

Will You Forget Our Heavenly Father?

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In his speech to the British House of Commons in 1948, Sir Winston Churchill (the Prime Minister of England during most of World War II) said this famous saying,

Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Churchill slightly reworded the original saying by the philosopher George Santayana in his book, *The Life of Reason*, published in 1905, where he wrote:

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

A testament to this fact is the current situation between the Palestinians in Gaza, and the terrorist group Hamas, and the citizens of Israel. The sheer anti-Semitism that is being openly expressed by large numbers of people, even non-Arabic, non-Muslim, non-Palestinian people, in countries around the world (including the United States) is absolutely shocking and almost unbelievable.

Back in the spring of 1945, near the end of World War II, General Dwight D. Eisenhower viewed firsthand the crimes that had been committed by the Germans against Jews and others at concentration camps when he visited the newly liberated Ohrdruf Concentration Camp. The sights were so heinous that he knew he needed not to only bring the information home to America, but also to make sure the truth was preserved. Eisenhower had the foresight to ensure a future would never exist where the crimes of the Holocaust could be denied.

After viewing the horrors of the German concentration camps, General Eisenhower is credited with instructing his men:

“Get it all on record now – get the films – get the witnesses – because somewhere down the track of history some bastard will get up and say that this never happened.”

And now, we are witnessing in real time the fulfillment of General Eisenhower’s concern. “Holocaust deniers” are becoming more prominent and more vocal. In the United Kingdom, the inclusion of the Holocaust has been removed from the school curriculum because it ‘offended’ the Muslim population which claims it never occurred.

The history of man has been, that over time memories are lost. History becomes rewritten and people forget. My sermon today is entitled:

Will You Forget Our Heavenly Father

Over the millennia, man has had a proclivity to always remember the things that he wants to and a proclivity to conveniently forget the things that he wants to. The natural man has always had the proclivity to forget who his Creator is, who his Sustainer is, and who his God is. This proclivity brings us to the subject of the message today.

To begin with, in Deuteronomy 8, at the end of the 40-year punishment period on the generation of Israelites which left Egypt, the new generation was preparing to enter the Promised Land. In preparation for entering this land, our Heavenly Father established again the law that He had given approximately 40 years before to their fathers and grandfathers at Mount Sinai. *Deuteronomy* is Greek for “Second Law”. In verse 11, Yehovah gives the Israelites a crucial command which would have long-lasting effects on their future as a nation and on their relationship with Him.

Deuteronomy 8:11 *Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: (KJV)*

So, Yehovah instructed the new Israelites with whom He was establishing His relationship that they should never forget Him.

My sermon this afternoon is entitled:

Will You Forget Our Heavenly Father?

In this sermon, I would like to explore in 3 points, man’s proclivity to forget our Heavenly Father and to explore our Heavenly Father’s consistent desire, plea, and warning in the Bible to His people to not forget Him in their lives.

The first point in man’s proclivity to forget our Heavenly Father is:

1) Israel and Judah forgot that Yehovah was their God (Mighty One)

In Exodus 3, and we read about the introduction of our Heavenly Father to Moses at the burning bush.

Exodus 3:6 *Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.*

7) And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8) And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey;

Continuing in verse 13)

13) *And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?*

14) *And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*

15) *And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God [Yehovah Elohim] of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.*

16) *Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:*

17) *And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. (KJV)*

So, Moses was to announce to the Israelites in Egypt that Yehovah was their God, their Mighty One, who was going to deliver them from the bondage in Egypt. In Exodus 19, our Heavenly Father introduced Himself to the Israelites at Mount Sinai.

Exodus 19:16 *And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.*

17) *And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.*

18) *And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. (KJV)*

Exodus 20:1 *And God spake all these words, saying,*

2) *I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

3) *Thou shalt have no other gods [Elohim] before me. (KJV)*

So, at the beginning of the Ten Commandments, our Heavenly Father introduces Himself to the Israelites by His name, *Yehovah*, and that He was the One who saved them from Egypt and from their slavery. The first commandment that He gave was that *we were to put nothing ahead of God Our Father in our lives.*

As a side note, the Ten Commandments in Hebrew are *aserét ha'dəbarím* – *the ten words*. In the Jewish community, the first word is actually verse 2.

