

Spiritual Memory Loss

"They forgot their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt" (Psa. 106:21).

Alzheimer's disease has caused much concern about memory loss in our day. Amnesia is basically described as an abnormal degree of forgetfulness which involves the inability to recall recent or past events. Studies have recorded that while amnesia sometimes begins suddenly, in other cases it comes on gradually. It has also been noted that, varying with the patient, memory loss may endure permanently or temporarily.

It is also clear that while the aging process brings on some memory loss, it is not to be blamed for significant memory loss. In this fast-paced society, most of us have forgotten important dates, appointments or plans. We may not appreciate being told, "You would forget your head if it wasn't tied to you," but the phrase has seemed to fit on occasions. The question has been aptly asked, "What good is a photographic memory if you are out of film?"

Unfortunately, at times the Lord's people are also plagued with spiritual memory loss. In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was strongly exhorted to "remember" their past and God's dealings with them (see Deut. 5:15; 15:15). In the New Testament, Simon Peter described a virtueless believer as one who has "forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Pet. 1:9). Spiritual memory loss involves several deficiencies in our lives.

When we forget the Lord, we usually neglect Him! In the phrases following our text, we are informed that the Israelites overlooked the "great things" God had done "in Egypt; Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea" (106:21-22). By failing to value these divine accomplishments of the past, they eventually disregarded God and His works. We are also warned of the danger of neglecting "so great salvation" (Heb. 2:3).

When we forget the Lord, we basically replace Him! The verses previous to our text inform us that the children of Israel "made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image" (106:19-20). In the place of Jehovah, they raised an idolatrous symbol. A false god was worshiped instead of the true God. We must be careful not to look to anyone or anything but God Himself in our worship and adoration.

When we forget the Lord, we definitely anger Him! God said that "He would destroy them," and He would have "Had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath" (106:23). Later, because of the Israelite's persistent unbelief, the Lord did lift "up His hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness" (106:26). May this Old Testament illustration serve to help us seek divine aid with our spiritual memory loss.