

Commentary on Hebrews

Review

TRESPASS OFFERING

This is the sacrifice under the Law of Moses that was built around the concept of strict justice. It was the *eye for an eye* kind of justice that was demanded under the Law. Towards the end of this study we will look at Christ as the fulfillment of the sacrifice of the Guilt Offering.

Trespasses involve the last five of the Ten Commandments and all laws later given to amplify and articulate those laws.

I. BACKGROUND

- A. Name: "ASHAM" literally meant "guilt" or "debt."
 - 1. Restoration to fellowship is based on fulfillment of all requirements of strict justice and atonement.
- B. Trespass Offering A Most Holy Type
 - 1. Nothing "sweet savor" about such actions.
 - 2. Right relations with man prerequisite to right relations with God.
- C. Respect For Rights and Properties of Others Was Demanded
 - 1. Since God is a person – with the greatest rights – it was possible for a Hebrew to trespass against God.

II. Trespasses Involving Man To Man Violations – these violations were also seen as a sin against God's government (Leviticus 6:1). They are called "sin and unfaithfulness to the Lord" by "deceiving or cheating a neighbor". Trespasses always involve the invasion of the rights of others – especially in regard to property or service.

- A. Deceiving A Neighbor – About something entrusted to him. This could be a loan or trusting care of livestock and he abused or unlawfully uses or sells it.
- B. Falsely Representing Some Product – probably involving some sort of pledge.
- C. Stolen Properties
 - 1. Unpaid debts – especially if dates are set.
- D. Cheating Or Oppressing A Neighbor
- E. Finding Lost Property And Not Returning It
- F. Adultery – Numbers 5:11-15 shows that adultery violates a man's right with his wife.
 - 1. The wife "commits a trespass" against her husband
 - 2. He can't prove it, but is so strongly convinced that he is moved to jealousy
 - 3. The husband must take his wife to the priest, and bring a tenth of an ephah of barley meal as an offering

III. Restitution And Satisfaction – this is the central theme of the Trespass Offering as seen from the peculiar aspects of this sacrifice.

- A. Restitution of the Property Was the First Demand
 - 1. If the owner is dead – restitution is to be made to the priest (Numbers 5:8).
 - 2. A person cannot be right with God while his neighbor's money is in his pocket!

- B. Satisfaction Involves An Added Amount – an additional one fifth, or 20% of the value of the property be given to the offended neighbor.
 - 1. First, restitution of the property is required – to the owner
 - a. "He must make restitution for his guilt IN FULL" – Numbers 5:6
 - 2. Restitution and satisfaction made by standard of the "shekel of the sanctuary" (Leviticus 5:15).
 - a. For reparation, 1/5 of the value lost to the owner is added. This was a double tithes – as additional 20%, and could not be ignored:
- C. No Exception for Ignorance – whether unwittingly, or wittingly – same ordinance.
- D. Restitution and Satisfaction Does Not Atonement – when restitution and satisfaction is fully made he is right with his neighbor but not yet with God.
 - 1. He must make the sacrifice of atonement – Trespass Offering to be right with God.

Continuation

- E. **Selection of the Sacrifice** – "A ram without blemish of the flock" - Leviticus 5: 15, 18; 6:6
 - 1. The ram was not the most valuable sacrificial animal - that would be the bullock
 - 2. It had to be appraised as to its value by the priest
 - a. "According to the shekel of the sanctuary" - Leviticus 5: 15; 6:6
 - b. This is the only sacrifice where the value of the animal is established according to tabernacle norms
 - c. The priest who represents God in the transaction must demand an established standard of animal
 - d. The plural form: "by shekels" insists the ram be not worth less than two shekels and they must be of full weight
 - e. For they are not the shekels of the market but of the sanctuary
 - f. The owner's evaluation is not accepted
- F. **No variation allowed for the sacrificial animal** – always, and invariably, it had to be a ram.
 - 1. Regardless of who committed the trespass – whether the high priest, regular priest, the ruler or the commoner
 - 2. Neither station nor riches – not even poverty altered this rule
- G. **The sacrifice is "most holy" as to type** – Leviticus 7:1
 - 1. Thus classing it with the sin-offering as to level
 - 2. It could never be thought of as a "sweet-savor" sacrifice
- IV. **Basis For The Trespass Offering** – strict rigid justice is demanded on the basis of the law, "an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth."
 - A. The Strict Justice of the Law
 - 1. **Matthew 5:23-26 NIV** Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, (24) leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. (25) Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your

adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. (26) Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

