

# Numbers 5:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.

## Analysis

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This law requires confession and restitution when someone 'commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the LORD.' The Hebrew 'yadah' (confess) means to acknowledge openly, while making full restitution plus twenty percent demonstrates genuine repentance bearing fruit. The phrase 'trespass against the LORD' shows that sins against people are ultimately sins against God (cf. Ps 51:4, 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned'). This law requires both vertical reconciliation (confession to God) and horizontal reconciliation (restitution to the wronged party), foreshadowing Christ's teaching on reconciliation (Matt 5:23-24) and Zacchaeus's response to grace (Luke 19:8).

## Historical Context

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Given at Sinai as part of the Holiness Code, this law maintained community integrity. The twenty percent addition ensured victims weren't disadvantaged by theft and deterred future offenses. If the wronged party died without heirs, restitution went to the priests, acknowledging the offense against God's community. This law influenced later Jewish halakha (legal rulings) and demonstrates that Old Testament law emphasized restorative, not merely punitive, justice. True confession leads to tangible restitution, not mere words.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. Is there anyone you've wronged who deserves not just apology but tangible restitution?
2. How does understanding all sin as ultimately against God deepen your repentance and fuel your reconciliation efforts?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהַתִּדְעֵה אֶת עֲשֵׂה אֲשֶׁר מְפַטָּאתֶם  
Then they shall confess their sin which they have done  
H3034 H853 H6213

וְהַשְׁבֵּב אֶת אֲשֶׁר בְּרָאשׁ וְתִסְמִיכֵת וְבָרָאשׁ  
and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal unto it the fifth  
H7725 H853 H7218 H2549

וְעַל יְדֵיכֶם יִתְּعַשֵּׂר לֹא שְׁרֵךְ  
thereof and add part thereof and give  
H3254 H5921 H5414 H834

לֹא אֲשֶׁר מִלְּבָד  
it unto him against whom he hath trespassed  
H816 H0

## Additional Cross-References

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**Leviticus 5:5** (Sin): And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing:

**Joshua 7:19** (Parallel theme): And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

**Leviticus 26:40** (Sin): If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

**Proverbs 28:13** (Sin): He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

**Luke 19:8** (Parallel theme): And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

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