

The Word Today
#830—Forget
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As we think about the topic of forgetting, or more precisely God's remembering us and not forgetting us, we are going to look at Isaiah chapter 49. There is segment here where the Lord talks about the fact that he will never forget his people. In verse 13 of Isaiah 49 it says "For the Lord comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones. But Zion said the Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me. Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has born. Though she may forget, I will not forget you. See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."

There was an exchange here, a discussion, a hypothetical conversation between God and his people Israel in the Old Testament. That is what the word Zion means—it is another word for the Jews; for the people of God. And the conversation is this: God says I will remember you, I will help you, I will heal you, but God's people say it sure looks like God has forsaken us. It looks like he has allowed all of these terrible calamities to happen and that he has abandoned us. That is when God replies "just as a mother cannot forget her offspring, neither will I forget you." Even if a mother would, even if it is conceivable that a mother could do harm or abandon her child, I will never forget you.

So we are going to think about God's remembering and the illustration for us will be that of a mother's love. When I think of a mother, when I think of my mother, I think of empathy, tenderness, concern. My mother embodies the kindness and the consideration that moms should have for their children. And in fact this is quite natural because the Lord made women, God designed women to be concerned over relationships.

You have noticed this between men and women. Often times men are more concerned about things and women are highly concerned about relationships. Well, that is because God has put a little bit of this divine love that he has in the hearts of women that shows itself similar to the Old Testament word for God's love which was "chesed". That word meant steadfast love or never-ending love. In other words God would not give up; he would not walk away from his people. He would always love them and in fact we see that same kind of love shown in the person of Jesus. That only makes sense because Jesus is the son of God so he is going to demonstrate the same kind of tireless, selfless love toward people.

There are examples in the Bible of great moms; women who demonstrate this selfless, thoughtfulness for their children. I think of Moses' mother and how when the Pharaoh of Egypt was commanding that all of the newborns be slaughtered that she wrapped her son in a waterproof basket and she sailed him down the Nile not wondering what would his future be. I think of Hannah, this godly woman who was so desperate to have a child that she went into the temple and was praying so fervently she was moving her lips and the high priest Eli thought that she was drunk. She explained that no, she was really burdened in spirit beseeching the Lord for a child. And when the Lord did give her a child, she had committed her child. She said that if the Lord gave her a son that he would be returned to the Lord; dedicated to the Lord as a priest. She followed through. Once the Lord gave her a son she named Samuel, she returned him to the Lord so that he could grow up with the priests and be trained as a priest. He turned out to be one of the greatest leaders in Israel. A person who was in between the time of the judges and the time of the first king of Israel, Saul. He actually, as one of his last official acts as

a prophet of God, Samuel anointed King David who was among the greatest of the kings of Israel.

And I think about Mary, the mother of Jesus and her willingness to be used by the Lord in order to bear the Christ child and to think about all of the things she would have to consider, that she would have to experience as she saw her son Jesus heading toward the cross and giving his life for the world.

These are great examples of thoughtful women, godly women who chose to put others first instead of themselves. That is this nature of God's love, this "chesed" that shows that he puts this love in the hearts of women. It is the mindset of "I will not forget you."

I think of all the times that people have made promises like young lovers who have to part because of circumstances and they say "I'll never forget you!" And yet, we know many times they go their separate ways and the love fades.

We think about businesses and maybe they are moving to a new headquarters or maybe the business is merging with another one and they try to reassure their customers "we won't forget you!"

There are so many ways that we try to reassure people that we will remember them, but so many times we tend to forget. And this is one thing where men can learn to do better. Many times we don't remember well enough, we forget the date of our wedding or we forget our wife's birthday or something like that. This is terrible! We should be much, much better at this, to show this consideration to let them know that we do not forget them. It is part of respect and it is part of the proper esteem that we show our wives.

I was counseling a man once who did not think it very necessary to show much affection to his wife and I talked to him about buying his wife some flowers and he said “that is just a waste of money!” I said well, consider this: imagine that you bought yourself a new vehicle, be it a car or a motorcycle and that you start driving it but as the tires wear out you decide that it is a waste of money to change the tires. As the exhaust on the vehicle goes you say “that is just a waste of money!” And when it comes time to change oil for the engine, you say “I am not going to throw money away!” What you will find out very soon is that if you fail maintain this vehicle it will not service you properly, it will break down.

It is the same with relationships. If we do not bring the proper care and attention to relationships, especially this consideration for our wives, then our marriages will break down. We need to remember.

So we are back to this analogy of God remembering and the way he said he will never forget his people. It is very important that you see that this continues on in the New Testament too. Jesus, in John 14, before Jesus ascended into heaven, he says “if you love me you will do what I command and I will ask the Father and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you.” And then he reinforces this thought again in verses 25 and 26. “All this I have spoken while still with you, but the counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything that I have said to you”.

Jesus was very concerned as he was about to return to the Father after he rose from the dead, that His disciples would not feel like they were being abandoned. After all, if Jesus just didn't reassure us and didn't leave us any comfort or any person of God, we literally would conclude that he had abandoned humanity. Instead he reassures us that we have the Holy Spirit and sure enough, in the book of Acts, chapter 2, we see the Holy Spirit coming with visible signs on the day of Pentecost just as Jesus promised. In other words, the Holy Spirit had come now to take Jesus' place. Christ had returned to the Father and the Holy Spirit had now come.

The Holy Spirit is available to you. The Holy Spirit can live within you and he wants to dwell within you. You only need to receive Jesus as your Lord, to call upon him as your Savior, and you can have the comfort that God is with you always. It does not matter what you are going through, it does not matter what you have done previously in life, and you can be forgiven these things if you ask forgiveness in God's name, in the name of Jesus.

You can take comfort from the fact that God remembers his people. He will never forsake you. He will never abandon you. Just as a mother can't forget the child that she has born and has compassion on her, so also God has compassion on us through Jesus. So, it is a wonderful, comforting thing to know that God is always thinking about us and even if the circumstances look dreary, know that God will always be with you and never abandon you.