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the Fall Feasts of Israel
Yom Kippur
...atonement or forgiveness?
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a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

"On exactly the tenth day of the seventh month is **the day of atonement**; it shall be a holy convocation for you in which you shall humble yourselves and present an offering by fire to YHVH. You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before YHVH, your Elohim." Leviticus 23:27-28

"YHVH passed before him and proclaimed, 'YaHoVeH, YaHoVeH, an Elohim merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands and **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin**'..." Exodus 34:6-7



...is actually "Yom haKippurim"

The Feast Day of Yom Kippur is popularly celebrated with religious rituals that has at its root the forgiveness of sin which most connect to some sort of sacrifice depending on the religion embraced. But, the actual scriptural sin sacrifice that **IS** Yom haKippurim (plural - the singular Yom Kippur never occurs in scripture) is not sacrificed but rather, sent away into the wilderness tied around the neck of **a goat** (**click on highlighted words to view content**) - not a lamb. The animals that WERE sacrificed are a bullock and another goat - not a lamb. It is their blood that is used to wash away what defilement is brought into the Temple. But notice how **Leviticus 16:16** says that it is the Temple that is cleaned - not what behavioral choices were made to cause darkness to enter and defile **the Temple**. Our behavioral sins create the need for wiping away impurities, but the wiping away action doesn't remove the choices made by an individual. Blood wipes away the pollution so that, after a change of direction in our lives (the true definition of **repentance**), we may enter into the **echad** of YHVH's Presence. **Blood cleans** the Temple by removing the impurity so that **we can be at one** with the Nature of Spirit. Blood does not "save" us. It does not provide us with "forgiveness". It simply cleans the abode from previous defilement that Spirit might **abide there**. Yeshua's atonement made the Temple clean, a fit habitat for His Father among the Body of Yeshua today. If we **remain clean** by keeping His Words, then that corner of the Temple that is our responsibility to oversee remains clean.

If one believes that a blood sacrifice was necessary before YHVH would forgive sin, then even one example where YHVH forgave sin without a blood sacrifice would prove that this idea is not scriptural. There are many such examples in scripture, but the most compelling is found in the Book of Leviticus. The reason this is so interesting is that it comes right in the middle of the discussion of sin sacrifices which are found in the first chapters. **Leviticus 5:11-13** states, "If, however, he cannot afford two doves or two young pigeons, he is to bring as an offering for his sin a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering." So here, right in the midst of the instructions concerning the sacrifices for sin, scripture tells us we do not need any blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin - thus proving that the idea that one needs a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin is not scriptural. One can also see that one does not need a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins in the Book of **Jonah 3:10**. There, scripture states that YHVH forgave because He simply saw the works of the people of Nineveh. Specifically, it says that the works YHVH saw were that they stopped doing evil. They repented, sending the evil from their midst and so YHVH forgave them. There are plenty of other examples, so the idea that one needs a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins is just - not scriptural. Exploring the issue of the need for a human sacrifice to forgive sin, then, particularly causes an even more serious conflict between Christian theology (which Messianic Judaism is keen to incorporate) and the actual words of scripture. We must constantly remind ourselves that Words Mean Things. It can not be stated enough that all of the books of scripture were written by Hebrews out of a Hebrew mindset

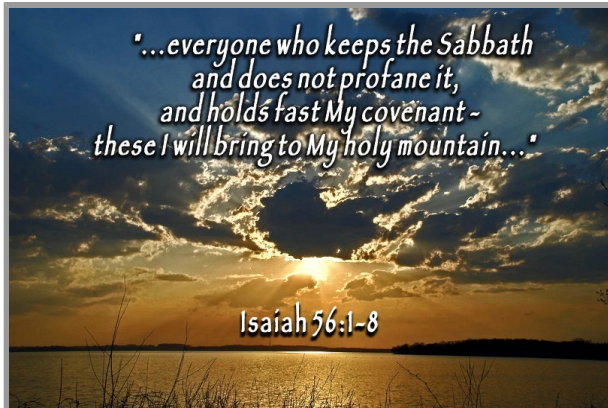
influenced by a Hebrew culture that produced a uniquely Hebrew perspective being conveyed primarily to a Hebrew audience which understood the nuances of the Hebrew language. To properly understand what these words mean necessitates viewing them from the same Hebrew perspective they were written in - not our current English culture. Yeshua's death on the cross had nothing in common with any sacrifices mentioned in Torah - which required the administration of a Levitical priest made upon an altar within the confines of a temple or tabernacle and never involved human sacrifice. The human Yeshua was killed alone (unattended by any priest) on a cross (which scripture has never considered to be an altar) **Outside the Camp**.

