

2. BUT GOD... Remembers Us and His Promises

“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, emphasis added). *Also found in the NLT.

People began to populate the earth, but most did not live in relationship with God. The human race had become very wicked and evil thoughts were rampant in their hearts. In Genesis 6:6, we are told humanity’s sin grieved God’s heart. Our heavenly Father opened His heart to us when He made us. In a way, He made Himself vulnerable, as we can affect His emotions, causing Him to smile with happiness or to feel sadness. Noah walked with God and because of this, they had a relationship. God decided to flood the earth and start anew when He saw how prevalent sin was, BUT GOD spared Noah and his family. God told Noah how to build an ark to house his family and the animals during the forty days of rain that were to come. Afterward, God remembered Noah floating around in that ark. This leads us to our BUT GOD verse.

How much do we like to be remembered? Birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, or just being picked up at the airport are all good examples. God is not far away from our circumstances; He is not just watching us from a distance. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina brought many deaths, and in the fall of 2012, Hurricane Sandy left quite a mess. The floodwaters destroyed hundreds of lives, but many people heeded warnings and escaped. Sometimes storms in our life will cause damage. In those times will we trust that God will remember us? We may be on a tiny planet in the universe with billions of galaxies, BUT GOD knows our addresses and exactly where we are; He intervenes in our circumstances. Just like us, Noah was definitely in need of some intervention!

God not only remembers us, BUT GOD also remembers His promises. After Noah departed from the ark, he gave thanks by building God an altar and offering Him sacrifices on it. God was pleased and made a decision (Gen 8:20-22). Even though humans have the tendency to be evil, God promised to never again flood the earth. He placed the rainbow in the sky as a sign of this promise between Him and all living creatures of every kind on the earth. It would be for all generations (Gen 9:11-17). The Bible says God promised that every time the rainbow appeared, He would remember that covenant. Don’t we want our Bridegroom to always remember these things? How nice that He does!

In the New Testament, we see many examples which demonstrate how significant it is that our Bridegroom remembers. One of the criminals hanging next to Jesus on the cross asked Jesus to

remember him when He came into His kingdom. Jesus responded positively and said he would be with Jesus in paradise that day (Luke 23:42-43). In our death and His own, He remembers us! After Jesus' resurrection, He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift His Father promised, the Holy Spirit. He told them they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came. Ten days after Jesus ascended into the clouds, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did come and they were filled with power (Acts 1-2). He remembered what He had promised in His Word. Even now, He remembers the blessings He wants to give us. Later, in Acts 10, we read God sent an angel to Cornelius to tell him his deeds had been remembered in the sight of God. God remembers what we pray and sees when we do works in His name. Psalm 139 reminds us how well the Lord knows us because He remembers the instant we were formed in the womb and every moment thereafter. He records every second of our lives and hopes we walk in His will to receive all the rewards He has destined for us. This is why David exclaimed that God's thoughts toward us are precious (Ps 139:17-18)!

During the summer of 2013, I went to a conference alone in Pasadena. While driving, I asked Jesus to be my date. I asked that He would lead me to a parking spot close by the door, bring me some water (I forgot my bottle), help me find a seat at the church, and make sure I was safe getting back to my car. I remember telling Him that, as my date, I thought those would be nice things He could do for me. I spent the next 45 minutes in the car singing, forgetting my requests. Wouldn't you know, I pulled my car right up to a front row spot! As I walked to the front door of the church, I was offered a nice cold bottle of water to take in with me. While I looked for a seat, a friend called my name, and I suddenly had a seat in the second row! It wasn't until after I took a sip of water that I heard Jesus say to me, "Three out of four!" I realized He was answering my requests from earlier. I couldn't stop smiling, but kept it all to myself. The conference ended at 10:15 PM, and I said goodbye to my friends. I walked out quietly wondering how Jesus was going to fulfill my last request. I was all alone, or so I thought, when suddenly my friend, Rolo, walked out beside me. As we talked, he asked where I was parked, not knowing Jesus was my date and fulfilling my last request to get me to the car safely. Jesus used my brothers and sisters in Christ to be His hands and feet that evening. Jesus did everything I asked because He remembers, even when we ourselves forget!

Many of us would agree we have done a few things that we would like to forget. Thankfully, God does not mind erasing some of our bad decisions if we repent and ask for forgiveness. David tells us in Psalm 103:12 that God will cast our sin as far as the east is from the west. The distance between east and west is infinite. This would not be true if the directions

of north and south were given. Meaning, if you walk north, eventually you will hit the North Pole and then have to walk south if you continued your journey. God's Word is very precise about His mercy; He will remove our sins from us if we ask and will remember them no more. Everything else, though, He remembers and He has books in heaven full of all the details. I tend to forget things as time goes on, so it is nice to know that God is having someone journal about my life for me. I'm looking forward to watching the expressions on Jesus' face as we read together some of my better moments. Which memories of yours are you looking forward to talking over with your Bridegroom?