

III. The sin-offering and trespass-offering were new in Israel.

A. Burnt, peace, meal, and drink were of ancient usage.

1. In all these expiation is secondary and other concepts assume primary consideration in each sacrifice.
2. For sins were atoned for in concessions of grace by God because of the devotions, love and fellowship manifested in those sacrifices.

B. But here atonement is primary – brought into solitary prominence.

1. This for the spiritual training of Israel – to impress upon their minds the burden of sins that break fellowship with God.
2. When the sin-offering is sacrificed with other offerings, **IT ALWAYS** came first.
3. When fellowship with God is broken by sin, only the sin or trespass offering can restore it.

IV. Of course we know that those sacrifices did not touch the sin – top, side or bottom – for it is *“impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to remove sin”* – Hebrews 10:4.

A. Yet they were offered for *“atonement”* – Leviticus 1:4; *“and he shall be forgiven”* – Leviticus 4:26, and so on.

B. Those sacrifices did grant to God the expediency by which He could **forgive IN VIEW OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST** where all sins were atoned for.

1. This is the teaching of Romans 3:24-27 – where God is judged **“JUST”** for forgiving sins done aforesaid – and the Cross made that possible.
2. Hebrews 9:15 *Jesus “died to redeem the transgressions committed under the first covenant, they that have been called...”*

V. The sinner’s position or rank in Israel increased proportionately his guilt for the wrongs done.

A. The influence of the individual stood in relation to his position before God and the nation.

B. Whether the sin was individual or collective made a difference in the ritual and even the victim.

C. Levels of responsibility – called also **“Graded Responsibility”** in descending order are as follows – and the victim demanded was:

1. Leviticus 4:3 – For the **“anointed priest”** = high priest, the victim was a flawless bullock (or bull).

2. Leviticus 4:13 – For the **“whole congregation”** a bullock required.

a. In each of the above, the bullock was the most valuable of all.

b. And the sin most aggravating – Ezekiel 9:6 **“Slay utterly young and old, and begin at my sanctuary”** – where sin has its greatest aggravation.

3. Leviticus 4:22 – For the **civil ruler**, a he-goat, less valuable than that of the high priest, but more valuable than the commoner’s.

4. Leviticus 4:27 – for the **common people**, the isolated individual, the sacrifice was normally a female goat.

a. If he was too poor to afford the she-goat, then two turtle doves or two young pigeons were allowed – Leviticus 5:7.

b. But **“if his means suffice not for the two turtle doves”** then he shall bring a tenth of an ephah of fine flour – Leviticus 5:12.

1) This does not deny the statement of Hebrews 9:22 – **“without the shedding of blood there is no remission.”**

2) For verse 13 states: ***“and the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.”***

3) Either by sacrificing the birds of the minimum requirement of else awaiting the great Day of Atonement .

4) Quite literally, the sin was not covered until the Cross.

5) For even in the Old Testament “the just shall live by faith” according to Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17.

D. This **“graded responsibility”** is based upon definite reasons in each case considered.

1. The High Priest can so sin **“as to bring guilt on the people”** – 4:3.

a. the consequences of his sin are more far-reaching.

b. Consider Aaron and golden calf – Exodus 32 – where the whole nation was guilty because of Aaron’s weakness.

c. Therefore the sin of the High priest demanded the highest order of victim – the bull.

2. The whole congregation – not only the individual – but also corporately, or collectively.

a. Their guilt grew out of their being **“a nation of priests” Exodus 19:6**

b. Thus the sin is no longer and isolated wrong, but it has become common practice.

c. And it indicates that individuals. As well as corporate bodies of people, can apostatize – as did the church!

3. The ruler who sins is more responsible for his civil authority.

a. He must learn that even if he is king he is not exempt from the demands of the Law.

b. Or that just because the king does something it is not necessarily right.

c. 1 Corinthians 2:6 seems to blame the rulers more than individuals.

d. See also Luke 24:20; Acts 3:17; 4:26 – quoting Psalm 2:2.

4. The common man is also responsible for his actions.

a. None are so high – such as the priest or ruler – to be above God’s judgment.

b. Nor are any so insignificant as to be ignored, or have their sins overlooked by God.

c. Even intense poverty does not exclude from responsibility.

d. The ordinary priest was considered as an individual on the same level with the common man.

e. **“With God there is no respect of persons”** – Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11.

E. God’s omniscience not only notes all sins, regardless of position, but also the way sins tend to involve or influence others.