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## ***Does God really Forgive and Forget?***

*"Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more"*  
(Hebrews 10: 17\*)

The man was seated with Bible in hand. The Holy Spirit caused Him to stop and think about the words he was reading. He had just read the great news that God entered into a new agreement with the people to forgive sin.

As he thought, the man remembered hearing that all men have sinned. He recalled that no human can live a sinless life. He even remembered the preacher saying one time that if we say we have no sin, we make God a liar! How then, could he or anyone get God's forgiveness for the sin that kept coming back to mind?

God had brought about *"a new and living way"* which He inaugurated for us through the veil" (Hebrews 10: 20\*).



The old way to seek forgiveness for shortcomings was replaced. The need to kill innocent animals was forever changed. There was a living way, a new arrangement for man to be in harmony with God!

He urges us to, *“draw near with a sincere heart in assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience”* (Hebrews 10: 22 \*) God invites us to come to Him and get the relief we all need to get our hearts, *right!* It takes a humble heart and determination to get ourselves right with God.

Can we *really* expect Almighty God to forgive the thing that we did, intentionally or otherwise? When our sins are forgiven, are they also forgotten? We are sharing an answer from God’s Word. God does *“forgive and forget.”* However, we must do our part.

Perhaps one of the most quoted scriptures is, *“And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors”* (Matthew 6:12 \*). Jesus tells us to forgive the thing done to us, before God will forgive and forget our own debt. As we pray the Lord’s Prayer, do we really think about what we are asking God to do?

When Jesus was talking with his disciples, he told them, *“If. Therefore, you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering”* (Matthew 5:23-24 \*). He is telling us that our offering is important, but just as important is a right relationship with our fellow believer!



The idea of holding on to a grudge for something done to us; a misspoken word, a bad idea, a good idea spoken at a wrong time, or a hundred other real or imagined debts, doesn’t seem to agree with God’s Word.

If we are of a sincere heart, we need to get it out of our system for the last time and ask His forgiveness. Thank God, the way to His forgiveness for our debt is always open. By the same way God reminds us of our obligation to settle things with our fellow man.

God can help us *“forgive and forget”* the others’ debt. Jesus told his disciples, *“And if your brother sins (against you), go and reprove him in private (between you and him alone); if he listens to you, you have won your brother.”* (Matthew 18:15 \*)

Think of the heartache that could be avoided if we were to follow this God's way! God makes things so simple, but we sometimes make them difficult. Do we bring about suffering because of our ignorance or our unwillingness to do it God's way?

Larry is really disturbed by what Ralph is doing. What good does it do for Larry to tell Sam about it? Now Larry has involved Sam. What should Sam do?

Does Sam go back to Ralph or does Sam tell Phil? Phil wisely lets Ralph know that he has offended Larry. Now Ralph has a decision to make.

Does Ralph let his human side respond in anger? Ralph wishes that Larry would have come to him directly. Going further, the thing becomes so much of a burden that it affects the relationship with his wife and family. Ralph's wife knows something is 'bugging' him. Ralph says "no, everything is fine" Of course; Ralph knows in his heart that everything is not fine!

Ralph, after thinking it over, takes it to his friend (Jesus) on his knees and seeks God's help in getting the issue resolved. Ralph wants things right with all others.

Can we see how ignorance of God's way or refusal to do it His way, involves others so quickly? It must hurt God as people reject His ways and bring needless sorrow to themselves and others.



The One Who gave His life that we may come under the new arrangement urges us to think and then take time to learn of His ways. God will "*forgive and forget!*"

Perhaps we are familiar with the instruction that Jesus shared with Peter, "*Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?*" (Matthew 18:21 \*) Jesus was quick to answer, "*I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.*" (Matthew 18:22 \*)

How many times has Almighty God forgiven us? If God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us, how can we hold evil thoughts in our heart toward others? God, help us get rid of our unforgiving spirit!

*"Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you...So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."* (Matthew 18:33,35 \*)

Even when we were dead in sin and did not care, God cared about us! He loves us and *"forgives and forgets"* the sin when we follow His Word.

God knew that we would be the sinner that we are. By His grace alone, He saved us. We didn't deserve it; there is no way that we can ever deserve it. All we can do is thank God and begin to show our thanks by doing things His way for the number of days that we have left here on Earth.

Do we have doubts about His ability to forgive our sin? *"If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us"* (1 John 1:8-10 \*).

Once we admit, first to ourselves, that we have sinned, and then go to God and confess those sins, does He forgive? Yes, He does. After we confess our faults and then do our best to get the matter settled with God and the one to whom we owe a debt, Yes, He also forgets. With God, it is forever settled; He will never bring it back to haunt us.

*"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins"* (Isaiah 43:25 \*). Remember that! Thank God for his promise to *"forgive and forget."*

Comments by Harry Bain

\* (New American Standard Bible; i.e., NASB)\*