

Levitical Rebound Offerings: Known Sins: "Trespass," Lev 5:5-6; Unknown Sins: "Sin," Lev 4:2, 27-29, 32; Confessed Sins Were Forgiven, Not Concealed

8. The reason that it is functional to a carnal believer is that regardless of his spiritual status quo, he is still a royal priest and therefore represents himself before God.
9. In the dispensation of Israel there was the specialized Levitical priesthood that dealt with the sins of the people through sacrificial offerings.
10. There were two rebound offerings: (1) the sin offering for confession of unknown sins and explained in Leviticus 4:2-35, and (2) the trespass offering for confession of known sins and explained in Leviticus 5:5-7.
11. Because 1 John 1:9 deals with known sins first and unknown sins last we will take a look at the Leviticus passages in reverse order.
12. The offering for sins the offender *knows* he has committed is referred to as the "trespass" offering. The introduction to this offering takes up several examples of violations of the Law about which the sinner is aware.
13. These include failure to: (1) voluntarily testify in court as a witness to a crime, (2) properly purify himself after touching something unclean, or (3) keep an oath. The procedure starts with his confession of sin:

Leviticus 5:5 - [NET] "When an individual becomes guilty [אָשָׁם 'asham] of one of these things he must confess [יָתַחַּ yathah] how he has sinned."

14. Sins of the tongue join with regulations on personal hygiene such as swearing oaths and speaking thoughtlessly. When a person is guilty of one of these he is to confess.
15. The word "guilty" is אָשָׁם 'asham and describes an act of sin, whether mental, verbal, or overt, that is to be confessed, the hithpael perfect of the verb יָתַחַּ **yathah**.
16. The hithpael stem is used to express an intensive type of a completed action with a reflexive voice. This means that the Jewish believer is first alerted by his conscience that he has violated a divine mandate and comes to recognize he is guilty.
17. Recognition brings volition into the picture where he decides that he must rectify the problem through rebound.
18. Rebound in the Old Testament was accomplished by a confessional prayer as per:

Psalm 32:5 - | [David] acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; and you forgave the guilt of my sin [See also Psalm 38:18; Proverbs 28:13].

19. The Levitical code required that following confession a ritual be performed in order to illustrate the doctrine that made rebound an operational problem-solving device.

Leviticus 5:6 - "He shall also bring his guilt offering to the Lord for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin."

20. The first two offerings approved for this ritual were the lamb and the goat. The lamb illustrated the doctrines of redemption and unlimited atonement while the goat taught the doctrine of substitutionary sacrifice.
21. 1 John 1:9 first addresses the confession of known sins and then those that are unknown. The Levitical offering that dealt with the latter is called the “sin” offering and its ritual is the subject of:

Leviticus 4:2 - “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘If a person **sins** [חָטָא **chata**: literally, “to miss the mark”; to sin] **unintentionally** [שְׁגָגָה **shegagah**: inadvertently; ignorantly] in any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and commits any of them.’”

22. Even though a person may be ignorant that he has sinned the fact that he did breaks his relationship with God. Therefore, a believer may be operating under the impression he is in fellowship but in fact is not. This circumstance was provided for in the form of the “sin” offering.
23. This ritual was made available to several categories of people: (1) a priest, Leviticus 4:3-12, (2) the community of Israel, 4:13-21, (3) a leader of a tribe or clan, 4:22-26, and (4) the member of a tribe, 4:27-31. We will only observe that of the individual Jew.

Leviticus 4:27 - ‘Now if anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and becomes guilty,

v. 28 - if his sin which he has committed is made known to him, then he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without defect, for his sin which he has committed.

v. 29 - ‘He shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and slay the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering [**brass altar**].

v. 32 - ‘But if he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring it, a female without defect.’