- a. Jesus is talking about the trespass offering and the laws of just restitution and payment here.
 - b. Verse 23 and 24 is an obvious reference to the primary thrust of the trespass offering, which insists upon restitution and pacification of the brother's complaint before the sacrifice itself is offered.
 - i. He thus implies that God will not accept the man before restitution is made.
 - ii. He cannot be at peace with God with his brother's goods or property in his pocket.
 - c. In verse 25 Jesus makes evident reference to the provision set up in the Law for disagreement between the accused and the plaintiff as to the value of the property in question.
 - d. Jesus also mentions in Matthew 18:32-35 mentions the Jewish practice of turning a man over to be tortured "until he should pay back all he owed".
2. [Exodus 21:23-25 NIV](#) But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, (24) eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, (25) burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.
3. [Leviticus 24:17-23](#) demands just payment for all wrongs; "fracture for fracture, animal for animal. . ." what he did to others must be done to him.
 - a. Verse 19 – "Anyone who injures their neighbor is to be injured in the same manner."
 - b. Verse 20 states: "fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth."
 - c. Verse 21 "Whoever kills an animal must make restitution..."
 - d. "But whoever kills a human being is to be put to death."
4. [Deuteronomy 17:8-13](#) indicates that litigation could be over "bloodshed, lawsuits or assaults..."
- B. [Even in the Absence of Money Deuteronomy 25:1-3 NIV](#) When people have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty. (2) If the guilty person deserves to be beaten, the judge shall make them lie down and have them flogged in his presence with the number of lashes the crime deserves, (3) but the judge must not impose more than forty lashes. If the guilty party is flogged more than that, your fellow Israelite will be degraded in your eyes.
 1. Possibly dealing with meanness, slander, pettiness.
 2. The matter goes to the judge or priest for decision.
 3. Could impose corporeal punishment on wrongdoer.
 - a. Limit of 40 stripes before judge or priest.
 - b. Never to exceed 40 stripes – for that would "degrade your brother" do not make him vile.

- c. Purpose is correction not vengeance.
 - d. Thus the Jews generally stopped with 39 stripes as Paul says “Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.” 2 Corinthians 11:24
- C. All Claims Must Be Well Proven (Deuteronomy 19:15-21)
 1. One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense. “A matter must be established by the testimony of 2 or 3 witnesses.”
 2. “If a malicious witness” falsely accuses a man:
 - a. The judge or priest will investigate.
 - b. If he is proven to be false, “then do to him as he intended to do to his brother.”
 - c. [Deuteronomy 19:20-21 NIV](#) The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. [\(21\)](#) Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.
- D. Further Litigation by the Priest (Deuteronomy 17:8-13) – if litigants cannot settle a matter of “bloodshed, lawsuits, or assaults” between themselves.
 1. The matter is first taken to the priests of Levi; then to the judge. “Go to the priest or the judge, inquire of them and they will give you the verdict.”
 2. “You must act according to the decisions they give.” Whatever damages they assess MUST BE PAID – the penalty for refusal to meet the judges demands “according to the tenor of the law they shall teach” as DEATH!
 3. “Do not turn aside from what they tell you, to the right or to the left” – Meet tenor, spirit of law.
 4. “The man who shows contempt for the judge or priest who stands ministering there to the Lord your God must be put to death.” It is as though God had handed down the sentence.
 5. “You must purge the evil from Israel.”
 6. This is why Jesus recommends that one “agree with thine adversary” – meet his demands, satisfy his claims – lest the penalty be greater – Mathew 5:25-26
 - a. **“Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way...”** on the way to the priest or the judge.
 - b. For Jesus says he could be cast into prison and would not come out until he had paid it all – Matthew 5:26