I am Yehovah your Mighty One, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (KJV)

These words are the actual pretext for the first commandment of what Christians list as the Ten Commandments. *Yehovah* first establishes that He is their *Elohim* or *Mighty One*, which is immediately followed by the sentence.

You shall have no other Elohim or Mighty Ones before Me or above Me in importance.

This commandment or word does not just mean other pagan gods and not worshipping them. It also includes anything in our lives on which we place a higher value than the value we place on our Heavenly Father and on obeying Him.

So, even though the Ten Commandments customarily are listed starting with verse 3, the Commandments actually start with verse 2 with the establishment and the announcement that *Yehovah was the God – the Elohim – the Mighty One* to the Israelites.

An interesting and important observation about the Ten Commandments is that the King James Version uses the word *thou* in each of these commandments. The pronoun *thou* in Old English was just the singular form of *you*, just like in most other languages which have a singular “you” and a plural “you”. Many centuries ago, the singular form “thou” was dropped and the plural form of *you* was adopted for both the singular and the plural forms in English.

Just as in the majority of other languages, the Hebrew language has a singular form of “you” which is different than the plural form of “you”. Of importance is that the Ten Commandments were written using the singular form of “you” in the Hebrew.

So, it is very important to notice that the Ten Commandments were not addressed to the nation of Israel as a whole, as a collective people. They were addressed to each and every Israelite at Mount Sinai on a personal and individual basis and level. When a phrase or action is repeated many, many times in the Bible, it is important that we take note of it. The sentence “*I am the LORD*” [*Yehovah*] occurs 163 times in the Old Testament.

We started the sermon today in Deuteronomy 8. Let’s reread this section of scripture to understand the full warning from our Heavenly Father that He reiterated to the Israelites.

Deuteronomy 8:11 *Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:*

12) Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

13) And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14) Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

15) *Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;*

16) *Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;*

17) *And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.*

18) *But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.*

19) *And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.*

20) *As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.*
(KJV)

Just before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, Yehovah warned them not to forget Him when they were prosperous, rich and healthy in their future life in the Promised Land. (KJV)

Yehovah, our Heavenly Father, warned Israel time and time again not to forget Him. He repeatedly told the Israelites who He was. He did not want them to forget who He was.

Again, the sentence "*I am the LORD (Yehovah)*" occurs 163 times in the Old Testament.

We have already read where our Heavenly Father uses these words in Exodus 3 when He introduced Himself to Moses and in Exodus 20 when He introduced Himself to the Israelites.

I am the LORD (Yehovah) occurs 45 times in the Book of Leviticus alone. In Leviticus 19 we read how our Heavenly Father intertwines the proclamation of His name into His dialogue with the Israelites.

Leviticus 19:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2) *Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*

3) *Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.*

4) *Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God.* (KJV)

Continuing in Verse 10)

10) *And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 12)

12) *And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 14)

14) *Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 16)

16) *Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 18)

18) *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 28)

28) *Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 30)

30) *Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 31)

31) *Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.*

32) *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 37)

37) *Therefore, shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

Do we see a pattern emerging here? God Our Father emphasized His name and who He was to the Israelites again and again and again and again. But what happened? Exactly as our Heavenly Father had warned, with prosperity and blessings, the Israelites began worshipping other gods and over time turned completely from Him and forgot Him.

In 2 Chronicles 30, King Hezekiah ruled Judah from 716 to 687 B.C. (about 80 to 100 years before the fall of Judah). King Hezekiah proclaimed that Judah was to keep the Passover as required in the law.

2 Chronicles 30:5 *So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. (KJV)*

So, the Kingdom of Judah had not been faithfully keeping the Passover in the decades before Hezekiah. They had forgotten the Passover and Yehovah.

About 70 to 100 years after Hezekiah, Josiah began to reign as king in Judah when he was eight years old. Ten years have now passed and Josiah is now eighteen years old. He begins to repair the temple. Let's read what incredible event occurred in verse 8.

2 Kings 22:8 *And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.*

9) And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10) And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

11) And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. (KJV)

Judah had forgotten Yehovah for so long that the book of the law was just lying in the temple probably covered over with other stored material. No one had seen the book of the law for decades.

In the end, both Israel and Judah forgot their Creator, their Protector, their Sustainer, and their Savior. They went after Baal and other gods. Because of that, Israel was conquered by Assyria and Judah was conquered by Babylon. Both went into captivity and were taken out of the Promised Land.

