

Leviticus 5:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him.

Analysis

And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him.

This verse falls within the section on **Guilt Offerings**. The guilt offering (אֲשָׁם, *asham*) addressed specific trespasses requiring both sacrifice and restitution, emphasizing sin's relational damage.

The Hebrew word *kaphar* (כָּפַר) means 'to cover' or 'to make atonement.' The sacrificial system provided temporary covering for sin, pointing forward to Christ's perfect, once-for-all sacrifice. The Aaronic priesthood mediated between God and Israel, offering sacrifices and maintaining the tabernacle. This prefigured Christ's superior priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. The five main offerings (burnt, grain, peace, sin, and guilt) addressed different aspects of relationship with God, all fulfilled in Christ's comprehensive sacrifice.

Every sacrifice and ritual in Leviticus points forward to Jesus Christ, who fulfills the entire sacrificial system as both perfect sacrifice and eternal high priest.

Historical Context

The guilt offering (אֲשָׁם, *asham*) addressed specific trespasses requiring both sacrifice and restitution, emphasizing sin's relational damage. Leviticus was given to Israel at Mount Sinai, shortly after the tabernacle's construction described in Exodus. The name 'Leviticus' (from Latin *Leviticus*, referring to the Levites) reflects its focus on priestly duties, though the Hebrew title *Wayyiqra* ('And He called') emphasizes God's initiative in revealing these laws. The first seven chapters detail the five main offerings, providing both worshiper instructions and priestly procedures. Ancient Near Eastern cultures had various sacrificial systems, but Israel's sacrificial worship was unique in its ethical foundation, monotheistic framework, and emphasis on atonement rather than appeasement. Unlike pagan rituals focused on manipulating deities, Israel's sacrifices acknowledged God's sovereignty and sought reconciliation based on His gracious provision. Ancient texts like the Code of Hammurabi show that law codes were common in the ancient Near East, but biblical law uniquely grounded ethics in God's character rather than merely social convention.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. In what ways does this verse deepen your appreciation for Christ's atoning sacrifice and the seriousness of sin?
2. How does Christ's superior priesthood, prefigured in this verse, assure you of access to God and effective intercession?
3. What does this verse teach about the costliness of true worship and dedication to God?

Interlinear Text

וְהָבִיא	אַיִל	תָּמִיִם	מִן	הַצֹּאֵן
And he shall bring	a ram	without blemish	H4480	out of the flock
H935	H352	H8549		H6629

בְּעִרְכּוֹ	לְאַשָׁם	אֵל	הַכֹּהֵן
with thy estimation	for a trespass offering	H413	and the priest
H6187	H817		H3548

וְכָפַר	עַל יוֹ	הַכֹּהֵן	עַל
shall make an atonement	H5921	and the priest	H5921
H3722		H3548	

שְׁגֵגַת וְ	אֲשֶׁר	שָׁגָג	וְהָיָא	לֹא	וַיֵּדַע
for him concerning his ignorance	H834	wherein he erred	H1931	H3808	and wist
H7684		H7683			H3045

וְנִסָּלַח	לּוֹ
it not and it shall be forgiven	H0
H5545	