

Commentary on Hebrews

Review

SIN OFFERING

Deals with the open violation by man of God's nature and government. Not a sweet savor type of offering but still most holy. Not a Free-Will Offering but prescribed by Law.

- I. Nature of the Offering
 - A. Not to the delight of God – since it spoke of man's rebellion
 - B. Not an expression of man's love, but required because of a lack of love, expressed in disobedience.
 - C. It grows out of the necessity imposed by God's holiness and His government by Law.
- II. SIN AND TRESPASS OFFERINGS WERE NEW LEGISLATION IN ISRAEL
 - A. Burnt, peace, meal and drink offerings were of ancient usage: Cain and Abel (Gen 4:3-4), Noah (Gen 8:20), Abraham (Gen 12:7-8; 13:18; 22:9, etc.),
 1. In all these expiation is secondary and other concepts assume primary consideration in each sacrifice
 2. Sins were atoned for in concession of grace by God because of devotion, love and fellowship manifested in those sacrifices
 3. In the sin and trespass offering though, atonement is primary – brought into solitary prominence
 - a. This is for the spiritual training of Israel – to impress upon their minds the burden of sins that break fellowship with God.
 - b. When the sin offering is sacrificed with other offerings, it always came first.
 - c. When fellowship with God is broken by sin, only the sin or trespass offering can restore it
 - B. The Law of Moses Gives First Commands Relative to Sin & Trespass Offerings
 - C. There Was No System of Sacrifices Ordained Before
 - D. There Was No Ordained Order of Priests to Offer Them Before
 - E. There Was No Tabernacle Where They Could Be Presented Before
- III. ANIMAL SACRIFICES DID NOT COVER SIN
 - A. No Atoning Quality in Animal Blood
 1. “. . .because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4 NIV).
 - B. Yet Sins Were Actually Forgiven
 1. Sin and Trespass Offerings were offered for atonement and individuals were actually forgiven.
 2. [Leviticus 1:4 NIV](#) You are to lay your hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on your behalf to make atonement for you.
 3. [Leviticus 4:26 NIV](#) He shall burn all the fat on the altar as he burned the fat of the fellowship offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for the leader's sin, and he will be forgiven.

4. See also Leviticus 4:20, 31; 5:10, 16; 6:7.
- C. The sacrifices granted to God the expediency by which He could forgive sin **in view of the cross of Christ** – that’s where all sins were atoned for!
 1. **Romans 3:23-26 NIV** ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (24) **and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.** (25) **God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood--to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- (26) he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.**
 2. God is judged just for forgiving sins done aforetime – and the cross made it possible.
 3. **Hebrews 9:15 NIV** For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Continuation

THE SIN OFFERING

IV. THE SINNER’S RANK OR POSITION AGGRAVATED ATONEMENT

- A. The sinner’s position or rank in Israel increased proportionately his guilt for the wrongs done.
- B. The influence of the individual stood in relation to his position before God and the nation
- C. Whether the sin was individual or collective made a difference in the ritual and even the victim chosen
- D. There are four levels of “Graded Responsibility” for whom different animals are required, the blood applied differently, with different dispositions of the sacrificial animal body.
- E. **Leviticus 4:2 NIV** "Say to the Israelites: 'When anyone sins **unintentionally** and does **what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands...**
- F. **LEVELS OR GRADES OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR SIN**
 1. **The High Priest** – “If the anointed priest sin, **bringing guilt on the people...**” (Leviticus 4:3-12).
 - a. The consequences of his sin are more far-reaching.
 - b. Example: Aaron permitted building of the golden calf.
 - c. Through religious error, false teaching he could lead the nation astray from God. (See also Leviticus 4:13-21)
 - d. Therefore this sin demanded the highest order of victim – flawless young bull

2. All Israel – “If the whole Israelite community sins. . .” – through lapses into idolatry, false teaching, apostasy (Leviticus 4:13-21).
 - a. The whole congregation, not only the individual.
 - b. Their guilt grew out of being a “nation of priests” – Exodus 19:6
 - c. This happens when sin is not just an isolated event but a wrong that becomes common-practice, like ignoring sin or sin patterns I others or adopting a false doctrine.
 - d. This indicates that individuals, as well as corporate bodies of people, like a church, can apostatize, as happened to the church throughout the centuries.
 3. The leader/ruler – through wrong governmental orders, or personal wrong, immorality (Leviticus 4:22-26).
 - a. Responsible for his civil authority
 - b. Even the king was not exempt from the demands of the Law. Just because the king did something didn’t mean it was the right thing.
 - c. **1 Corinthians 2:6-8 NIV** We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, **but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.** (7) No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. (8) **None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**
 - d. Paul seems to blame the rulers here more than the individuals.
 - e. See also Luke 24:20; Acts 3:17; 4:26 – which quotes Psalm 2:2
 4. A commoner – “If a member of the community sins. . .” – this is individual wrong, without social influence on others (Leviticus 4:27-5:13).
 - a. None are so high as to be above God's government. If anything, the higher your rank or position, the more grievous your sin. With much power came much responsibility!
 - b. None are so insignificant as to be ignored or have their sins overlooked. Every person is valuable in God's’ sight and none are disposable.
 - c. Even intense poverty or affliction does not exclude anyone from responsibility to God, themselves or their community.
 - d. The ordinary priest was considered as an individual on the same level as the common man – “nation of priests” – Exodus 19:6
 - e. Romans 2:11; Acts 10:34 NIV God does not show favoritism (is not a respecter of persons).
 5. God's omniscience not only notes all sins, regardless of position, but also the way sins tend to involve or influence others.
- G. Animal Demanded for Each Level of Responsibility
1. High Priest – flawless young bull or bullock (Leviticus 4:3).
 2. Whole congregation – young bull (Leviticus 4:14).
 - a. This bullock was the most valuable of all
 - b. The sin was the most aggravating

- c. [Ezekiel 9:6 NIV](#) “Slaughter the old men, the young men and women, the mothers and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary.” So they began with the old men who were in front of the temple.
 - d. Sin had the greatest aggravation with those nearest to the sanctuary.
- 3. Civil ruler – male goat (Leviticus 4:23).
- 4. Commoner – female goat (Leviticus 4:27).
 - a. He could bring a lamb (Leviticus 4:32).
 - b. “If he cannot afford a lamb, 2 doves or pigeons” (Leviticus 5:7).
 - c. “If he cannot afford doves, pigeons – then a tenth ephah of fine flour.” (Leviticus 5:11-12)
 - i. This does not deny the statement in Hebrews 9:22 “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”
 - ii. There was not blood in the flour
 - iii. But verse 13 (Lev 5) states “The priest shall make atonement for him and he shall be forgiven.”
 - d. We know either way the sin was not covered until the cross of Christ.
 - e. Nevertheless, God arranged for the poor.
 - i. No man will be excluded from atonement because of his poverty.
 - ii. If he doesn’t have a tenth ephah – don’t sin!