

Part 8 – Let Us Remember

In part 7 we learned that, even though God showed the children of Israel (who He freed from Egyptian bondage) *many* mighty miracles – and chastised them, *many* times – they *still* continued to sin, for they truly didn't believe the mighty works that He showed them (over and over again). And even though they did (at times) verbally repent, their repentance was not sincere because their heart really *had not changed*. And they were *not* willing to change their heart (desires, emotions, intentions, motivations) nor their mind (thoughts) to be steadfast with God's Covenant (His Laws). This shows us there's much more to true repentance than simply saying 'sorry Lord'. It takes a *sincere* change of heart, mind, words *and* actions – *and sticking with it!* Seeking and obeying God thus isn't something we do only when we have hard times - it has to be *a way of life* for us... for the *rest of our life!* And the Psalmist of this great 78th Psalm will now tell us how gracious and merciful our Heavenly Father truly is with His (so often) rebellious children...

Psalm 78

38 But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

Compassion is being sympathetic of others distress and having a desire to alleviate it. And so, after God chastised Israel – and they then called out to Him for help and forgiveness – He did have compassion upon them. After all, they were His children. Not only in the fact that He has created us all (Rev 4:11, Ezek 18:4) but also because they were *His* 'chosen' people/nation (Detu 7:7, 14:2). So, because God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) He used *great* self-control, and did not allow His great anger to cause Him to totally destroy His chosen people. Several times, His initial response to their incredibly rebellious obstinance was to just kill them off. Thankfully, Moses (who was a type of Jesus Christ) interceded for Israel and convinced God not to do that. Therefore, He truly did not stir up all His wrath or else *all* of them would have been 'gonners'. And a large part of how Moses was able to succeed in getting God to withhold *all* of His intense anger was *reminding* Him of *His own unconditional* promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen 12, 15, 17, 22, 26, 28, 35). For He *promised* to make their children as the 'dust of the earth' and as the 'sand by the seashore', both of which are terms describing an unnumerable (uncountable) number of people. Therefore, God showed great self-control in holding back His anger and instead, only pointedly let it vent – i.e. He only killed off the rebels instead of the *entire* nation. However, He did allow that rebellious generation to die in the wilderness (giving them shorter life spans than what was normal at that time); but that too was still compassionate because they really deserved to be killed *instantly* for all their ingratitude, murmurings, lusting and faithlessness...

Psalm 78

39 For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

This verse gives us great insight into how to control ourselves, for it shows us how God Almighty controls Himself! He not only remembered His *unconditional* promises to Abraham, Issac and Jacob/Israel (that He would bless their descendants and make them so numerous they could not be counted... not kill them all off because they were being rebellious) but He also remembered that they (as we are) just ‘flesh’. And, as Jesus Himself said, ‘the flesh is weak’, *even if* our spirit is willing (Mth 26:41, Mk 14:38). Paul explained this point rather well in the 7th chapter of his letter to the Romans [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Romans/38]. There’s actually another Psalm which touches on this point as well...

*6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.
7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.
8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.
10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy **toward them that fear him.**
12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth **them that fear him.**
14 For **he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.**
15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.
16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.
17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon **them that fear him,** and his righteousness unto children's children;
18 **To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.***
Ps 103:6-18

So again, our Heavenly Father is *merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy* (vs 8) because He remembers that we are in a flesh body that is really quite weak. Thus, it’s not only evil influences (i.e. from evil spirits/demons) but also our flesh body itself that urges us (provokes us) to sin. And that’s something we have to spiritually fight against *all the time* (Eph 6). But, don’t overlook the stipulation that comes with God’s grace and mercy. Verses 11, 13, 17 and 18 all point out that He is *only* that way to those who fear HIM. The word ‘**fear**’ means not only *to fear*, as in be afraid of, but also to fear, as in *to revere* (#3373). As Prov 16:6 explains, only by the fear of the LORD will men depart from evil. So, we should not only revere (honor and respect) God Almighty (Yehovah, who is our Creator) but we should also fear to disobey Him *because* He can do whatever He wants to us, truly. We owe our very existence to Him (Ex 18:4). Not only in the flesh but also our spiritual existence (life). And we cannot (in any way, shape or form) live without Him. As Jesus said in John 6:63, *God’s Word is what gives us life.* Our flesh body profits us nothing. It’s truth (God’s Word) *within us* that gives us *eternal life*

(John 17:3) and that's why we *cannot live without Him*. But, if we reject the truth (God's Word) and willingly embrace lies instead, then we will (ultimately) spiritually die, as Rev 20:10-15 warns us. Ps 37:20 likens our spiritual death to the fat of lambs that *dissipates into nothing*. **That** is what will happen to our soul (spiritual body) and spirit (heart and mind) **if** we don't accept the truth (sincerely). So, while God is quite compassionate, merciful and gracious *to those who do fear Him*, He is also a terror to those who do not. This means those who are rebelling against Him will face His wrath, just as the rebellious Israelites did so many times. So, it was only because of His *unconditional* promises He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel that He continued to forgive Israel and they were really quite fortunate for that!

