

REMEMBER, REMEMBER**INTRO**

Adults forget three things a day, research Commissioned by the National Lottery found: Around 15 million of us will leave a cup of tea to go cold today while a similar amount will forget where they put the keys to their house or car. Meanwhile, 12 million go to the shops only to completely forget what they went for - and the same will forget about wet washing in the machine, PIN numbers, passwords and chores such as taking food out of the freezer the night before and charging your mobile phone also featured highly on the list.

Me going into a room/upstairs/watch!

In 2012 a Lottery ticket win went unclaimed £63 million bought in Stevenage/Hitchin.

Paul Lewis Money Box presenter: according to Industry figures:

People in the UK waste £250m per year on store gift cards they do not use!

This time of the year we remember – re. Remembrance Sunday/Guy Fawkes Night/Autumn.

Remembering things was important for the people of Israel. The historical books in the OT make up a large section of the OT and were written to **remind Israel of their history and God's dealings with them in the past so as not to forget the lessons learnt and God's faithfulness.**

Many Psalms recount God's dealings with His people eg. Ps.105 (read 105:5 a/c out of Egypt).

When we go on holiday we have to **remember** to take **the right things with us** (re. trips):

GET CASE OUT – If you were going to the Arctic for holiday (!) it would be important to remember to take the right things: Take out items not right/ for the Arctic.

Sometimes we remember the wrong things and forget the right things

1. THINGS TO REMEMBER TO FORGET

In the first half of the Psalm the Psalmist expresses his unhappiness and concerns

READ Ps.77:1-9 Very negative and inconsolable.

Good to be honest with God about our feelings and concerns.

a). DON'T DWELL ON THE PAST (77:4-6)

AI's answer to ways in which remembering the past can be unhelpful:

Psychological and emotional effects

- **Ruminating on negative events:** Continuously replaying past mistakes or traumas can increase symptoms of depression and anxiety. (v.4-6)
- **Causing constant dread:** This pattern of thinking can lead to a persistent feeling of dread about the future. (v.2 & 7-9)
- **Diminishing motivation and joy:** Dwelling on the past can sap motivation and make it harder to experience happiness in the present. (v.2&3)
- **Impacting (self-perception) but here instead perception of God:** Negative memories can cause you to doubt your (God's) abilities and make you overly critical of yourself (God). (v.7-9)

Good to think about the past but not be overwhelmed by it.

Basically, in these first 9 verses the **Psalmist getting so wrapped up and overwhelmed by his problems and worries it is colouring his view of the past** (and also the present & future) that **he has forgotten the most important thing:**

God's faithfulness and God's presence beside him.

He has **lost his God perspective** – which is very easy to do when troubles come at us.

Has God changed or has the psalmist (and sometimes us) changed his focus?

It's **right to think through** important issues (eg. Job/financial or health troubles) **but not lose sight of God.** (re. Fir tree in our front garden).

b. DON'T HAVE AN UNREALISTIC MEMORY OF THE PAST (V.3-4)

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be!

It's **good to reminisce sometimes** but our memories can play tricks deleting the not so good bits.

Re. **People who live in the past** and for whom the present can never live up to it.

Read Exodus 16:1-3) within a couple of months of leaving Egypt the **Israelites** were reminiscing about what life had been like in Egypt!

Such an **easy perspective** to get into **when time are difficult**. There is a hint of the Psalmist falling into it in verses 5&6 – certainly the sense that things seemed easier then.

He's certainly not drawing on the memory in a positive way.

In most situations, there are usually things that were better and things that were worse.

MAGA feeds on the perspective that in the past there was a golden era to get back to!

Enjoy the memories but don't live in the past.

c. DON'T BE BOUND BY THE PAST

Re. Branstan – snakes & bees!

Something he never forgot (positive because of dangers) even when there was no danger.

A traumatic event or difficulties can impact the rest of our lives (re. drawing positives blow)

Re. Australian banana plantation WWII – understandable + extreme).

Re. CASE WITH CHAINS (Past not helping the Psalmist at this point)

We accumulate baggage and it can chain us down.

Galatians 5:1 *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.*

However, we can be **bound by the past – fear** – that mustn't ever happen again.

Eg. Relationships – never get close again/Work/school rejection. Working for Church

All a very negative way of viewing the past but at **verse 10 the Psalmist changes his perspective:**

GET OUT CASE OF SENSIBLE THINGS TO PACK FOR AN ARTIC HOLIDAY!

2. THINGS TO REMEMBER (77:10-20)

a. REMEMBER TO LEARN FROM THE PAST

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

We have **warnings from the past that we do need to heed.**

Re. Branstan – sensible to be cautious of handbag straps in the circumstances One of the many positives about remembering – **avoid it happening again!**

Learning from the past is very different to being bound by the past:

Eg. Becoming bitter against people, chip on shoulders, lives built on hurts rather than God. It **should lead to rational and Biblical ways forward not irrational and obsessive conclusions.**

Read Acts 16:36-40 Paul, Barnabas, and Mark on a missionary journey after he had abandoned them on a previous trip. Barnabas, who was a mentor to both Paul and Mark, wanted to give Mark a second chance, while Paul, feeling Mark was undependable, refused. This disagreement led to them splitting up: Barnabas took Mark to Cyprus, and Paul took Silas and went elsewhere. Later, Paul said bring Mark to me because he has been helpful in my ministry (2 Tim 4:11).

Despite what had happened in the past Paul didn't right Mark off.

b. REMEMBER THE LORD'S PROMISES AND HIS ACTIONS IN THE PAST

READ v. 10+11 - I will remember

It was **an act of will to change** his focus from self to God.

Sometimes this has to be a conscious decision.

Where is our focus on ourselves/troubles or God?

Do we need to change our towards God again?

Sometimes the Psalmist remembers what the Lord has said

(remember his promise to us/times of refreshing/Commands etc.).

But here the Psalmist remembers what the Lord has done his ways and character (Read v.12+13).

As said before this is Often in scripture eg. Ps 136 '*His love endures forever*'. Ps105/

Also NT Communion Service: '*Do this in Remembrance of me*'.

In his Son / In my life Testimony/provided in Past (how he has changed my life around).

Not just remember but meditate on God's deeds to **be encouraged and strengthened** for the issues we face today and concerns re. the future.

Here the Psalmist **recounts the flight from Egypt** (read. V.15-20):

Ps. 77:19 *'Your path led through the sea,*

your way through the mighty waters,

though your footprints were not seen'

Re. picture of unseen footprints in Red Sea link to Footprints (Poem)

When we look back we can see God's hand at work even when we couldn't see it clearly at the time.

When Moses tried to encourage the People of Israel to enter the Promised Land he referred to what the Lord had done before (easy to forget):

Duet. 1:29-31

²⁹ Then I said to you, "Do not be terrified; do not be afraid of them. ³⁰ The Lord your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes, ³¹ and in the wilderness. There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place."

In this season of Remembrance **lets dwell on the past and what he has done for us on the cross, in a positive sense to trust God in the issues we face today and the concerns we have for tomorrow.**