24. Here the goat or lamb was placed on the altar, the one offering the sacrifice placed his hand on the head of the animal, it was then slain, and some of its blood was taken by the priest and smeared on the horns of the altar.
25. The brass altar was the place of sacrifice. Brass was symbolic of sacrifice and the rituals on it spoke of rebound recovery from sins that would be judged in the future on the cross.
26. When the person offering the sacrifice placed his hands on the head of the animal it was symbolic of his sins being transferred from himself to the innocent animal.
27. The goat or lamb was to be “without defect” which is symbolic of the impeccability, perfection, and sinlessness of Messiah as the true sacrifice for sin.
28. The animal’s carotid was then severed with a sacrificial knife and its blood was collected and the priest smeared some on the four horns of the altar. Details of the typology of this sacrifice are provided of us by:

Unger, Merrill F. *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*. 3d ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 946:

The object and effect of the sin offering were declared to be forgiveness of sin (Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35) and cleansing from the pollution of sin (12:8, 14:20; 16:19). It was thus the offering among the Hebrews in which the ideas of propitiation and of atonement for sin were most distinctly marked. Its presentation presupposed the consciousness of sin on the part of the person presenting it. The laying on of the hands of the offerer was understood to typify the fact that the sin for which pardon and cleansing were being sought was transferred to the victim, which thereby became sin (4:4, 14). The soul of the offerer, being represented by the blood, was, through the sprinkling of the latter, brought into the fellowship with or within the sphere of operation of the divine grace. The blood of the sin offering being sprinkled upon the *horns* of the altar, which were symbolic of power and might, the soul was thereby symbolically brought within the full force and efficacy of that divine grace in which it was required to participate in order that its sin might be duly atoned for.

29. The end result of this sacrifice was forgiveness of the believer's sin and cleansing of all unrighteousness.

Leviticus 4:35 - 'The priest shall make atonement for him in regard to his sin which he has committed, and he will be forgiven.'

30. The impact of sin and trespass offerings on Old Testament believers needs to be clarified. I have recently asserted that precross sins were not forgiven but covered awaiting their judgment on the cross.
31. This is wrong. It is true that the reason Old Testament saints' souls and spirits did not go directly to heaven at physical death is because their sins had not yet been judged in Christ.
32. I have stated that the sin and trespass offerings and the sacrifice on **יום כִּפּוּר** **Yom Kippur** "covered" the sins of the people until the cross. This is true but the precise idea behind the word "cover" looks toward the coming judgment of sins on the cross, but does not mean that the sins atoned for are not forgiven.
33. Clarification of the definition of **כִּפּוּר** **kippur** is important to straightening out this misunderstanding and for that we go to:

Baker, Warren and Eugene Carpenter. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament.* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2004), 521:

כִּפָּר **kaphar**: A verb meaning to cover, to forgive, to expiate, to reconcile. This word is of supreme theological importance in the Old Testament as it is central to an Old Testament understanding of the remission of sin. At its most basic level, **the word conveys the notion of covering but not in the sense of merely concealing**.

This is where I went wrong. I understood the word meant to "conceal" in the sense of holding the sins in escrow awaiting their forgiveness following the work of Christ on the cross, assuming that once all precross sins were judged then they could be forgiven. I further concluded that while awaiting this future event Old Testament saints were retained in Paradise until the work of the cross was completed and their sins could be forgiven. But instead, the reason they were held there was because their sins were not yet judged, but they had been forgiven. Baker and Carpenter continue on this subject:

The word also communicates God's covering of sin. Persons made reconciliation with God for their sins by imposing something that would appease the offended party (in this case the Lord) and cover the sinners with righteousness. In the Old Testament, the blood of sacrifices was most notably imposed. By this imposition, sin was purged and forgiven (Ps. 78:38). The offenses were removed, leaving the sinners clothed in righteousness (cf. Zech. 2:3, 4).

Of course, the imposition of the blood of bulls and of goats could never cover our sin (see Heb. 10:4), but with the coming of Christ and the imposition of His shed blood **[His spiritual death during which He was judged for our sins]**, a perfect atonement was made.