Jeremiah was Yehovah's prophet in the time of Josiah, just decades before the captivity of Judah. We will read several verses in Jeremiah which show our Heavenly Father's acknowledgement that Judah had totally forgotten Him.

Jeremiah 3:21 *A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the LORD their God. (KJV)*

Jeremiah 13:25 *This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood. (KJV)*

Jeremiah 18:15 *Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up; (KJV)*

Jeremiah 23:27 *Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. (KJV)*

Sadly, brethren, in the end, both Israel and Judah forgot that Yehovah was their Mighty One, and they paid a heavy price for that.

The second point in man's proclivity to forget our Heavenly Father is:

2) Man today has forgotten the identity and the name of our Heavenly Father

From the Encyclopedia Britannica, we read:

Originally, the name YHWH was spoken out loud any time Jewish readers came to it in the Scriptures without any second thoughts. But as time went on, the people came to believe that mispronouncing the personal name of the Lord—even unintentionally—was tantamount to taking the Lord's name in vain. As such, they stopped pronouncing YHVH (Yehovah) altogether, and began substituting a more generic term for Yehovah ("Elohim" - God, "HaShem" -- The Name," or "Adonai" – my Lord) anytime they came to YHVH (Yehovah) in the Bible. With that substitution, the proper pronunciation was lost to history.

This time of transformation was in the early 4th Century B.C. when the Jews began to substitute the words Elohim, HaShem, and Adonai for the Tetragrammaton, YHVH, or Yehovah. Of these three substitutions, the term Adonai or "my Lord" was used most often in the centuries before Jesus' birth.

The New Testament, as preserved through the centuries, is entirely in Greek, except for a few scriptures in Aramaic. The original text of the Old Testament was written entirely in Hebrew except for a few chapters in Daniel which were written in Aramaic. As Greek became more and more predominate as the universal language of the Roman world (much like English is in today's world), there was a strong push to have a Greek text of the Old Testament for the Jews living in Egypt. Consequently, the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek by 70 Jewish scholars in the late to mid-3rd century B.C. in a document which we now commonly refer to as the Septuagint, which is Latin for seventy, in reference to these 70 Jewish scholars.

When the 70 Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew text into Greek, they did not transliterate the name Yehovah, since no one was pronouncing His name. Instead of transliterating Yehovah into Greek, the scholars substituted the title “Adonai” which the Jews most often said aloud when they read scriptures containing Yehovah. That title “Adonai” in Hebrew means “Lord”. In Greek, that translated title was *Kurios* without the definite article “the”. And in the English language versions of the Bible such as the King James and New King James versions, the Tetragrammaton YHVH was translated into English using the translation of this Greek word *Kurios* which in English means “Lord”. However, in English, the word “the” was added in front of Lord, although there is no “the” in front of the name or title in either Hebrew or Greek. The title “Lord” is all capitalized as LORD when referring to the Tetragrammaton. So, this is a short history lesson on how the name Yehovah became “the LORD” in English.

In Exodus 3:15 in the Septuagint, the LORD or Yehovah was written as *Kurios*. In Exodus 20:2 in the Septuagint, the LORD or Yehovah was written as *Kurios*. In Deuteronomy 6:4 in the Septuagint, the LORD or Yehovah was written as *Kurios*.

The name Yehovah was written consistently throughout the Old Testament as the title “*Kurios*” in the Septuagint.

In the text of the New Testament, this nomenclature from the Septuagint was followed in denoting *Yehovah – the Most High God of the Old Testament*.

In Mark 12:29 Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4. The written words of Christ were preserved in Greek.

Mark 12:29 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The LORD our God is one LORD: (KJV)*

In the Greek New Testament, verse 29 is an exact copy of Deuteronomy 6:4 in the Septuagint. The LORD or Yehovah was written as *Kurios*.

Jesus is telling the multitude that the first commandment was to love Yehovah. In that verse, Jesus was telling the multitude not to love Himself, but to love another Being, Yehovah, who had to be God Our Father.

The Apostle Paul and the Apostle John used this title “*Kurios*” without the definite article “the” throughout their writings.

However, with the Bible being translated over the centuries into hundreds of languages, this connection in between the title “*Kurios*” in the Greek New Testament, the title “*Kurios*” in the Greek Old Testament in the Septuagint, and the name Yehovah in the Hebrew Old Testament has been lost, even in the Churches of God.

