

## Revenge & Loving Our Enemies

*“You heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,’ but I say to you, do not resist the wicked. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. “And he who wishes to sue you and take away your inner garment, let him have your outer garment as well. “And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. “Give to him who asks of you, and from him who wishes to borrow from you, do not turn away.” Matthew 5:38-42*

Most can understand the concept of “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” because that seems like a fair exchange. But when you begin to talk about praying for your enemies and forgiving those who have done you wrong, that concept begins to raise eyebrows. To suggest that we need to hold back vengeance seems unbalanced and unjust and some people have a hard time accepting it.

The command in Leviticus 23:17-21 was there to give those who were executing judgment for the nation guidelines on how to exert fair retribution that matched the crime that was committed. The idea was to have just scales and balanced weights. It was not a directive for taking revenge on personal offenses. When we seek out vengeance on our own, we jump into the seat of the Judge and Creator. Praying for our enemies is a two-edged sword. It causes us to take a heavenly perspective that allows us to intercede for what YAH truly desires for the person. And in the process, it changes our heart to be more like YAH. It extinguishes the murderer in us that seeks to execute others for their transgressions against us. Yahusha gives us instruction:

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*"You heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those cursing you, do good to those hating you, and pray for those insulting you and persecuting you, **so that you become sons of your Father in the heavens. Because He makes His sun rise on the wicked and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.** "For if you love those loving you, what reward have you? Are the tax collectors not doing the same too? "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Are the tax collectors not doing so too? **"Therefore, be perfect, as your Father in the heavens is perfect."** Matthew 5:43-48*

Yahusha is pointing the remnant towards, being like the Father, being sons. Remember, Hebraically speaking, the son carries the seed of the house and expands the father's territory in the earth. The son is the image of the Father in the earth. So as we are restored we, like Yahusha, will walk as human examples of the Heavenly Father, demonstrating His character - that is our goal. If The Most High YAH still allows His sun to rise on the wicked and His breath to fill their lungs, until the appointed time of His vengeance, then who are we to insist on our own vengeance before then? The Most High allows time for people to experience His goodness and repent.

***"And יהושע (Yahusha) said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." Luke 23:34***

By loving those who flesh sees as unlovable we become witnesses of YAH's love in the earth, whether the love is received or rejected. We work with the Father so that all of mankind experiences His touch and is without excuse on His day of judgement. When we try to exert judgment, it is only for selfish means of vengeance, but YAH has an everlasting plan.

This is not at all to say that people should not face a court of law or a council to make retribution for their crimes committed in society. But when it comes to our personal grievances with our neighbors,

our call is to extend the love of YAH. Correction and justice are a part of that love, but wrath and vengeance belongs to YAH alone.

*Beloved, do not revenge yourselves, but give place to the wrath, for it has been written, "Vengeance is Mine, I shall repay," says יהוה. "Instead, if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink, for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:19-21*