

Finally, God the sins of the impenitent. Listen very carefully, my dear friend: God remembers sin and He often bides His time, but He will bring every unrepented of, unresolved, unforgiven sin to judgment. God says in Numbers 32:23, "Be sure, your sin will find you out." Sometimes we look at the worldly people who have no regard for God and for right and we think they are living joyfully and care-free, but that sin comes with a heavy price-tag. "The way of the transgressor is hard..." said the wise man Solomon and Paul said in Galatians 6:7 "Be not deceived. God is not mocked for whatsoever a man sows he shall also reap." God keeps a record. The history of peoples and nations spanning thousands of years in the Old Testament should tell us that much. Sometimes God allows hundreds and hundreds of years to pass before He settled the score and brought judgment upon a wicked people, but His judgment always eventually fell. Thus, it will be in the life of every person who holds on to sin and tries to bury their sin in anything but the blood of Jesus.

God knows the identity of every little baby whose life was snuffed out in an abortion clinic. He knows the names of every person involved. He knows exactly who committed the murders that police never solve. He knows who broke into that person house and stole their belongings. He knows the name of every person you slink around in the shadows and commit immorality with. He knows every penny you embezzle from the company or that you take or swindle from some other person. He hears every lie and word of guile and deceit. And He has a record of it. He never forgets it. If judgment comes 10,000 years from now, He will not have forgotten you nor will He have forgotten every sin. Time does not erase it. Your efforts to hide and cover it up do not conceal it from the all-seeing eye and the all-knowing mind of God.

There was a man who was sick and dying and a friend would visit him. He would always ask him, "Is there anything I can do for you?" The reply was always, "No, there is nothing." One day as death was very close, he asked the same question: "Is there anything I can do for you." But this day the answer was different. The dying man said, "No, there's nothing ANYONE can DO for me. What I want to know is, is there anyone who can UN-DO? The bitter regret of a misspent and wasted life was haunting and tormenting this man as he looked into his yawning grave. But there is good news today... there is One who CAN undo. At least, He can forget what He up until now has remembered! Hebrews 8:12 says, "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE." That CAN be you today.

Are there sins that haunt you today? Have you perhaps tried to push them out of your mind, not only hoping that no one will ever find out and that God didn't notice or will not remember. He remembers. And He will always remember until you repent, confess it to Him, and wash in the cleansing blood of His Son who died the sins you committed. Saul of Tarsus was a sinful man. His fingers dripped with the blood the early Christians. Yet Ananias eagerly told him, "Saul, why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." And we bid you do the same today – because God remembers.

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