*"And it shall be a statute to you forever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, **you shall afflict your soul**. For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before YHVH from all your sins. It is a Sabbath of solemn rest to you, and **you shall afflict your soul**; it is a statute forever." Leviticus 16:29-31*

The Hebrew phrase '**anah nephesh**' translated as the English "afflicting the soul" appears in a number of scriptural passages from which it is clear that this expression signifies fasting, i.e., **Psalms 35:13, Ezra 8:21**. It should also be pointed out that one of the meanings of the Hebrew word *nephesh*, commonly translated as "soul" is translated in various scriptures as the English "appetite", i.e., **Proverbs 23:2, Ecclesiastes 6:7**. So, the expression "to afflict your *nephesh*" can also be translated as "to afflict your appetite", hence the meaning "to fast." Of course, your "appetite" can include all manner of voraciousness besides a craving for food - such as power or any type of unflattering greediness. How many of us today are hiding behind, using our "appetites" as an excuse for not keeping His Words? In the ritualistic tradition of Judaism, to fast means to refrain from eating or drinking throughout the entire period of the fast but also includes crying, donning sackcloth and putting dust or ashes on the head, prayer and repentance. In addition to these traditional aspects of fasting, work of any form is forbidden on the Day of Atonement, as is having **a fire burning or cooking food**. But what the traditional view seems to overlook is what YHVH considers to be what *He* considers to be a proper fast - "...to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?" (**Isaiah 58:1-12**). These elements are exactly what Yeshua's example of life taught us how to live. These words from Isaiah are essential in understanding what constitutes a fast - and not just one day out of the year but consistently.

In Christian terms, the innocent Lamb is slain as a substitutionary sacrifice - as atonement for the sins of the sinner in place of the sinner himself being sacrificed. It is assumed that the universal "Christ" is based on the sacrificial system of the Torah who became the Lamb for mankind, once for all, covering their sin with His Blood and providing forgiveness for those sins because of the cross - regardless of their behavior. But, there is no foundation for this premise anywhere in scripture - it is only found in Christian religious theology predisposed to an **agenda of men** not familiar with the Hebrew perspective and then read back into as an overlay upon existing scripture. Interestingly, this is simply a twist on the same premise the Pharisees and Sadducees used in Yeshua's day to excuse their behavior because they felt their **connected lineage to Abraham** absolved them of all sin. Christianity has embraced this same religious spirit, only with a **different mask**. *In fact*, Torah provides many ways to forgive sin apart from the shedding of blood because forgiveness is part of the **Nature of YHVH**. The purpose of Torah is to show us how to become partakers of the divine nature! So, does the sacrifice of the "Christ" rise to this occasion of scriptural sacrifice? This might come as a disappointment to many but, no - it does not. As it was with our study of **the Beatitudes**, here is where an understanding of why these sacrifices were instituted becomes critical in our comprehension of the Hebraic meaning of the words in the Messianic Writings. First, as the verses from **Luke 1:68-69, Matthew 15:24** and **Acts 5:30-31** tell us, Yeshua was raised up to enable the family of YHVH, *Israel*, and those adopted into her to be restored - **not the world**. Secondly, the *Pesach* (Passover) Lamb of the Torah portrayed as "the Christ" was not a sin sacrifice nor does it meet any of the Levitical requirements of a sacrifice - it was not slain in the Temple on an altar attended to by Priests, but was slain in individual homes that the **specter of death** of the firstborn would pass over those abiding inside. Thirdly, as mentioned previously - Torah sacrifices never involved human sacrifice.

"For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them, I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I gave them this command: **Obey me**, and I will be your Elohim and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I instruct you that it may go well with you." Jeremiah 7:22-23



"...everyone who keeps the Sabbath
and does not profane it,
and holds fast My covenant -
these I will bring to My holy mountain..."

