Sermon #10 <u>Exodus Series</u>

Title: **GOD REMEMBERED**

<u>Text</u>: Exodus 2:23-25 <u>Subject</u>: *God's Faithfulness*

<u>Date</u>: Tuesday Evening — January 17, 2006

Tape # Exodus #10

Introduction:

When someone says to me, "I will remember you," I take that to mean that the person loves me and is concerned for me. I often receive letters from people around the world, many are people I have never met, who tell me, "I remember you in prayer every day." Whenever I do, I am humbled and filled with gratitude. What a great blessing! I take those words to mean, that I am loved and prayed for by someone who knows that I need God's constant grace, protection, direction, and care. Frequently, you remind me that you remember me before the throne of grace. I cannot tell you what that fact means to me. It tells me that you love me, that you are concerned for me, that you have a real interest in the work God has trusted to our hands, and that you know something of both my weakness and inability and God's greatness and infinite ability.

To be remembered by God's saints in prayer before the throne of God is, to me, a wonderful blessing God's goodness of indescribable value. Yet, there is a blessing of God's goodness that surpasses that infinitely. Great as it is to be remembered before God, this is better. — We are remembered by our God. Our heavenly Father remembers us. God our Savior remembers us. We are engraved upon the his heart. He never forgets us. He purposefully remembers us, always, in all our circumstances. All that he does he does because he remembers us in infinite grace, in tender mercy, and in faithful loving kindness. What could be more wonderfully glorious? That is what I want to talk to you about tonight. You will find my text in Exodus 2:23-25.

(Exodus 2:23-25) And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. (24) And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. (25) And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.

"<u>It came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died</u>." — God raises up kings and destroys them as he will. While they live he rules them absolutely. When he is done with them, he puts them down. And the mightest of kings, just like the most insignificant worm of the human race, dies at the time appointed by God from eternity. In the process of time, Pharaoh died; and so shall we.

"Keep silence all created things, And wait your Maker's nod; My soul stands trembling while she sings The honors of her God. Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown Hang on His firm decree; He sits on no precarious throne, Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to His throne a volume lies, With all the fates of men, With every angel's form and size Drawn by the eternal pen.

His providence unfolds the book And makes His counsels shine; Each opening leaf and every stroke Fulfils some bright design.

Here He exalts neglected worms
To scepters and a crown;
And then, the following page He turns,
And treads the monarch down.

Not Gabriel asks the reason why, Nor God the reason gives, Nor dares the favorite angel pry Between the folded leaves.

My God, I would not long to see My fate with curious eyes, What gloomy lines are writ for me, Or what bright scenes may rise.

In Thy fair book of life and grace May I but find my name Recorded by electing grace Beneath my Lord the Lamb!"

"<u>And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage</u>." — Another king was on the throne; but God's people were still in bondage and bitter affliction. Political changes never change human nature. Cain hates Abel, Ishmael despises Isaac, and the serpent's seed afflicts the woman's seed in all nations, at all times, relentlessly. That fact will not be altered until the offense of the cross ceases to enrage the hearts of men.

"<u>And they cried, and their cry came up unto God</u>." — They sighed and groaned by reason of their bondage and affliction. It is a great blessing of grace for the God of Glory to hear the cries of our hearts, when we call upon his name in prayer (Ps. 18:6).

(Psalms 18:6) In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

That is truly a blessing indescribable. But the children of Israel did not cry to him. They only sighed and groaned by reason of their bondage and affliction. There is no indication of any repentance. They had learned the ways of the Egyptians and cried to the gods of the Egyptians (Jos. 24:14).

(Joshua 24:14) Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

They cried to the river gods, frog gods, and calf gods of their captors. Yet, their God, the only Lord God, heard their cry, not because of them, but in spite of them. "<u>And their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage</u>." He heard them because they needed him, though they looked to other gods. That is called "free, unconditional grace, immutable, indestructible!"

