

## Yom Kippur: Yeshua Already Paid for That

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*"...Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who trespass against us."* (Matt. 6:12)

*"...Forgive, and you will be forgiven."* (Luke 6:37)

**Forgiveness:** Relinquishing our desire to punish another for their offenses. (Dr. Jerry Cook)

**Easy concept, hard to apply.** But Yom Kippur is all about forgiveness - God's forgiveness of man, and man's forgiveness of others. Yom Kippur (translated the Day of Atonements) is the sixth in the seven Biblical Feasts. It commemorates God's annual forgiveness of the Israelites as a nation and God's forgiveness of us through Yeshua's death. Likewise, it's a time when we are to forgive others.

But in our daily walk with God, forgiveness is a frequent event offered as we encounter offenses, an attitude really. We don't collect up our sins for a year and bring them to the altar on Yom Kippur. And neither did the Israelites. That was never the intention of Yom Kippur. It's a time to reflect with complete honesty on those areas where sin hides, the ones we've put aside to deal with later or not deal with. A time to wipe the slate clean. A time to repent for our own offenses and forgive others theirs.

I believed I was good at forgiving. I'm not easily offended, I'm empathetic with others' actions even if I don't agree with them, I don't hold grudges, and I keep "short accounts." But one year as the Day of Atonement approached, I had to admit that I had been dragging around a grudge against one person for nearly the whole year. I had seen my attitude grow colder and colder and although I repeatedly tried, I had not been able to truly forgive. I was still blaming, avoiding, resenting and hardening my heart toward the person. I was a long way from honestly loving the person.

How could I come to the Day of Atonement – the day God forgave my sin while I was yet a sinner – with this unforgiveness in my own heart? This was it, this had to be dealt with once and for all – just as Yeshua's blood applied to me once and for all.

But how? What more could I do that I hadn't already tried? The person committed the offense against me, there was no denying that. No amount of forgiveness could change that fact or the resulting consequences. No matter what I did or told myself in my attempts to forgive, I always came back to this.

### **But, the answer was easier than I thought:**

The cross. I had heard the admonition a hundred times: Yeshua forgave you at the cross, you need to forgive others. This time was different.

I had often wondered why Yeshua's death had to be so drawn out and excruciating. I understand why He had to die for the sin of mankind, but why so torturously? It wasn't just the Roman way. Even the actual criminals crucified beside Him didn't endure what He did – flogging with a barbed whip, carrying His own cross on His back of raw and bleeding flesh, the spitting, the piercing, the crown of thorns. Was it all really necessary to fulfill the penalty of sin?

As I pondered the hideous scene of Yeshua's crucifixion, the agonizing pain, the humiliation and disgrace in light of the sins committed against me, suddenly true forgiveness seemed not only possible, but inescapable, even trite. Was Yeshua's torture, pain and degradation not enough for me? What would I possibly need to add to sufficiently punish an offense?

The fact is, Yeshua's heartbreaking death more than covered not only our own sin, but any sin that could be committed against us. Possibly this is why it was so horrendous, so that we are fully satisfied that someone has truly paid for all sins, no matter how hurtful or damaging they are. If Yeshua has already taken more than the punishment I think is warranted for the offense against me, why would I need to continue holding that over the person?

This realization not only released me from the need to harbor the offense, but freed me up to resume truly loving the person. When I loved her I was loving Yeshua, thanking Him for His sacrifice and acknowledging that His blood is sufficient for me. That's why He paid the price so completely for our sin – because of His love for us, for the person that offended us and so that we wouldn't have to worry about revenge, grudges or others getting what we think they deserve. He's paid for all of that.

### **What a relief!**

This Yom Kippur, consider those people you've not been able to forgive. Consider Yeshua's grueling punishment. Then consider truly repenting once and for all as an offering to God on His special holy day, The Day of Atonement.