

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Remembering – Forgetting

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Imagine standing in the present, having to remember the past, and yet forgetting the past in another sense. Yet, this is what God demands of us, allowing us to appreciate our present relationship with Him in Christ and move properly into the future.

Peter takes us back to our spiritual condition before becoming God’s spiritual people in Christ. “...Who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy” (1 Peter 2:10). This prophetic promise was first presented to an idolatrous Israel in the days of Hosea. God commanded Hosea to marry a woman from an idolatrous culture, and the children from this union were named reflecting Israel’s spiritual condition before God. A daughter is named **Loruhamah** meaning: “no mercy obtained,” and a son is named **Loammi** meaning: “not my people” (Hosea 1:6,9).

Remembering this past is sobering! We must come to grips knowing without living a holy life, separated from the way the world lives, we are not God’s people!

Paul uses Hosea’s prophetic statement and applies its fulfillment to Gentiles becoming God’s people. Along with penitent Jews, could it be that in God’s plan the Gentiles could also be vessels of mercy? “...Not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? As he saith also in Hosea, I will call that my people which was not my people; and her beloved, that was not beloved. And it shall be, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there shall they be called sons of the living God” (Romans 9:24-26). We should be thankful to God that while we all deserved the brunt of God’s wrath, in Christ we can now be recipients of His mercy.

Thankfulness for the opportunity to be God’s spiritual Israel today, and realizing the importance of holiness in all manner of living (cf. 1 Peter 1:14-15) comes from remembering what we are without Christ and without holiness in our lives.

Paul encourages us also to do some forgetting. Following his example we should be “...Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal

unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14).

As a Jew, Paul could appeal to his past of being of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a Hebrew of Hebrews. Regarding the law, he was a strict separatist as a Pharisee. Who could question his zeal? Look how he persecuted the church. Considering the righteousness in the law, Paul was blameless (Philippians 3:5-6). Yet, this was not how one was righteous before God. Faith in Christ is the way unto righteousness. These other so-called past achievements must be forgotten.

We may not have a Jewish heritage that we can forget so we can become righteous before God in Christ. However, as a Gentile, we might think living a good moral life will get us saved, with our ticket punched into heaven. Cornelius, a good moral man, still needed to hear the gospel message to be saved (Acts 10:1-2, 11:14). Faith in Christ is the only basis for righteousness before God. Contemplative forgetting and remembering has a place in appreciating our relationship with God in the present, as we look to the glorious future.