Verse 24 — "<u>And God heard their groaning</u>." — Yes, he hears the very groans of our hearts! — "<u>And God heard their groaning</u>, and <u>God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob</u>." — (Gen. 15:14; 46:4; Ex. 6:5; Ps. 105:8, 42).

(Genesis 15:14) And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

(Genesis 46:4) I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

(Exodus 6:5) And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

(Psalms 105:8) He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations.

(Psalms 105:42) For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.

Verse 25 — "<u>And God looked upon the children of Israel</u>." He looked upon them with pity and compassion, and beheld their bondage and affliction. — "<u>And God had respect unto them</u>." — He favored them as the objects of his tender mercy, love, and grace.

GOD'S RESPECT

Let me spend a little time here. Throughout the Word of God we are told that God is "no respecter of persons." How often have you heard some ignorant Arminian throw those words at you, as if that statement is a denial of God's free, sovereign, electing love and discriminating grace? Yet, here we read that God had respect to the children of Israel. We see that frequently in

the Book of God. There are some people to who are definitely respected, favored, loved, and accepted by God (Gen. 4:4-5; Rom. 9:11-13).

(Genesis 4:4-5) And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: (5) But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

(Romans 9:11-13) (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) (12) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. (13) As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

<u>True, God respects no man's person</u>. That is to say, God does not show partiality to anyone because of anything in man. Those things that cause us to be prejudicial and show partiality (race, wealth, education, morality, etc.), God almighty sees through. He sees all men exactly the same. He sees every man as he really is, nothing but filth and sin. Therefore, he is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:9-11; Eph. 6:8-9; Col. 3:25; James 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:17).

(Acts 10:34-35) Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: (35) But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

(Romans 2:9-11) Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; (10) But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: (11) For there is no respect of persons with God. — Your race and nationality mean nothing to God.

(Ephesians 6:8-9) Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free. (9) And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him. — **Your social standing means nothing to God**.

(Colossians 3:25) But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. — <u>Your position means nothing to God</u>.

(James 2:1-2) My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. (2) For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment. — **Your wealth** means nothing to God.

(1 Peter 1:17) And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear. — <u>Social</u>, <u>economic</u>, <u>racial matters ought never have any place in our esteem of others</u> (Col. 3:10-11).

(Colossians 3:10-11) And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (11) Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

I repeat. It is true, God respects no man's person. But do not ever imagine that God does not show partiality, favoring some and not others, being gracious to some and not others, loving some and not others. The text before us and the Scriptures universally declare that there are some to whom God shows infinite, eternal, distinguishing favor and respect (Ex. 2:23-25; Lev. 26:9; 2 Kings 13:23; Ps, 74:19-20).

(Exodus 2:23-25) And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. (24) And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. (25) And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.

(Leviticus 26:9) For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

(2 Kings 13:23) And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

(Psalms 74:19-20) O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever. (20) Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

Did you notice that in each of these references God's respect of men is based not upon their persons, but upon his covenant? God shows favor to some and passes by others because of, and only because of, his covenant. It is on the basis of God's covenant of redemption and grace made with Christ before the world began that he deals with and receives sinners favorably in time. It is this covenant of which David sang on his deathbed. It is by this covenant that all things are brought to pass in God's providence. And it is by this covenant that all the blessings of grace flow to chosen, redeemed sinners in Christ (2 Sam. 23:5; Rom. 8:28-31; Eph. 1:3-6). Thank God for the covenant!

GOD REMEMBERS

And thank God, he remembers his covenant! That is the delightful thing revealed in our text. — "God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob!" That covenant God made with Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob was but a typical picture of the covenant of grace made with Christ before the world was, ratified and fulfilled by our Surety's blood, and confirmed to us by the gift of faith in Christ.

Without question, David had this passage of Scripture in mind when he was inspired of God to write the 136th Psalm. This Psalm stands out in the Psalms because of the chorus repeated in each verse, "for his mercy endureth for ever." It is a song of praise for God's enduring mercy. The chorus, "for his mercy endureth for ever," we are told, was a favorite among the Old Testament saints. They often sang it when giving praise for the display of God's great goodness in the performance of his wondrous works.