Isaiah 56:1-8

In 1Kings 8, King Solomon dedicates the only Temple in the world to the One True Elohim of Israel. It was in this Temple that sacrifices were to take place. Yet at the dedication of this very Temple, Solomon states that one need only pray to YHVH for forgiveness after repenting and YHVH would forgive (**1Kings 8:38-39**). Non-ethnic Hebrews ("foreigners") coming as converts to YHVH ("for His Name's sake") were also to pray directly to YHVH for the forgiveness of their sins without the need of a sacrifice (**1Kings 8:41-43**). Notice here that YHVH allowed the "foreigners" to pray directly to Him, without the need of an atonement - also shown in the Book of **Jonah** with the Assyrian people of Nineveh. YHVH has never excluded anyone from Him who will keep His Words. All YHVH asks

for is a contrite heart and the willingness to follow **His Instructions** (read how **I Am Not A Sinner**).

"Take courage, my son, your sins **are forgiven**." Matthew 9:2

When Yeshua forgives this man, he proclaims that he has the authority to do so - taking on the **performative function** of YHVH. Most read this as evidence of His **divinity**. But perhaps we need to read it as more than that. Perhaps we need to see that YHVH can forgive from grace alone. This paralyzed man does not ask for forgiveness. All he does is demonstrate faith - which is a reliance on Yeshua's words. He simply acts in a way that exhibits his commitment (the definition of repentance). This challenges the Christian view of the necessary sacrifice of Yeshua for the forgiveness of sin. Perhaps we need to rethink the doctrine so that it incorporates the ability of YHVH to forgive simply because He chooses to. Perhaps forgiveness isn't quite as cut-and-dried as we thought. Perhaps there is a lot more going on here than our feeble attempts to define forgiveness and redemption. Did you notice in reading this passage from Matthew 9 that there is no atonement required for forgiving these sins? Most of our theological understanding about forgiveness requires some kind of atonement. The rabbinic religion of Judaism looks toward the sacrifices while the religion of Christian theology looks toward the sacrificial crucifixion for absolution. But here in Matthew 9, Yeshua forgives without any such requirement. This isn't the only time atonement seems to be missing (consider **the thief on the cross**). Atonement is not appeasement. Appeasement is demanded by pagan deities, not by YHVH. Why? Because appeasement implies that the deity is in a state of wrath or anger and that some human requirement is needed to defer that anger. Appeasement suggests that human beings are able, through their own efforts, to assuage the anger of the gods (the premise most religious prayer is conducted in even today). But the Hebrew view begins from an entirely different perspective. YHVH isn't angry at His People - He is brokenhearted. YHVH loves His creation. Rebellion produces a broken relationship that He is anxious to restore. Of course, if all His efforts fail, the moral integrity of the creation calls for consequences - but this is not His beginning state. That's why the Hebrew verb **kippur**, "...never refers to propitiation of God. Even when a human person is the subject of the action, kippur denotes the action of a substitutionary mediator, effecting forgiveness of sin." (Lang, *kippur*, TDOT, Vol. 7, p. 294) Does this now raise some question about the required connection between forgiveness and atonement (redemption)? Perhaps our understanding of forgiveness is too constrained by theological requirements. Perhaps forgiveness has elements we can't easily absorb.

So, how is scriptural atonement made? Someone acts as a mediator, standing **between** the offender and the offended. Someone offers payment on behalf of the offender in order to restore the relationship with the offended. In most of the sacrificial settings, a priest acts as the mediator. The offering becomes the payment required by the offended party in order to heal the broken relationship. The Torah spells out in great detail exactly what is required to restore such broken relationships. The requirement implies a legal setting much like a court of law where certain restitution must be met to satisfy the judgment. This works perfectly when the offenses concern interactions between human beings (for example, when a man steals someone's property) then atonement is the payment of the penalty. But what happens when the offended party is YHVH Himself? What happens when my sin breaks relationship with Him? How will I atone for that? I am the offender. I am the one who now **inhabits darkness** because of my behavior. I can't come to the offended one, YHVH - the most brilliant of Light, on my own because I am the one who broke the relationship. I need a mediator. If the sacrifice of *Yeshua haMashiach* (the Messiah *of Israel*), as we have just seen, is not for the forgiveness of sin - then what was it for? And who was it paid to? His was a willing surrender of His Pure Blood of obedience to His Father's Plan and Purpose from the beginning as a substitute for the corrupted blood of disobedience to the Father's Plan which had been passed down to the subsequent generations of YHVH's Family - outlined in **the Need for Atonement**. As Israel's Kinsman Redeemer, Yeshua's life was as an exchange, the atonement paid once and for all of YHVH's Hebrew family (including those adopted into her) for restoration to their rightful place of intimacy with Him as it was experienced in the beginning in the Garden.



