

072824

## "The End of Memory"

Hebrews 8:7-13

Bernard Bell



### Background

"But God remembered Noah" is one of the great turning points in Scripture. Had God actually forgotten about him? Surely God remembers everything! Or does he? Are there things he chooses to not remember? What does he remember about us? Or, more to the point, what do we think or fear he remembers about us? As we journey through life we accumulate our own memories, some good, some bad, some haunting. Some memories we try to keep alive, others we wish would die. This final sermon in the current block on Hebrews will ponder the purpose (end) of memory and the choice to end certain memories.

## **Sermon Text:**

*Hebrews 8:7-13*

*<sup>7</sup> For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. <sup>8</sup> But God found fault with the people and said<sup>[a]</sup>:*

*“The days are coming, declares the Lord,  
when I will make a new covenant  
with the people of Israel  
and with the people of Judah.*

*<sup>9</sup> It will not be like the covenant  
I made with their ancestors  
when I took them by the hand  
to lead them out of Egypt,  
because they did not remain faithful to my covenant,  
and I turned away from them,  
declares the Lord.*

*<sup>10</sup> This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel  
after that time, declares the Lord.*

*I will put my laws in their minds  
and write them on their hearts.  
I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.*

*<sup>11</sup> No longer will they teach their neighbor,  
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’  
because they will all know me,  
from the least of them to the greatest.*

*<sup>12</sup> For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more.”<sup>[b]</sup>*

*<sup>13</sup> By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.*

## **Discussion Questions**

### **1. Preparation**

- What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

## 2. Sunday Questions:

1. Bernard says that our memories of wrongs done against us and wrongs done to others, may cause us to be disabled by pain, or consumed with anger and a lust for retribution. Do you have instances which you should forgive and forget?

2. The first covenant did not deal with the problem of sin and death. It did not provide full access to God's presence. Does the problem lie in the covenant, or the people, or both?

3. The old covenant was written on tablets of stone. The new covenant will write God's law into minds and hearts. Please give examples of failure of old covenant and accomplishment of the new covenant.

4. Under the new covenant, God *"will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more. And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary."* Heb. 10:17-18.

How does restorative justice avert retributive justice as exemplified by Nelson Mandela and Bishop Tutu's launch of Truth and Reconciliation? Respond by referring to Bernard's comments that "once the truth was confessed and received there was a path forward to hope and freedom."

5. As Christians, we have the Lord's Supper to remind us to not forget Jesus, his better covenant and his offering of himself for us. God has accepted that offering. He forgives our wickedness and remembers our sins no more. How can we praise God for his mercy and grace?