

Does God Forget? Here's What the Bible Really Says

Anyone else find themselves becoming a little more forgetful as they get older?

It happens, doesn't it? The same weakness we saw (and chuckled at) in our parents and grandparents is now showing up in us. And if you haven't experienced this yet, no worries ... it *will* happen!

Forgetfulness. It's a human foible. But is it one God shares with us?

Some people say yes. They say God forgets our sin because of the forgiveness we have in Jesus. They cite verses such as:

- "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember your sins" (Isa. 43:25).
- "For I will be merciful toward their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more" (Heb. 8:12).
- "Then he adds, "Their sins and lawless deeds will I remember no more" (Heb. 10:17).

But is *not remembering* the same as forgetting? Maybe for people, but not for God. God is not like a doddering old grandfather with a faulty memory.

Whenever the Bible refers to God *remembering*, it has nothing to do with a poor memory. He is perfect and omniscient—He knows everything.

When the Bible says God remembers, it means God is ready to act.

Consider these examples of verses that talk about God

remembering:

- “God remembered Noah and every living thing and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. So God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the water receded” (Gen. 8:1).
- “Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb” (Gen. 30:22).
- “God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Ex. 2:24).

So when God “forgets” our sin, it means He will not act on them. He will not hold them against us. He will not pour His wrath on us. And He will not judge and condemn us.

Why? Because Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath so we would not have to.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. How much more then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5:8-9).

When God “blots out our sins,” He covers them with His Son’s blood, sacrificed for us. He doesn’t forget our sin. How could He? If He “forgot” our sin, then He’d have to forget the reason for Jesus’s sacrificial death.

An infinite, perfect, omniscient God forgets nothing.

A holy, righteous, just God requires payment for sin.

And a merciful, compassionate and gracious God provides that payment.

The result is that there is now no sin for Him to act on—to “remember”—because everything that needed to be done was done at the cross.

Those who put their full faith and trust in Christ are clean

in God's sight—as clean as His Son, Jesus.

That's why King David could say with confidence in Psalm 18:20-24:

The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He has repaid me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all His judgments were before me, and I did not put away His statutes from me. I was also upright before Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity. Therefore the Lord has repaid me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His view.

Despite all his sin, David knew, in God's sight, he was righteous. And Christians can say the same thing.

It's all about amazing grace. Intentional grace. Grace that provides a right standing before God even though we don't deserve it. Grace that enables us to say with David, "I'm righteous in His sight."

Not forgetfulness. Grace.

May we never confuse them. {eoa}

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