Instead, most of the Churches of God have supplanted God Our Father being the Yehovah of the Old Testament with Jesus the Anointed One.

In this way, the knowledge of the identity of who God Our Father is in scripture has been lost and forgotten.

In the time of Jesus, the Jews in Judea were worshipping Yehovah. In John 5, and we will find the answer as to why the Jewish leadership was trying to kill Jesus.

In both instances of “God” in verse 18, the Greek words are *ho theos* – the God – God Our Father. So, verse 18 states that the Jews were attempting to kill Jesus because He said that the God (the God that they were worshipping – Yehovah) was His Father. They were not trying to kill Jesus because He ever claimed to be Yehovah.

Furthermore, in all but two instances in the New Testament (and those two instances are because of requirements in Greek grammar), the 981 occurrences of *ho theos* all refer to God Our Father. So, it is crucial knowledge that the instances of the generic title “God” in the English is referring in Greek to a specific Being – “*the God*”, which is *Yehovah* which is *God Our Father*.

The loss of the knowledge of the identity of “*the God*” in the New Testament, and that that Being is the same Being as the *LORD* – *Yehovah* in the Old Testament, *Kurios* without the “the” in the Septuagint, and *Kurios* without the “the” in the New Testament has led to much confusion about the identity of God Our Father in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

In the end, man has forgotten the identity of our Heavenly Father.

The third point in man’s proclivity to forget our Heavenly Father is:

3) Without a close relationship with Him, we will forget our Heavenly Father

As a young child when you were growing up, you most likely had a close friend with whom you did everything. You were inseparable. But perhaps the day came when your friend’s family moved away to another city. Then with time, without seeing and speaking with that friend every day, slowly but surely, that close relationship with that friend became more and more distant to the point that, in the course of time and with the activities, stresses, and demands of life, we began to forget that friend on a day-to-day basis. That friend ceased to come to mind in our daily lives and our daily routines.

This same phenomenon can occur in our relationship with our Heavenly Father. Without continuing a close relationship with our Heavenly Father, we will, over time, forget Him.

Let’s discuss several ways in which we can keep from forgetting our Heavenly Father over time.

The first way that we can keep from forgetting our Heavenly Father over time is:

a) Prayer

Prayer is so important because it is such a great honor and opportunity for us as our Heavenly Father's children and called-out ones to talk to the most powerful Being in all the universe.

In 1 Thessalonian 5 the Apostle Paul exhorted the Thessalonian congregation to pray to the Father.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 *Pray without ceasing.*

18) In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19) Quench not the Spirit. (KJV)

The exhortation by the Apostle Paul is to pray without ceasing. Brethren, do we pray without ceasing? Are we constantly in communication with our Heavenly Father? Or do the chaos and the time constraints and demands of our lives crowd Him out?

The Apostle James shows that our relationship with God Our Father is reciprocal.

James 4:8 *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. (KJV)*

Brethren, we draw near to our Heavenly Father when we pray effectually to Him, and He will draw near to us.

The second way that we can keep from forgetting our Heavenly Father over time is:

b) Bible study

Prayer is the way that we talk to and with our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father talks to us through His word, the Bible.

Jesus describes the scriptures of the Bible as the Words of His Father.

Mark 7:11 *But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.*

12) And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13) Making the word of God [ho theos – the God – God Our Father] of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. (KJV)

As children and called-out ones of our Heavenly Father, we should be studying His word every day. Paul exhorts us to study in order to rightly divide the word of truth of our Heavenly Father.

2 Timothy 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God [ho theos – the God – God Our Father], a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV)*

The brethren in Berea studied the scriptures daily. At that time, the only scriptures available were the Old Testament. They searched the scriptures daily to prove or to disprove that what the Apostle Paul was preaching was true or not.

Acts 17:10 *And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.*

11) These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (KJV)

Brethren, we study the scriptures and search the scriptures daily so that our Heavenly Father can talk to us and can reveal to us His thoughts and His words.

The third way that we can keep from forgetting our Heavenly Father over time is:

c) Meditation

We live in a busy, chaotic, and time-demanding world. The immediacy of technology has translated to an immediacy of action on the part of all of us. All aspects of our lives seem to require immediate attention. Unfortunately, the valuable action of meditating on our Heavenly Father's Word is one of the first casualties in our time-demanding world.

