

Remember

The Importance of Remembering

- 48 times the Bible specifically commands the people of God to remember
- Over 200 other times the concept of remembering is brought up
- Deuteronomy 32:7-9 - 7 Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you. 8 When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. 9 But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

God Expected Israel to Remember

- The Passover
 - Exodus 12:24-27 - 24 You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. 25 And when you come to the land that the Lord will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. 26 And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' 27 you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'"...
 - Exodus 13:3 - Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the Lord brought you out from this place.
- In Addition to the Passover...
 - 6 other annual festivals to remember what God had done to rescue Israel: Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of the Firstfruits, Feast of Weeks / Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Booths
 - Sabbath Day - A day of rest once a week (to remember their slavery)
 - Sabbath Year - Every 7 years (land rests, debts cancelled, slaves freed)
 - Year of Jubilee - Every 49 years (Sabbath Year + land is returned to original ancestral owners)
- Other Ways Israel Remembered God
 - Monuments and Altars
 - City Names
 - Clothing
 - Food
 - Circumcision
- Psalm 78:5-8 - 5 He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, 6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, 7 so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; 8 and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

It's Not Just the Old Testament

- Remember that you were grafted into the vine of Israel, so don't be proud (Romans 11:18)
- Remember to give to the poor (Galatians 2:10)
- Remember those in prison for the faith (Hebrews 13:3)
- Remember your leaders and imitate their faith (Hebrews 13:7)
- Remember that you used to be "separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:11-12)
- Paul exhorted Timothy to "remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David" (2 Timothy 2:8)
- Peter told his readers to "remember the predictions of the... prophets and the commandment of [Jesus]" (2 Peter 3:2)

- Jesus told the church in Ephesus to remember how they used to be righteous and holy but now they've allowed sin in (Revelation 2:5)
- Jesus told the church in Sardis, "Remember... what you received and heard" (Revelation 2:5)
- Jesus broke the bread of Communion and said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19)

What Does it Mean to Remember?

- Greek *mimnēskó* = to actively, intentionally remember – not off-handedly or merely by accident something comes in your memory
- Hebrew *zakar* = usually implies not just remembering the thing, but remembering which affects your present feelings, thoughts, or actions

Two Dangers with Remembering

- Danger #1: When We Don't Remember, We Lose the Fight
 - During the Exodus from Egypt
 - Psalm 106:7 - Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.
 - During the Wilderness Wandering
 - Psalm 78:40-43 - 40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert! 41 They tested God again and again and provoked the Holy One of Israel. 42 They did not remember his power or the day when he redeemed them from the foe, 43 when he performed his signs in Egypt and his marvels in the fields of Zoan.
 - During the Time of the Judges
 - Judges 8:34 - And the people of Israel did not remember the Lord their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side.
 - During Israel's Great Kings
 - Isaiah 17:10 - For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge...
 - Ezekiel 16:22 - And in all your abominations and your whorings you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, wallowing in your blood.
 - Deuteronomy 8:11 - 11 Take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today...
- Danger #2: If We Remember the Wrong Things, We Lose the Fight
 - Numbers 11:4-6 - 4 Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, "Oh that we had meat to eat! 5 We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. 6 But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."
 - Ezekiel 23:17-21
 - Philippians 3:13-14 - 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Two Blessings with Remembering

- Blessing #1: Remembering God Brings His Presence
 - Exodus 20:22-24 - 22 And the Lord said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. 23 You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. 24 An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you.'

- Isaiah 64:5 – You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways.
- Jonah 2:7 - When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.
- Blessing #2: Remembering God Gives You Strength
 - Psalm 42:5-6 – 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation 6 and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.
 - Psalm 63:5-8 - 5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, 6 when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; 7 for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy. 8 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

Remembering God is a Key to Victory

- Nehemiah 4:14 - And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.”
- Psalm 77
 - Vs. 1 - I cry aloud to God
 - Vs. 2 - In the day of my trouble
 - Vs. 3 - I moan... my spirit faints
 - Vs. 4 - I am so troubled that I cannot speak
 - Vs. 7-12 – Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion? 10 Then I said, “I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High.” 11 I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. 12 I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds.
- Revelation 12:10-11 - 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.
 - “testimony” = marturia = testimony, witness... also sometimes translated “record”
- Psalm 103:1-5 – 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

A Great Time to Remember – Deuteronomy

- Deuteronomy 7:17-19 – 17 If you say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I. How can I dispossess them?’ 18 you shall not be afraid of them but you shall remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, 19 the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, by which the Lord your God brought you out. So will the Lord your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.
- Deuteronomy 8:2 - And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.