



God Remembers

*"But God **remembered** Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided."*

Genesis 8:1

Noah experienced firsthand the reality and intensity of God's judgment. Even though he had many years of preparation before it finally took place, how difficult it must have been to live through the weeks of destruction of the entire earth and to see God's wrath erase everything else around him. He knew the generalities of the plan but not the specifics, especially how long it would take—first the flood itself and then the long wait for things to reside back to normal. But regardless of how difficult it seemed, how frightening and lonely it appeared, nor even the long periods of waiting until it was accomplished, "God remembered Noah".

At times I'm perplexed at Christians' personal reaction to Final Judgment, the Last Days, or whatever moniker you wish to place on the "End Times". One disturbing reaction is apathy. Some are so intensely focused on the things of this life that the future doesn't get much thought or consideration. They appear to be more interested in the things of **THIS** life than the next, of things temporal rather than eternal. An equally disturbing reaction is fear. These are individuals who haven't yet learned that this is not a test of knowledge but faith, and believe there's something needing to be done with the knowledge to prevent being overcome by future events. But like Noah, many

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people throughout the Bible have lived through the tempestuous ride of God's judgment, and regardless of what it felt like at the moment, the most important factor is that in the end "God remembered".

Times of judgment are like times of trial or testing. They have a purpose, ergo a series of events that need to take place (no matter how unpleasant the process is at the time), and in the end God's purpose and results are made very clear. The process takes some time to fully resolve and can seem unbearable during individual segments. This is why the Bible speaks of the need and value of "endurance" to see these things to their successful conclusion.

*"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. And let **endurance** have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, **lacking in nothing**."*

James 1:2-4

For Believers, the right response to trials is the same required to live through God's judgment. Jesus Himself repeatedly admonishes us that when it comes to how we should live and react to the events of the End Times, it's summed up in "endurance".

*"At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who **endures** to the end, he **will be saved**."*

Matthew 24:10-13

Now before you pull out the End Times "Get Out of Jail Free" card--the argument that we'll be raptured and thus avoid having to endure judgment--consider carefully the biblical patterns established to the contrary.

- Noah was "saved" from judgment, but he certainly experienced firsthand some of its effects. He and his family may not have been killed like the rest of mankind, but it was certainly no picnic, especially from the time the boat lifted off the ground until it settled back down again.

- The first plagues sent upon Egypt by God were experienced by Israel as well the Egyptians. Although they were shielded from the latter plagues, they still lived through **ALL** of God's judgment.
- Crossing the Red Sea was a scary event up until the water rolled back in behind them.
- Lot and his family's escape from Sodom and Gomorrah is an especially compelling example: Ultimately saved, but certainly not quarantined from the events of God's judgment.

God's people are "saved" and make it safely through to the other side, but they are not entirely immune to experiencing the events of their times. In a sense they make it to the other side "unscathed", but not uninvolved.

Jesus repeatedly uses another word in his letters to the seven churches in Revelation to describe how He expects His followers to deal with the End Times. And I find it both comforting and inspiring that it's used repeatedly in the form of a promise: "Overcome".

*"...To him who **overcomes**, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."*

Revelation 2:7

*"...He who **overcomes** will not be hurt by the second death."*

Revelation 2:11

*"...To him who **overcomes**, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."*

Revelation 2:17

*"He who **overcomes**, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star."*

Revelation 2:26-28

*"He who **overcomes** will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."*

Revelation 3:5

*"He who **overcomes**, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name."*

Revelation 3:12

*"He who **overcomes**, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."*

Revelation 3:21

All of these promises from Christ to Believers who endure His judgment upon this earth! It won't be a pleasant endurance, it will take its course contrary to our own notions, and we won't be miraculously exempted from 100% of it, but we **CAN** endure and overcome and realize the rewards for doing so. How? Because **GOD** "remembers".

During the course of events, before we see their successful completion for our benefit, it may seem like we're alone at times or that God has "forgotten" us, but He **ALWAYS** "remembers". This term is used throughout Scripture to remind us that as humans we continually fall back on human perspectives and limited human knowledge. It's not that God somehow forgot for awhile and suddenly remembered His people in the nick of time. It's a way of stating, "Silly human...you were so worried and consumed with the circumstances that **YOU** forgot that the God of the Universe never let you out of His control." The essence of faith is to trust Him regardless of the circumstances.

*"The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; **He will be with you**. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."*

Deuteronomy 31:8

Paul encourages us to look beyond the circumstances to the greater work of Christ.

*"For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are **afflicted** in every way, **but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;** always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body."*

2 Corinthians 4:6-10

In spite of the circumstances, God remembers. We might forget in the heat of the moment, but **He** never does. That's why it's not a test of knowledge but faith. It's a cornerstone of His character repeated throughout Scripture.

My conclusion, therefore, is that the "work" of a Believer in the End Times is the same as at all other times: Faithfulness. To be wholly and exclusively devoted to God's way and will alone in pursuit of the Gospel. The daily exercise of faithfulness is the very preparation needed for times of trial and judgment. What is required of us for what we perceive as "special" times is actually the very same, exact daily requirements of our walk in Christ today. Consider Christ's words concerning what many consider to be about the rapture itself:

"Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left."

Matthew 24:40-41

What will we be doing when He comes? Working, sleeping, **LIVING OUR DAILY, ORDINARY LIFE!**

I find it comforting that I should have no fear of the antichrist, the mark of the beast, or any of the signs of judgment because they are all overcome not by being called upon to invoke special, extraordinary powers of faith when they appear, but by exercising my ordinary, daily faith to prepare me for the ride, to deliver me to the other side where it will be confirmed that I never left His care. God will remember me.

In His Love,

Servant@WalkWithTheWord.org