This Psalm was probably written by David when brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. In 16:34 David said, "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Solomon repeated those words when he dedicated the temple. When the glory of the Lord filled the temple and the people fell with their faces upon the pavement, Solomon led them in a chorus of praise, "The Lord is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." Then, again, in 15t_Chronicles 20:21, when Jehoshaphat led Judah out against the overwhelming armies of Ammon and Moab, who had come up from the valley of Tekoa, he appointed singers to sing praise to God, saying, "Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever."

(Psalms 136) O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. (2) O give thanks unto **the God of gods**: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. (3) O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever. (4) To him who alone **doeth great wonders**: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. (5) To him that **by wisdom made** the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever. (6) To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever. (7) To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever: (8) The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever: (9) The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever. (10) To him that **smote Egypt in their firstborn**: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: (11) And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever: (12) With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever. (13) To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever: (14) And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever: (15) But **overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea**: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. (16) To him which **led his people through the wilderness**: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. (17) To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever: (18) And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever: (19) Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever: (20) And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever: (21) And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever: (22) Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever. (23) Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever: (24) And hath **redeemed us** from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. (25) Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever. (26) O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

What thanks! What praise! What wonder! What comfort fills our hearts when we meditate upon the boundless mercy of our God. That he pities us in our misery and is determined to do good to us, that his mercy endures forever, without abatement, that his mercy is eternity to eternity, constant, immutable, and sure, oh, what a cause for wonder and praise! Psalm 136 is a psalm of praise God for God's never-failing mercy, praise to God "who remembered us in our low estate:

for his mercy endureth for ever: And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever." Do you sense something of the wonder of those words?

CONTRAST

Moses wrote "God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." The Holy Spirit translates to mean, that he "<u>remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever</u>." What a contrast there is between our God and us! We forget. He remembers! We are able to retain in our memory the most trivial, most useless, and even the most abominable things with ease. Try as we may, we just cannot forget worthless things. But that which is good, useful, profitable, spiritual, and meaningful, we forget very quickly, try as we may to remember. — I can remember jokes I heard as a child; but I quickly forget a passage of Holy Scripture I read this morning!

More tragically far, how often, how quickly, how easily we forget God our Savior and his countless mercies! In order to help us remember him, knowing our infirmity, our Lord Jesus gave us the blessed ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and told us to keep the ordinance often in remembrance of him. But, blessed be his name, our God never forgets us. He is, as Arthur Pink put it, "The Faithful Rememberer."

FIRST MENTION

I found it very interesting and instructive to discover that the first five times the word "remember" is used in Holy Scripture, we see God remembering his chosen (Gen. 8:1; 9:15-16; 19:29; 30:22).

(Genesis 8:1) And God <u>remembered</u> Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;

(Genesis 9:15-16) And I will **remember** my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. (16) And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may **remember** the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

(Genesis 19:29) And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God **remembered** Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

(Genesis 30:22) And God <u>remembered</u> Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

The first time the word "remember" is used with reference to man is in Genesis 40:23. — "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him."

ISRAEL IN EGYPT

David tells us that God "remembered us in our low estate:" Israel was a nation of slaves, groaning under the lash of merciless task-masters, oppressed by a cruel, heartless king. But when there was no other eye to pity them, the Lord God looked upon them, heard their cries of distress, and "remembered" them in their low estate. — "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto it."

But this blessed word of grace is not to be limited to the literal seed of Abraham. It is God's word to us, to the whole "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). We unite with God's saints of old, and sing, "Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth forever!" How "low" our "estate" was by nature! Fallen, sinful, and corrupt, we were in bondage and misery, wretched, ruined, and lost, unable to deliver or help ourselves. But, in wondrous grace, God took pity on us. His strong arm reached down and rescued us. He came to where we lay, saw us, and had compassion on us, and ran to us (Luke 15:33). Therefore we sing, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (Psa. 40:2).

WHY?

