

When Jesus told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven<sup>1</sup>, this brought forth a storm of protest. And then Jesus asked the crucial question: “Is it easier to forgive sins or heal this man?” Before anyone answered this, Jesus went ahead and healed the man.

His adversaries had many issues, but not the least of these would be that throughout their history, atonement was accomplished through the shedding of blood<sup>2</sup>. Forgiveness was essentially pushed ahead each year at the Day of Atonement<sup>3</sup>. For this Teacher to proclaim this was blasphemy in their eyes.

Jesus proclaimed the forgiveness of sins several times during their ministry, and in each instance this was done before His own blood had been shed. He could only announce this in His view of the upcoming crucifixion, and the blood that would be shed in His death. He had commitment and confidence in the fact that His shed blood would accomplish this atonement once and for all<sup>4</sup>, as the blood of animals was not sufficient to provide forgiveness of our sins<sup>5</sup>. Because He pre-existed the creation of the universe<sup>6</sup>, He could consider the act of His crucifixion to have covered all of time, before and after the event on earth.

The Spirit revealed to us later the analogy of a last will and testament<sup>7</sup>, where those in a close relationship to the testator will inherit a portion of the estate as one of the testator's family. So when Christ told people that their sins were forgiven, He was putting that man's name in the will, which would take effect at His death. Our benefits will be even greater because of the power of the resurrection of Christ.

The blood of Christ is presented one time in the Most Holy Place so that we also can enter<sup>8</sup>. It introduces a new covenant with us, which will be written into our hearts and souls and the very fiber of our being<sup>9</sup>. Because of its cleansing power we can come into the presence of God with confidence<sup>10</sup>.

1. Luke 5:18-26.
2. “For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make **atonement** for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes **atonement** for one’s life.” Leviticus 17:11 and “In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Hebrews 9:22.
3. “But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.” Hebrews 10:3.
4. “Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first **for** his own sins, and then **for** the sins of the people. He sacrificed **for** their sins **once for all** when he offered himself.” Hebrews 7:27.
5. “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4.
6. John 1:1-3.
7. Hebrews 9:15-18.
8. Hebrews 9:12, 25.
9. Hebrews 10:16.
10. Hebrews 10:19.