the Living Torah

*"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new **testament**, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first **testament**, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Hebrews 9:15*

When you read this verse in the modern translations of the NKJV, NASB, NIV or NRSV, you will find that the Greek **diatheke** (used in the LXX for the Hebrew **brith**) is correctly translated "covenant," not "testament." But simply because these translations have corrected the word does not mean they have corrected the 400 years of theological error that followed the King James error. We need some history to see just how influential this little mistake has been. When Jerome translated the LXX into the Latin Vulgate (the version used by the Roman Catholic Church for nearly 1500 years and subsequently passed on to Protestants), he correctly translated **Jeremiah 31:31**, using the Latin **foedus** for the Greek **diatheke** for the Hebrew **brith**. No problem here. But when he translated the citation of this same verse in **Hebrews 8:9**, he did not use the Latin **foedus** (or even the synonym **pactum**). Instead he used the Latin **testamentum**. With this mistake, he introduced the idea of a "new testament." Unfortunately, even though the word **diatheke** appears more than 300 times in the LXX, it never means "testament." Why is that? It is because a "testament" is the last declaration of a single person for the disposal of property upon **death**. A covenant, however, is a declaration of terms of a relationship between two parties **who are both alive**. A covenant has no authority once one of the parties dies (as Paul makes abundantly clear in Romans). But a testament does. It is a **death** statement, not a life statement. And since it takes effect only upon **the death** of its maker, it implies that what was formerly true is no longer the case. The person has died. By legitimizing the idea of a "testament," the Catholic translation allowed the former covenant of YHVH with Israel to be treated as if it no longer applied. The former agreement was over because one of the parties was dead. YHVH rejected Israel and offered a "new testament." Therefore, all of the previous requirements that kept the former agreement in place were now null and void. The death proclamation closed that "old" way of relating to YHVH. *Now the Christian faith could **rewrite** the agreement.* This mistake influences even the ASB translation of **Hebrews 9:15-16**. It suggests that the mediator must die because if there is a covenant, *"there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it."* But this isn't correct. It is not the **mediator** who dies because a covenant requires **living** parties. The sacrifice is not the death of one of the parties. It is the symbol of the commitment **between the parties**. The idea of a "testament" influences this incorrect translation. *"Hebrews 9:15 speaks of Messiah as the mediator of the new covenant. That means that Messiah is not the maker of the covenant. He is the **mediator** between the parties making the covenant. The parties of the New Covenant, as presented in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 8:8-12, are YHVH and the house of Israel (Daniel Gruber, Copernicus and the Jews, p. 45). This simple mistranslation, misrepresentation, and misunderstanding are foundational to virtually every Christian theology. It creates the*

illusion of a conflict within the Bible itself (Ibid., p. 47)." In the end there is no "new" testament and "old" testament. If fact, there is no "testament" at all. The Bible is about covenants, not testaments. The very existence of the page separating the Old Testament from the New Testament is a lie. Tear it out. It's one book about one YHVH and one people who have entered into living covenants together. Any theology that suggests otherwise is a consequence of its invention by Jerome. There has never been a "new" or second covenant. There has only ever been **One Covenant** made with the house of Israel and Yeshua restored it as YHVH promised He would in the Person of Israel's Messiah.

How, then, are the feasts contained in **the 613 ordinances** of the Torah to be kept? Are they to be observed by the legalistic tenets of the religion of Judaism? Or, should they be **elevated** to the higher level of Spirit Yeshua spoke of? I keep all the feasts - just not in the ritualistic manner to which most are accustomed. I worship the Father in Spirit **and** Truth - not substituting one for the other (**John 4:23-24**). He has become my *Teruah* because I am constantly listening for His trumpeting (voice); I don't live for a week out under the stars because YHVH has become my *Sukkot* where I constantly abide; He is my *Shavu'ot*, daily filling me with His Spirit; He has become my *Pesach* (redemption); He is my *Kippur* (atonement); etc. So, while acknowledging these events by my **elevation** of them in Spirit in this generation (as with **His Temple**.) and **not abolishing** them, I have found the ritualistic manner in which most celebrate the feasts to not be necessary.

*"But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, **that the whole nation of Israel should not perish.**' He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Yeshua would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of YHVH who are scattered abroad." John 11:49-52*

- The Fall Festivals Of Israel Series***
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Part Three: Sukkoth - Feast of Tabernacles



???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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