

Leviticus 5:14-6:7

Laws for Guilt Offerings

Leviticus 5:14 The LORD said to Moses:

Lev 5:15 "When anyone is unfaithful to the LORD by sinning unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD's holy things, they are to bring to the LORD as a penalty a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel. It is a guilt offering.

Lev 5:16 They must make restitution for what they have failed to do in regard to the holy things, pay an additional penalty of a fifth of its value and give it all to the priest. The priest will make atonement for them with the ram as a guilt offering, and they will be forgiven.

Lev 5:17 "If anyone sins and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though they do not know it, they are guilty and will be held responsible.

Lev 5:18 They are to bring to the priest as a guilt offering a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. In this way the priest will make atonement for them for the wrong they have committed unintentionally, and they will be forgiven.

Lev 5:19 It is a guilt offering; they have been guilty of wrongdoing against the LORD."

Lev 6:1 The LORD said to Moses:

Lev 6:2 "If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving a neighbor about something entrusted to them or left in their care or about something stolen, or if they cheat their neighbor,

Lev 6:3 or if they find lost property and lie about it, or if they swear falsely about any such sin that people may commit--

Lev 6:4 when they sin in any of these ways and realize their guilt, they must return what they have stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to them, or the lost property they found,

Lev 6:5 or whatever it was they swore falsely about. They must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day they present their guilt offering.

Lev 6:6 And as a penalty they must bring to the priest, that is, to the LORD, their guilt offering, a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value.

Lev 6:7 In this way the priest will make atonement for them before the LORD, and they will be forgiven for any of the things they did that made them guilty."

The Levitical guilt offering (or reparation offering) required restitution for damages to God or others, plus a 20% penalty. It symbolizes that sin creates an actual debt. To Christians, this foreshadows Jesus, who paid humanity's infinite sin-debt in full and completely restored our broken relationship with God.

The Mechanics of the Levitical Guilt Offering

Detailed in **Leviticus 5:14–6:7**, the guilt offering (Hebrew *asham*) was required for sins involving:

- Violating God's holy things (unintentionally misusing offerings)
- Committing a sin against a neighbor (stealing, lying, or defrauding)

Core Elements of the Offering:

1. **Sacrifice:** The guilty party had to offer a ram without defect or its equivalent in silver.
2. **Restitution:** They had to fully compensate for the loss.
3. **Penalty:** They were required to add an extra fifth (20%) to the value of the damage to cover the inconvenience and labor of making things right.

Significance to Jesus and His Ministry

The Old Testament guilt offering directly parallels and informs the redemptive work of Jesus in several ways:

- **Cleansing the Guilt of Sin:** The blood of the ram was applied to make atonement, ensuring the worshiper was forgiven. The Book of Hebrews connects this to Jesus, stating that His blood cleanses believers' consciences from "acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"
- **Paying an Infinite Debt:** Sin creates a "debt" of brokenness and loss. According to New Testament theology, Jesus paid this debt in full. His sacrificial death provided the ultimate reparation, more than sufficient to cover the debt humanity owed to God.

- **Reconciling Relationships:** The guilt offering required making horizontal amends with those wronged. Jesus emphasized this same principle of reconciliation, teaching His followers that making things right with a brother or sister must happen even before presenting an offering at the altar (Matthew 5:23–24).

Matthew 5:23 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, Mat 5:24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

- **Restoration and Re-creation:** God's justice in the guilt offering wasn't just about balancing scales; it was about over-restoring what was broken by adding the 20%. **In Christ, believers are not just forgiven, but are made "new creations"** (2 Corinthians 5:17). Jesus promises to ultimately heal the damage sin brought into the world, making all things new (Revelation 21:5).

2Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2Co 5:18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

2Co 5:19 that **God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them.** And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

2Co 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

2Co 5:21 **God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

Rev 21:2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev 21:4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Rev 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Rev 21:6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.

Rev 21:7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

Rev 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-- they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."