



Does God Have a Memory Loss?

“He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven.” (Ephesians 1:7, NLT)

Do you get excited when you begin to understand something, which up until that time was a puzzle, secret or mystery to you? Maybe you did not know how to solve a difficult math problem, use a computer or become a Christian. The New Testament Christians lived in exciting times because they now understood so many mysteries about Jesus that were prophesied in the Old Testament – truths which the Old Testament prophets had searched for with great care to understand. Even the angels longed to look into these things! However, these truths, which were a mystery or secret, were unknown until Jesus died, resurrected and the Holy Spirit came to live in each believer. (1 Peter 1:10-12) The apostle Paul told the Corinthians, *“His Spirit searches out everything and shows us even God’s deep secrets.”* (1 Corinthians 2:9-10, NLT) Could anything be more exciting?

The forgetting of sin

One of the first secrets God wants you to know concerns your sins. Have you ever disobeyed your parents or hurt someone and then said, “I’m sorry, will you forgive me?” Usually they reply, “Sure, its okay.” Even though they forgive you, do you think they really forget? Probably not! Listen to what God says, *“And I will forgive their wrongdoing, and I will never again remember their sins.”* (Hebrews 8:12, NLT) In the Greek language, “never again remember,” means “never to call to mind, to recall, or to think about it again.” Never! What undeserved favor (grace) and love!

Think what this means to you. When you agreed with God that you were a sinner, believed in Jesus as your Savior and Lord and invited him into your life, he forgave all your sins – past, present and future. ALL! He dropped all charges against you. In his eyes, it is ***just as if you had never sinned.*** Never again will he recall or think about them. You may suffer discipline or natural consequences for sins committed in the past or future, but God does not punish you for them. Why? Because when Jesus died on the cross, he took your punishment. He made the final sacrifice!

The new accounting system

Does that mean that God has a memory loss? No, because he is ALL Knowing – he knows everything. ***He simply chooses not to remember your sins.*** However, he does much more than that for you. The Bible explains his wonderful plan by a legal

accounting term: **imputation**. To impute means, “to set something to one’s account or record.” If you are a believer, based on your faith in Jesus Christ, God the Father takes the sins off your record and imputes (credits) them to the account of the Lord Jesus Christ. Awesome! *“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.”* (2 Corinthians 5:21, NLT). At the cross, God treated Jesus as though he had committed your sins even though he was perfect. Imagine the pain and suffering he took for you!

The great exchange

Based on your belief, God accepts you into his family. He treats you as though you are as righteous or perfect as Jesus is. This process he calls **justification** (just as if you have never sinned). You might call this THE GREAT EXCHANGE. He takes your sin, and you take his righteousness! You are made right with God. What an incredible bargain! When God looks at you, he sees you clean and whole. He never thinks about your old sin-packed past. Think what this means. Not only did Jesus give you a new life; **he gave you a new past!** You are no longer an enemy, but a friend. Instead of hostility, there is love, acceptance and sweet fellowship. As long as you live in your flesh (body), you can still sin. When you do, be quick to confess your sin. Accept his forgiveness, and restore fellowship with Jesus. (1 John 1:8-10)

The final sacrifice

The Old Testament gives an interesting picture of what Jesus did for you. The priests had to offer animal sacrifices repeatedly for sins year after year, but the blood of the bulls and goats only covered the sins of breaking the law, external rules and regulations. The sacrifices were temporary until Jesus came. They illustrated how Jesus would shed his blood as a sacrifice for all sins, cleansing our hearts once for all. *“For by that one offering he perfected forever all those whom he is making holy.”* (Hebrews 10:14, NLT)

When Jesus made the final sacrifice and ascended to heaven, he sat down at the place of highest honor at God’s right hand. Why is this important? In Old Testament times, there were no chairs in the temple. The priests could never sit down because they continuously had to keep offering sacrifices that could never take away sins. When Jesus sacrificed his life on the cross, he said, “It is finished!” Sitting down showed that God accepted his final sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Hebrews 10:12) What a Savior!

The gift of forgiveness

Sometimes a believer worries that he or she has committed a sin that God won’t forgive. Then you should know about Saul, the Christ-hater. Before he became a Christian, he harassed, persecuted, imprisoned and even killed Christians. Then on his way to Damascus to arrest more Christians, he met the resurrected, ascended (to heaven) Jesus. Suddenly, a brilliant light from heaven beamed upon him. Falling to the ground, he heard a voice, *“Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?”* When he asked, *“Who are you, sir?”* The voice replied, *“I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!”* (Acts 9:3-5, NLT)

Then Saul knew how wrong he had been. Jesus was the true Messiah! Can you imagine how awful he must have felt about what he had done? However, Saul (later called Paul) repented and accepted God's gift of forgiveness. Later, he said, "I have decided to forget the past and look to the future." (Philippians 3:13)

Do you still have nagging doubts about forgiveness of your past? Do you have memories of emotionally damaging experiences that cause guilty feelings, low self-esteem or feelings of rejection? If your thoughts continue to trouble you, please talk to a Christian counselor or mature Christian. You may need to forgive someone or make restitution. God wants you free. Accept God's truths by faith, and he will begin healing your emotions and set you free from the past. Believe his promises, bring out the fireworks and celebrate! You have a new identity. Live like the new you!

Attitude Check:

- How does your attitude toward past sins compare with God's attitude?

Explore:

- Read "Forgiveness" (in front of the *Student New Testament*.) Daily ask the Holy Spirit to reveal sins you need to confess. Depend on the Holy Spirit's power to obey.
- Write in your journal the truths you have learned.

Talking with God:

- Father, thank you for forgiving ALL my sins, for clothing me with Christ's goodness and perfection, and accepting me as your friend.