In Psalm 119, we can read what David meditated on.

Psalm 119:15 *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 23) ...

23) Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes. (KJV)

Continuing in verse 48) ...

48 – My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes. (KJV)

Continuing in verse 78) ...

78) Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts. (KJV)

Continuing in Verse 148) ...

*148) Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.
(KJV)*

David meditated daily on our Heavenly Father's Word. In 1 Timothy 4 the Apostle Paul also exhorted us to meditate on the Holy Spirit that our Heavenly Father has given to us.

1 Timothy 4:13 *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

14) Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15) Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. (KJV)

Brethren, meditating on what we read in our Heavenly Father's words and scriptures gives us the opportunity for His Spirit to work within us to bring us to deeper understanding of Him, His character, and His love. Meditation deepens our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

The fourth way that we can keep from forgetting our Heavenly Father over time is:

d) Fasting

Fasting has long been misunderstood by so many, even in the Churches of God. The purpose for fasting is not to get our Heavenly Father to do what we want. The purpose for fasting is to draw closer to God Our Father in order to better understand Him, and His character, His desires, and His love for us.

In Matthew 17, Jesus was discussing the topic of faith with His disciples. Jesus told them that a key factor in absolute faith and assurance in God Our Father is by prayer and fasting.

Matthew 17:20 *And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

21 *Howbeit this kind goes not out but by prayer and fasting. (KJV)*

Brethren, as we are humbled through hunger and thirst, fasting allows us to draw closer to our Heavenly Father, and by doing so, fasting helps us never to forget Him. The fifth way that we can keep from forgetting our Heavenly Father over time is:

e) Continually seek the will of our Heavenly Father

Do we continually seek our Heavenly Father's will? Jesus told the Jewish leaders that He did not seek His own will.

John 5:30 *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. (KJV)*

After the Passover service and just before His arrest by the Jews, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray to His Father. Jesus knew of His imminent arrest, torture, suffering, and death. Jesus, as a human, did not want to suffer and die.

Matthew 26:39 *And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

40) *And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?*

41) *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

42) *He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. (KJV)*

Jesus wished there could be another way. But He put His Father's will before His own and within sixteen to twenty hours, He was tortured and killed.

Do we humbly give up our will and ask solely that our Heavenly Father's will would be done? It's actually part of what is commonly known as the Lord's Prayer.

Matthew 6:9 *Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

10) *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (KJV)*

Do we earnestly pray for and seek our Heavenly Father's will, even if His will may not be what our will is? If so, we will never forget our Heavenly Father.

In today's sermon, we have explored the subject of man's proclivity to forget our Heavenly Father. We have explored that subject through three points, which are:

1) Israel and Judah forgot that Yehovah was their God (Mighty One).

Although God Our Father warned Israel and Judah again and again and again, with time, they always turned away from our Heavenly Father and forgot Him.

2) Man today has forgotten the identity and the name of our Heavenly Father.

As a result of the actual suppression of our Heavenly Father's name by the Jews and as a result of translations into languages other than the original Hebrew (including and emanating from the Greek Septuagint), the identity and the name of our Heavenly Father has been forgotten.

3) Without a close relationship with Him, we will forget our Heavenly Father.

The spiritual tools of prayer, Bible study, meditation, fasting, and continually seeking the will of our Heavenly Father, we will over time drift further and further away from Him to a point where we, in effect, forget Him.

Brethren, mankind has a proclivity to forget the things which are not repeated and continually rehearsed. Our Heavenly Father knows and understands this proclivity.

The Bible is full of repetitions in bringing forth our Heavenly Father's name, in warnings for disobedience, and in blessings for obedience to His laws. God Our Father instituted the Holy Days on an annually recurring basis, so that we would rehearse those days every year. Without the annual recurrence, we would soon forget the Holy Days.

Without repetitive action, we lose what we don't use. We get rusty in what we do not rehearse on a continuing basis. This is true in learning and recalling facts. This is true in doing math quickly in our heads. This is also true in relationships with friends. It is true in religious belief. It is true in Biblical understanding and in understanding our Heavenly Father's truth and it is true in our relationship with our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus the Anointed One.

Simply put – what you don't use, you will lose.

Brethren, will you forget our Heavenly Father?