

Absent Minded

Dr. Harold Urey was a Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry. One day he was walking along a when he ran into another professor. They chatted for a few minutes, then, as they parted, Dr. Urey asked the other prof, "John, which way was I going when I met you?" "That way," said the other, pointing. "Oh, good. That means I've already had my lunch," muttered Dr. Urey as he walked away.

I am starting to get somewhat absent-minded myself. It seems like I "chase a lot of squirrels!" That's one of the advantages of growing older, we have a more acceptable excuse for forgetting things. I forget where I've left my keys, I forget others' names, and I sometimes forget why I have walked in a particular room. I call it the "Great Hereafter" – what am I here after?

On the one hand, there is an acceptable form of forgetting much like Paul described in **Philippians 3:13-14 (ESV)**:

... one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul had success and regret in his past and put those things behind him. He didn't wallow in those regrets or savor his past achievement. He forgot and looked ahead.

On the other hand, there is an unacceptable form of forgetting. That is, forgetting God and His words.

Deuteronomy 8:11-14

¹¹ "Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, ¹² lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, ¹³ and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴ then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery,

Moses was retelling the stories of God to the generation that was about to enter the Land of Promise. The older generation died off and the younger was about to enter. Many of them had not seen what their parents and grandparents had, so Moses instructed them. Here he especially instructs them not to forget God. That is not to neglect His words and will.

This kind of forgetting is unacceptable because God doesn't forget us.

Isaiah 49:15 (ESV):

"Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.

He doesn't ask of us what He won't do Himself. He says, "Don't forget me because I won't forget you."

This kind of forgetting is also unacceptable because of undesirable consequences.

Deuteronomy 8:19-20 (ESV)

¹⁹ And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. ²⁰ Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

In the founding of our nation, we almost forgot God. Benjamin Franklin refocused the delegates to the Constitutional Convention back to the One who brought us through the War for Independence. Remember his words?

"I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth--that God Governs the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? . . . I therefore beg leave to move--that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessing on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

When we didn't forget God we were blessed. When we do forget Him, we struggle. This is a biblical principle and affects us just like Israel.

Someone has said, "I'd forget my head if it wasn't screwed on tight." Christian, would you forget your head? Just don't forget who your Head is! During the Revolution one of the slogans was, "We have no King but King Jesus!" So, as the writer of Hebrews admonishes, **". . . let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."** (Hebrews 12:1-2, ESV).

Once again, this is Perry Greene and I thank you for listening. Let's press on and not forget the One who made eternal life possible for us. Let's Keep The Light Burning!