



T*HIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (2 Peter 3:1-10)*

Without the benefit of memory, we would all be more closely related to the beasts of the field - except that even they have a limited memory with which the Lord has graced them to be aware of things vital to their survival. But with mankind, memory is often fleeting. Moreover, it is often fostered by those things pleasant to remember, and repressed by those things unpleasant. This is one of the fundamental rules of recall in the learning process. Being lazy, and averse to remembering laws and Commandments of our LORD that limit our desires, we tend to repress those things that impose a Godly obligation to obey the Lord, and prefer those things that provide us a license to sin. The sinful nature of man is a vivid expression of His presumed free will instead of conformity to that perfect Will of God. I say presumed free will because we are born with a will dedicated to Satan. Our wills conform to his until we are

quicken by the Holy Ghost and become dead to sin and alive to Christ. It is a work of grace and of no credit to our own efforts and striving. (see Eph 2)

The word REMEMBER is found 148 times in Holy Writ. It must, therefore, be of some grave importance to us. As a matter of fact, it would still be of grave importance if it were only mentioned once. There are, additionally, derivatives of the term such as Remembrance and Memorial. It is no wonder that God counsels us to REMEMBER so many times in Scripture. Children do not need to REMEMBER how to misbehave. It comes by force of natural desire to satisfy a selfish proclivity; however, to REMEMBER to do those things directed by parents is a matter of fear combined with commitment based in love. This is true of God.

Our Lord has never forgotten one of His Elect. He knew us before the worlds were formed. He knew us in our mother's womb, and He REMEMBERED to call and choose us in due time to Himself. *15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.* (Isaiah 49:15-16) When I was a young elementary school student, I sometimes wrote some important point on my hand so that I would not forget. All I had to do then was to remember that I had written the information on my hand. But the Lord has graven (carved) our names in the palms of His hands. He did that with the nails of Calvary's cross. Even in the waning moments of His conscious life, He REMEMBERED His Elect, in some cases, centuries before we saw the light of day at birth.

Love is the strongest remedy for a weak memory. When we were young (and some of you still are) we REMEMBERED every detail of the darling of our affection. We read, time and time again, the love letters exchanged – and we tried to even read between the lines to pick up every nuance of meaning. How glorious would it be if we paid such a devoted commitment to reading and understanding God's love letter to us – His Holy Bible.

Memory is also aided by repetition (another law of learning). Many readers of this devotion will recall learning our multiplication tables in early years. We repeated them over and over again by rote repetition until they were indelibly written upon our memories. This same principle holds true to the Word of God. There is an old hymn that applies: *"Sing them over again to me, wonderful Words of Life."* David loved the Word of God. He arose early to seek the face of the Lord – in prayer and reading. Here are a few verses of Psalm 63 which should serve to remind each of us as to what manner we should view God's Word: *1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. 3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. 4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: 6 When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. 7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. 8 My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.* (Psalm 63:1-8) It might be profitable to bear in mind that the great depth of Holy Scripture was not available to David as to us. He had the Law and the Prophets. We have BOTH plus the Gospels, Epistles, Historical Books, Minor Prophets, and Revelations. David looked forward in faith to the coming of a Redeemer; we look BACK to the accomplished historical fact.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. (Psalms 8:3-5) What is man that the Sovereign of the Heavens should

REMEMBER him? Only love compels that remembrance. But love can never exist in a void – it requires reciprocation. Love never originates in the heart of the sinner toward God. It is always an echo of the love God has shed upon us. It is not of our initiation, but His. *19 We love him, because he first loved us. 20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.* (1 John 4:19-21) You may see in these verses, and numerous others spread throughout Scripture, that the act of salvation is never of our own doing, but the act of a Providential Father in God. It would not be possible to truly love God and not love our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Because of His great love for His Elect people, God will forever REMEMBER them. But what of the wicked? *7 The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.* (Prov 10:7) God REMEMBERS the just because their names are written in His Book of Life, but look at the above verse to discover the fate of the wicked. Every reader will recall the name of the poor beggar laid at the gate of the rich man in Luke 16:19-20: his name was LAZARUS wasn't it? Good that you remembered, but what of the rich man's name? He had none because his temporary and worldly name was not important since all of this world will perish forever. His name was not written in the Book of Life, and no man needs a name in Hell.

I have witnessed the death of many soldiers – some Godly and others not so Godly. It was never difficult to tell by a man's dying peace where his heart was and where his name was written. Those who do not know God, regardless of manly courage demonstrated in this life, go to the dark chamber of death in fear and trembling. Imagine how sorrowful it must be to grow old and weary with no hope in Christ.

1 REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; 2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: 3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, 4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; 5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: 6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. (Eccl 12:1-7) God commands us to REMEMBER because He knows we are frail and weak. But when we have tasted of the Balm of Gilead, our memories are refreshed daily by that Manna which is the Bread of Heaven in Jesus Christ; and, thusly, we shall never forget.