Why did He "remember" us? The word "remember" tells of previous thoughts of love and mercy toward us. As it was with the children of Israel in Egypt, so it was with us in our low estate. He "remembered" his covenant, that covenant into which he had entered with Christ our Surety from old eternity. In that covenant eternal life was promised to us in Christ, all the blessings of grace were bestowed upon us, we were "accepted in the Beloved" (respected, favored), and saved, because the Lord God trusted our Surety, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Tit. 1:2; Eph. 3:3-6; Rom. 8:28-31; Eph. 1:12; Rev. 13:8; 17:8).

God "remembered" that he had "chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). Therefore, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly, redeeming us with his precious blood and, at the appointed time of love, sent his Spirit to redeem us from the bondage of our spiritual death by the power of his grace (Ps. 136:23-24; Gal. 4:4-6) bringing us from death unto life by his omnipotent grace.

(Psalms 136:23-24) Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: (24) And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

(Galatians 4:4-6) But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS

As David sings about this word recorded by Moses, he takes God's remembrance of our souls beyond our initial experience of his free, saving grace in Christ, and applies it to the wilderness wanderings of his people, as they made their way from Egypt to Canaan. As you know, Israel's experiences in the desert were typical of our pilgrimage through this hostile world of woe. The Lord's remembrance of them, was manifested in the daily supply of their every need.

- Sweetened Waters
- The Manna
- The Rock
- Protection
- Shoes and Clothes

Those things tell us of the rich provisions of God's boundless grace for us while we journey to our Home on High. True, our present estate, is but a lowly one. Yet, the Lord our God is ever mindful of us and richly provides for us, ever remembering his covenant (Rom. 8:28-32).

(Romans 8:28-32) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (31) What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? (32) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

We do not always dwell upon the mountain top. We are often in deep valleys. Bright and sunny days give place to dark and cloudy ones. Summer is followed by winter. Disappointments, losses, afflictions, bereavements come our way, and we were brought low. Frequently, just when we most need the comfort of friends, they fail us. Those we count on to help, often forget us. But, even then, there our great God and Savior remembers us and shows himself to be "the same yesterday and today and forever." Truly, "his mercy endureth forever" (1 Chron. 16:34)

(1 Chronicles 16:34) O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

<u>How often we forget him</u>! How often our hearts turn cold and hard, and we forget our first love! How low our estate is then! Yet, he remembers his covenant, and comes to us in grace, awaking our hearts and causing us to seek him anew with all our hearts (Song 5:1-7).

(Song of Songs 5:1-7) I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. (2) I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. (3) I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have

washed my feet; how shall I defile them? (4) My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. (5) I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. (6) I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. (7) The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

(Psalm 23:3) "He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (23:3).

In the hour of death, we may be in a very low estate. When this heart and flesh shall fail, when the cold sweat of death is on our brow, our "estate" may be low. But then the Lord God shall still remember his covenant and remember us, for "his mercy endureth for ever." It has often been said, "Man's extremity is but God's opportunity." His strength is made perfect in our weakness. In that hour, our God will remember his covenant, though we may forget, and remember us, though we may forget him. He will make good his promises (Isa. 41:10; 43:1-7; 25:9).

(Isaiah 41:10) Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

(Isaiah 43:1-7) But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; (6) I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; (7) Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

(Isaiah 25:9) And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

"God remembered his covenant." — Surely, this will furnish us with suitable words to express our thanksgiving when we are at Home, present with the Lord. How we shall then praise him for his covenant faithfulness, his matchless grace, and his loving kindness, for having "remembered us in our low estate!" Then shall we know, even as we are known. Our very memories will be renewed, perfected, and we shall remember all the way the Lord our God has led us (Deut. 8:2),

recalling with gratitude and joy his faithful remembrance of our souls, acknowledging with adoration that "His mercy endureth for ever."

(Deuteronomy 8:2) And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

He remembers his covenant, and remembers us, because "his mercy endureth forever!"

(Psalms 136:23-24) Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: (24) And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

(Psalms 136:26) O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Amen.