But, this brings up another point – one that the Psalms bring out in other chapters. Ps 39:4-6, 11 and Ps 62:9-10 both brought out the point that our flesh body is 'vanity' (empty, nothing) because *it's not lasting*. Our life in the flesh doesn't last forever because, no matter how rich or poor we are, we still die just like animals do. Ps 144:4 also makes this point when it says that *man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away*. And Solomon points this out rather well too in Eccl 5:13-16. Paul also points out, in 1 Tim 6:7, that *we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out*. And James 4:14 asks: *what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*. So, as Peter reminds us in 1 Pt 4:1-2, we should live our life in the flesh with a carnal mindset. We've got to put on the 'mind of Christ' and discipline our carnal mind (which is our 'heart' and is what causes us to *want* to sin) so we can love, honor and obey our Heavenly Father instead of sinning *willfully*. For life truly is not about fulfilling our fleshly lusts, nor about how much fame or money we can obtain while we are here.

After all, when we die, someone else gets what we have because we can't take our earthly 'goods' with us. So, **it's not worth selling out your soul** just to obtain earthly riches (or anything else) – and *that's* the point to remembering that we're all 'just flesh' and our bodies will die just as the grass. If we want to obtain eternal life, we've got to learn to put off the 'old man' (carnal mindset) and put on the 'new man' (spiritual mindset) that is created after God's image of righteousness and *true* holiness (Eph 4:24). As Paul warns us in Rom 8:6, *to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace*. And that's why we must fight each day (and night) to put off our 'old man' *which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts* (Eph 2:22), and *not serve sin any longer* (Rom 6:6). Again, we do this by *renewing in the spirit of your mind* (Eph 4:23) *through studying God's Word* (Col 3:10). And when we do so faithfully, the Holy Spirit **will** help us put on the 'new man', *which is created in righteousness and true holiness* (Eph 4:24). And so, even *though our outward man perish, yet the inward man can be renewed day by day* (2 Cor 4:16) by knowledge of Jesus Christ (Col 3:10) ...

Psalms 78

40 How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!

The word ‘**provoke**’ here means, figuratively, *to rebel* or *resist* as well as *to provoke* (#4784). And the word ‘**grieve**’ means to *worry*, *pain* or *anger* (#6087). Num 14:22 tells us that the Israelites ‘provoked’ God (by sins of murmuring, disobeying and lusting) *at least ten* times within the *first two years* of their being freed from Egyptian bondage! So, their ‘provoking’ God in the wilderness wasn’t ‘occasionally’ sinning because they simply didn’t know better or simply fell short from time to time (as we all do, Rom 3:23). It was a lifestyle for them. As Stephen testified (shortly before he was martyred) when the Holy Spirit was speaking through him...

42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

Acts 7:42-43

Stephen quoted this from the ‘book of the prophets’ (Amos 5:25-27) to prove the point that the ‘Jews’, who were living at the time of Christ, were just as rebellious as the Israelites who came out of Egypt. And, in Amos 5, God was pleading with Israel to turn away from their idols or they would be carried into captivity. And, in Amos 5:15, He specifically told them to *hate the evil* and *love good* so they would do what’s right instead of continue in their sins and have to be cast out of the Promise Land. But, like the Israelites that came out of Egyptian bondage, the generation that lived during the days of Amos didn’t listen. Thus, they were carried away captive, *as slaves*, yet *again*. As Paul clearly explains in Rom 6 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Romans/37], slavery is the consequence of sin. Not only physical slavery but (worse) *spiritual* slavery. ***When we allow our lusts and emotions to control us, we are slaves to sin.*** And, since God gives us free will, it’s up to us to ‘take dominion’ over our self [<https://t.me/BibleStudyGodsWord/441>], both our ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ man. And truly, when we are slaves to sin we are slaves to Satan, for he is the ‘father of lies’ (John 8:44) and thus, the father of sin as well, because *he was the first one to rebel against God* [**Once Was a High Priest** <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/423>]. So, if you don’t want to be deceived by him [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/472>] you’ve got to learn how to control both your heart and mind (inner man), as well as your flesh body (outer man) so you are not beguiled into serving him - just as Eve was, and just as the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness were. For while Eve had access to God Himself (the Tree of Life), she still fell for Satan’s good looks and convincing lies (Gen 3). And while the Israelites who came out of Egypt saw many mighty miracles that God performed – with their own eyes – they still fell for the lies of Satan, which they apparently had picked up on in Egypt (Ex 32:4), and even though God had proved to them (through the plagues) that all those ‘gods’ were *false*! As Paul so well said...

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 **Neither be ye idolaters**, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 **Neither let us commit fornication**, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 **Neither let us tempt Christ**, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 **Neither murmur ye**, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them **for ensamples**: and **they are written for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore **let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall**.

