

**DSC Community Group**  
**Sermon Summary, 06/06/2012**

Title: "The Fight Against Forgetfulness"  
Series: "Pour Out Your Heart to Him: A Study Through the Psalms"

Text: Psalm 78  
Preacher: Ryan Kelly

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"I forgot" seems to pass as an acceptable excuse for adults when we miss a lunch, or an appointment. Forgetfulness does not usually entail ill intent. As Christians as it concerns God and his works, it is our job to remember and we are culpable if we do not. Psalm 78 shows us that remembrance is a matter of eternal life and death. Psalm 78 is the longest of 6 history psalms (Ps. 105, 106, 107, 114, 135), and is quite long, verses 9-67 retelling approximately 10 stories from Israel's history, and mostly from the Exodus. In all of this, God is showing us our great need for him, and his great grace, patience, and salvation. For all that Israel saw, they rebelled, and still they forgot. How much more should we who are in Christ "remember" what God has done.

**1. A Hopeless Cycle: Blessing, Sin, Patience, and Judgment (9-67)**

- Psalm is like a roller coaster, retelling the story of Israel's history along the themes of Israel's rebellion and God's unthinkable patience and grace. Israel sinned, and when God blessed them, still they sinned more, complaining, doubting, and forgetting. God's anger was kindled, yet he provided for them, but when they persisted in unbelief, he judged them. And after judging, Israel repented, but it was empty repentance. Every 3-5 verses the description changes ("Yet..."; "Yet..."; "But..."; "But...")
- Notice the testing in verses 18, 41, and 56; Notice how much they had seen: Red Sea (13), led by a cloud (14), manna (24-26), quail (27-29), etc. All of this highlights the persistence of their unbelief.
- Verses 59-67 retell God's decisive judgment; "But" in verse 68 signals a hopeful turn.
- Psalm 78 is similar to 1 Corinthians 10, which we look at at the last Lord's Supper.

**2. A Crucial Commandment: Listen, Remember, Teach, and Heed (1-8)**

- Notice the commands to listen: "Give ear...incline your ears"; to instruct, "a parable";
- Notice the progression of purposes: Fathers are commanded to teach, so that the next generation knows, so that they will hope in God, so that they will obey, so that they will not be like the rebellious generation. This command these purposes reflect what is called, the "Shema," Israel's mission statement given in Deuteronomy 6:4-9.
- Notice the focus on the kids, and that not telling children of God is actually hiding God from them!

**3. A More Certain Future: a Faithful Servant-Shepherd (68-72)**

- Most of Psalm 78 is a generalization of Israel's history, but some of it focuses on Ephraimites (60-61). It was the Ephraimites who turned back in battle and it was that story where the Ark of the Covenant was taken. When the Ark was returned to Jerusalem it went to the tribe of Judah, not the Ephraimites. Genesis 49:10 tells us that God's promised one will come from the tribe of Judah, and Psalm 78:72 tells us that David will "shepherd the people with integrity of heart, leading them with skillful hands." Two generations after David, the kingdom splits in two! So, the Old Testament is a sad book, but it has a silver lining. David's greater son will fix this. He is from the tribe of Judah. He will put an end to the cycle of rebellion and judgment.
- In John 10, we learn that Jesus is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

**4. A Heightened Responsibility: Living in Light of Sad History and Sure Hope**

- Verse 4 summarizes the lesson of Psalm 78. From our position in redemptive history, we look backward to Israel's rebellion, but also to God's in the cross. Thus, our responsibility is greater than Israel's.

**Sample Questions**

- Forgetfulness: Why do we forget God? What is at stake in remembering? D.A. Carson says that when one generation believes and teaches the gospel and the next generation assumes it, the following generation will deny it. How have you observed this pattern? Where are you at in it?
- Children: If God has blessed you with children, how are you teaching them about God and his salvation? What one thing can you start doing this week? If you don't have children, how can you tell the next generation about God and his salvation? (Psalm 78 entails intergenerational ministry at church). Also, Ryan said we have a tendency in our culture to view children romantically to the neglect of their function as an arrow to be shaped and shot out. How have you observed this to be true?