SBC Communion Service Dr. Rick Griffith

28 July 2000 Mini-Message

NIV 10 Minutes

**Don’t Forget!**

Title

***Leviticus 23***

**Topic:** Communion

**Subject:** How can we remember God’s provisions with thankful hearts?

**Complement:** This Lord’s Supper chapel is our corporate time set aside so we won’t forget God’s greatest provision.

**Purpose:** The listeners will prayerfully reflect upon this first week of class by being brought to Calvary.

# Introduction

### [Interest: We all are forgetful people.]

#### A man once called a university and asked for the address of Albert Einstein, to which the secretary responded, “I’m sorry, sir, we can’t give out the addresses of our teachers for security reasons.” She heard the embarrassed caller shuffle around uncomfortably and then admit, “Well, this is Dr. Einstein—and I forgot how to get home!” It gives me comfort to know that even Einstein forgot things—and by the look of his pictures, it looks like this genius even regularly forgot to comb his hair!

Einstein

#### We all are forgetful people—especially us “absent minded professors.” One of our lecturers here a few years back forgot to attend a particular Friday class session many times when the students had to fish him out of the office. Finally he promised the class, “OK, if I ever forget one more time I’ll take you all to pizza!” I hear that the pizza tasted really good!

Profs

### Need: Haven’t you sometimes even forgotten important things?

#### Surely you forget birthdays and anniversaries. This happens so much in my family that my brother compiled a list of everyone’s special days and distributed it to each family. Now my problem is forgetting to look at the list!

#### Or have you ever told a friend, “I’ll pray for you” then the next time you see him you remember you forgot to pray? So you shoot up a quicky and say, “Why, hi! I was just praying for you!”

### But sometimes we forget to thank God for even the most incredible provision of our lives—the day we trusted Christ and received forgiveness.

#### That’s why the psalmist said, “Restore to me the joy of my salvation.”

#### Often the very regularity of God’s blessings causes us to forget to thank Him.

### Subject: How can we remember God’s provisions with thankful hearts? Today’s Old Testament text will give us a handle on this issue.

Subject

### Israel had the same problem of forgetfulness as us, so…

# I. Israel regularly remembered God’s provisions by rest and gathering together (Lev. 23).

MP

[Jewish community celebrations when they stopped all work helped them recall God’s gifts.]

## God told them to obey His feasts by assembly, which assumes rest (vv. 1-2).

Don’t work

### They had to set aside their work.

### There was accountability since everyone rested together and gathered in an assembly.

## They remembered His provisions *weekly* by resting and gathering on the Sabbath (v. 3).

Sabbath

## They remembered His provisions *throughout the year* by rest and celebrations (vv. 4-44).

Calendar

### Passover recalled their redemption from Egypt (4-8).

### The Feasts of Firstfruits and Weeks reminded them of God’s provision of food (9-22).

### Trumpets called the people to repentance in preparation for the day of Atonement when God provided cleansing from their sins (23-32).

### Tabernacles looked back on how God had given them rest rather than living in booths as they did in the wilderness (33-44).

(They recalled political [4-8], material [9-22], and spiritual blessings [23-44]. We should too!)

# II. We should remember God’s provisions through times of corporate rest and celebration.

MP

[Community gatherings when we set aside our studies help us remember God’s provisions.]

## At SBC we recall His provisions weekly by resting and gathering together each Thursday.

### I remember as a student bringing my Greek cards with me wherever I went—waiting in line at the shopping centre, walking between classes—even while driving my car! In fact, I learned four languages mostly in my car—Greek, Hebrew, French, and German.

### And when I came to chapel, pulling out those cards was such a temptation.

### But chapel is a time to get away from studies and refocus on who this God is that I’m studying about.

## At SBC we also remember His provisions during the year by annual events of corporate rest and celebration.

### These include the Day of Prayer, Pastoral Care Group Retreat, Mission Week, Maundy Thursday, and even Homecoming.

### Spiritual Emphasis Week also fits into this annual cycle by starting off our year right.

### And this week traditionally ends with a Communion Service—today.

(Why? Because…)

# Conclusion

### This Lord’s Supper chapel is our corporate time set aside so we won’t forget God’s greatest provision (MI).

MI

### That provision was the One who called Himself the Bread of Life. As we move into this time of remembrance, let’s sing *Break Now the Bread of Life* (#243).

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

# Questions

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

Text

# Possible Illustrations

### Text

**Don’t Forget!**

***Leviticus 23***

**Exegetical Outline**

***Exegetical Idea:* The manner in which Israel celebrated appointed feasts was by canceling work and gathering in sacred assemblies.**

Alternate: The manner in which Israel worshiped in appointed feasts

Prologue: Israel’s worship was both individual and corporate. Leviticus 1—7 concerns the individual worshiper. Leviticus 23 highlights the corporate side. It concerns not so much the *meaning* of Israel’s feasts (explained elsewhere in the Pentateuch) but the *manner* in which they are to be celebrated, that is, by offerings, sacred assembly and rest at appointed times (vv. 1-2).

# I. The manner in which Israel celebrated the Sabbath was by canceling work and gathering in sacred assemblies (v. 3).

# II. The manner in which Israel celebrated feasts of the first month was by canceling work and presenting offerings in sacred assemblies (vv. 4-8).

## Passover began annual sacred assemblies on the fourteenth day of the first month (vv. 4-5).

## The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted seven days after Passover and both began and concluded with days of rest and presenting offerings in two sacred assemblies (vv. 6-8).

# III. The manner in which Israel celebrated feasts associated with the harvest was by canceling work and presenting offerings in sacred assemblies (vv. 9-22).

## The Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated by abstention from eating grain products until the presentation of the first harvested sheaf and animal offerings (vv. 9-14). [no convocation]

## The Feast of Weeks was celebrated by grain and animal offerings and abstention from work in a sacred assembly (vv. 15-22).

# IV. The manner in which Israel celebrated feasts of the seventh month was by canceling work and presenting offerings in sacred assemblies (vv. 23-44).

## The Feast of Trumpets was celebrated by rest, sacred assembly, and offerings (vv. 23-25).

## The Day of Atonement was observed by self-denial (fasting?—Isa. 58:3-5), rest, and sacred assembly (vv. 26-32).

## The Feast of Tabernacles included living in booths and presenting offerings for seven days and both began and concluded with days of rest and sacred assembly (vv. 33-44).

**Homiletical Outline** (simple inductive)

# Introduction

### We tend to forget the good things God has done for us in the past and present (examples).

### Subject: How can we remember God’s provisions with thankful hearts?

# I. Israel regularly remembered God’s provisions by rest and gathering together (Lev. 23).

## God told them to obey His feasts by assembly, which assumes rest (vv. 1-2).

## They remembered His provisions *weekly* by resting and gathering on the Sabbath (v. 3).

## They remembered His provisions *throughout the year* by rest and celebrations (vv. 4-44).

(They remembered political [vv. 4-8], material [vv. 9-22], and spiritual blessings [vv. 23-44]. We must do the same!)

# II. We should remember God’s provisions through times of corporate rest and celebration.

## At SBC we remember His provisions weekly by resting and gathering together every Thursday.

## At SBC we remember His provisions during the year by annual events of corporate rest and celebration.

# Conclusion

### This Lord’s Supper chapel is our corporate time set aside so we won’t forget God’s greatest provision (MI).

### *Break Now the Bread of Life* (#243).