1 Cor 10:6-12

Psalm 78

41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

They ‘turned back’ means that, while the ‘repented’ at times, they (not much) later ‘turned back’ to their sins. And the word ‘tempted’ here actually means **to test** (#5254). And then the word ‘God’ here is **’El** (#410), which means the **Almighty God** who is *Omnipotent*; it shows His strength, power and might. And the word ‘limited’ means **to grieve** (#8428) while the words ‘Holy One’ here means **sacred** (ceremonially or morally); (as noun) **God** (by eminence), an angel, a saint, a sanctuary (#6918). It comes from a word that **to be** (causatively, make, pronounce or observe as) **clean** (ceremonially or morally) (#6942). As Ps 145:17 says, the LORD (YHVH) is righteous in **all** his ways, and holy in **all** his works. And Deut 32:4 declares that *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*

So, there is **no** sin in our Heavenly Father. After all, sin is the transgression (breaking) of **His** Laws (1 John 3:4) and *God never breaks His own laws* - not even when He was incarnated into a flesh body as Jesus Christ (Heb 4:15, 2 Cor 5:21, 1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 3:5). As Heb 4:15 says, He was, in all points (every way, 1 Cor 10:13), tempted like we are, yet *without* sin – as His being tested by the Devil (Satan) himself shows. For Jesus not only was tested by the Devil himself but He had just fasted for forty days! So, His flesh was weaker than we’ll probably ever be in the flesh. Yet, He still did *not sin*. And *that’s* exactly what enables Him to help us overcome all our temptations to sin, as well as helps us learn to endure the hard times, as Rom 8:26-34 well explains.

Psalm 78

42 They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

Herein again we see that their problem was lack of memory. They couldn't stay focused (which is nothing new for our people, Ecc 1:9). All they could do was think 'in the moment' because they were thinking with a carnal mind (with their heart, the part of us that causes us to want to sin). The word '**remembered**' here means *to mark* (so as to be recognized), i.e. *to remember*; by implication, *to mention* (#2142), which is interesting because it implies we *must* mark something in our mind *so we don't forget it*, as well as mention it often (which is why we study God's Word and share it with others) *so we don't forget it*. And that's what they didn't do. Further, the word '**hand**' here is the *open hand*, which indicates power, means and direction (#3027). And then the word '**delivered**' actually means *to ransom, release, preserve* (#6299). So, even though they literally witnessed amazing plagues, by which He ransomed (redeemed) them from Egyptian bondage, and also saw Him save them from the Egyptian army when they were chasing after Israel (because they didn't return after a few days) ... they still forgot.

And while this seems amazing to us (that they could forget and sin after literally seeing miracles), consider how easy it is for us today to forget the history of our nation (especially the Christian nations) let alone how easy it is for us to forget *things in our own life* when God helped us. It is easy to do, truly. And that's because we're in a flesh body that only wants to think about 'right now'! In other words, the carnal mind has a tendency (if not habit) of only thinking about the *immediate* present and not the past or the future (unless it's fantasizing about what future you want to have). And that's why it's *so critical* for us to work hard to control our carnal mind, *each and every day*. That's also why it's *so critical* for us to study God's Word *each day*. For it not only tells us the past (as this Palmist is pointing out) but it also tells us the future – of both those who do obey God (faithfully) and those who do not. ***Studying God's Word each day (for ourselves) thus helps us to keep reality (truth) in perspective so we can dedicate ourself not to be like those who came out of Egyptian bondage...*** because we know what happened to them. They died in the wilderness and were not allowed to go into the Promise Land. ***And this is an example for us (1 Cor 10:11) to show us that we must not be the same way if we want to make it into the future 'Promise Land' of 'New Jerusalem' where we'll have eternal life*** (Rev 21). As Paul warned, when quoting Ps 95:8-11 ...

- 7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, ***To day if ye will hear his voice,***
- 8 ***Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:***
- 9 *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.*
- 10 *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*
- 11 *So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)*
- 12 ***Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.***
- 13 ***But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.***

*14 For we are made partakers of Christ, **if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end**;*

Heb 3:7-14

Now, Paul did not give this warning to us because ‘once we are saved, we’re always saved’ [which is a lie - <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/420>]. No, he gave us this warning because once we’ve ‘been saved’ by Jesus (i.e. accepted Jesus Christ) it IS possible to ‘turn back’ just as these rebellious Israelites. Remember, after they were ‘saved’ (and even baptized, as Paul points out in 1 Cor 10:2) from the Egyptian army, they truly did believe, as it is written: *the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses* (Ex 14:31). BUT, only three days later (when they ran out of water) **they lost faith** and murmured against Moses (Ex 15:22-24). That’s how short of ‘memory’ our carnal mind has! Therefore, let’s remember...

*11 Let us labour therefore **to enter into that rest**, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

*12 For **the word of God** is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, **and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**.*

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

*14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold fast our profession**.*

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

*16 **Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Heb 4:9-16

We’ll pick this up in part 9...

AMEN.