

there in front of the altar. First **go and be reconciled** to them; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24 (NIV)

Is God forgetful? The following verses seem to indicate that He is.

But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. Genesis 8:1 (NIV)

Then God remembered Rachel; he listened to her and enabled her to conceive. Genesis 30:22 (NIV)

God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them. Exodus 2:24 (NIV)

Did God forget these people until something jogged His memory, or is there something we are missing?

We often think of memory as purely mental, involving the retention (or lack thereof) of information. But people with a Hebraic background wrote the Bible, so we need to think like they did in that culture.

The Hebrew word for “remember” is *zakar*. Hebrew words are generally action words. When we examine the biblical concept of remembering we find that **remembering leads to purposeful action**.

God did not forget the people in the verses above. They were still in His consciousness, but He needed to choose the proper time for His action.

Look at each of these references again. Notice that following the remembering there was an action taken.

So if this is the way God remembers then what is expected of us when we are told to remember?

Action follows Remembering

Paul when speaking to the Ephesian Elders told them this:

*In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must **help the weak**, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to **give** than to receive.’” Acts 20:35 (NIV)*

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift

*Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” And **he broke down and wept**.* Mark 14:72 (NIV)

When Jesus was teaching the disciples at the last supper he said:
... and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”
1 Corinthians 11:24-25 (NIV)

I think that this one is a little different because the bread and the wine were symbols of the new covenant He was making with them and the rest of the world. A covenant requires action on the part of the members of that covenant. In other words the action here is to follow all the stipulations of this new covenant, which are all the instructions He had been giving for the last three and a half years of his earthly life.

Lastly we have a verse that says that it will NOT be remembered.
“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. Isaiah 65:17 (NIV)

It is also referenced in Revelations 20:1 and worded slightly differently.
Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

“no longer any sea” may hold the clue of why it will no longer be remembered or acted upon. The word sea is Yam (Strong’s 3220) in Hebrew. Yam figuratively refers to the Great Laver, sometimes called the sea of brass, in the Temple where the priests cleansed themselves before serving in the Holy Place. If this is correct then we have all been cleansed and in the presence of God and there is no need for the sea.

When you see Remember look for the action.

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