“The Purification Offering and the Purging of Sin”

Wisdom in Torah
Talmidim Teachers

Daniel McGirr
Resources

- The Torah
- The Tanak
- The Brit Chadasha
- Jacob Milgrom - Leviticus Commentary
- Yitzhaq Feder - Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual
Understanding the Chattat/Sin Offering

1. What is sin, and how is it to be understood in Israel?

2. How does our sin affect the Tabernacle or Temple of YHWH?

3. What does the blood from the sacrifices do?

4. How is the Purification/Chattat Offering to be understood?

5. How is our sin purged or atoned for?

6. How does this all tie in with the work of Yeshua?
“Sin-Offering or Purification-Offering?”
By Jacob Milgrom

“...To my knowledge, all the versions and translations, old and new, render the hatta't sacrifice as "sin offering". This translation is inaccurate on all grounds: contextually, morphologically and etymologically.

The very range of the chatta't in the cult gainsays the notion of sin. For example, this offering is enjoined upon recovery from childbirth (Lev. xii), the safe completion of the nazirite vow (Num. vi) and the dedication of the newly constructed altar (Lev. 8:15; see Exod. 29: 36 f.). In other words, the chatta't is prescribed for persons and objects who cannot possibly have sinned.”
“Sin-Offering or Purification-Offering?”
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The chatta’t must be rendered as “purification (or purgation) offering” and it leads automatically to the question:

**Whom or what does it purge?**

Herein lies the first surprise: it is not the offerer of the sacrifice. It must be remembered that the chatta’t is brought by an individual under two circumstances:

- Severe physical impurity, as that of the parturient, leper, or gonorrheic (Leviticus 12–15); or because of the commission of certain inadvertent sins (e.g., Leviticus 4)
Ablution or Washing for Purification

Physical impurity is removed by ablution:

Exo 30:17 And יְהֹוָה spoke to Mosheh, saying,

Exo 30:18 “And you shall make a basin of bronze, with its stand also of bronze, for washing. And you shall put it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and shall put water in it.

Exo 30:19 “And Aharon and his sons shall wash from it their hands and their feet.

Exo 30:20 “When they go into the Tent of Meeting, or when they come near the altar to attend, to burn an offering made by fire to יְהֹוָה, they wash with water, lest they die.

Exo 30:21 “And they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a law forever to them, to him and his seed throughout their generations.”

“He shall wash his clothes and bathe in water” (Leviticus 15:8, ).

“I indeed immerse you in water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to bear. He shall immerse you in the Set-apart Spirit and fire.”
“Sin-Offering or Purification-Offering?”

By Jacob Milgrom, Continued

“The advantage of freeing the Chatta’t from the theologically foreign notion of sin and restoring to it its pristine meaning of purification is that now it is possible to see this sacrifice against its true ancient Near Eastern setting. Israel was part of a cultic continuum which abounded in purifications both of persons and buildings, especially sanctuaries.”
“It seems that many scholars have fallen victim to the fallacy of using etymology as an indication of meaning. Against this tendency, Barr warns: “Etymology is not, and does not profess to be, a guide to the semantic value of words in their current usage, and such a value has to be determined from the current usage and not the derivation”. As a result, the only reliable approach is to examine the BIBLICAL EVIDENCE itself to understand how the ancient Hebrew speech community used this term.”

Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual - Yitzhaq Feder on the word and meaning of Kippur
What is Sin?
SIN

H2403
חטּאת חטּאה
chaṭṭâ'āh

From H2398; an offence (sometimes habitual sinfulness), and its penalty, occasion, sacrifice, or expiation; also (concretely) an offender: -punishment (of sin), purifying (-fication for sin), sin (-ner, offering).
SIN: “To Go Wrong” or “To Be in the Wrong”

To Break the Stipulations or Commandments of a Covenant with the King = SIN AGAINST THE KING

Regardless of Intent

- Mistake
- Heedlessness
- Malice
Human sins have consequences. When individuals disobey moral law, a tangible form of evil is created in the world that must be accounted for. And this is even more true when a whole society goes astray.

Sin: A History
Severity

Intent

• Unintentional/Accidental
• Non-malicious
• Intentional/Rebellious

Level of Responsibility

• Laity
• Priest
• Ruler, Leadership, King
1. Violation of Covenant Oath
2. Encroachment against Sancta
First Category of Ma’al-

Sancta Trespass.

Cases of ma’al trespass on Temple sancta are found only in Chronicles. Uzziah is charged with ma’al for offering incense inside the Temple (2 Chr. 26:16-18). His offering is illicit in accordance with the Priestly source, since both place and rite, i.e., entering the sanctuary and officiating there, are forbidden to a non-priest. He is stricken with leprosy on the spot. Ahaz is also indicted with ma’al by Chronicles for tampering with the Temple sancta (2 Chr. 28:19, 22-25, cf. 2 Kgs. 16:14-17) and suspending their use (2 Chr. 29:19).
Second Category of Ma’al

Oath Violation.
The second category of ma’al, oath violation, is in-tegrally related to trespass upon sancta for the violated sanctum is none other than the Deity Himself. The Lord’s name by which an oath is taken is called a sanctum, gm qdg (e.g., Lev. 20:3; Isa. 57:15; Ezek. 36:20-22; Amos 2:7; Ps. 111:9), and the oath itself is called dbr qdg (Ps. 105:42, cf. vv. 8f.) and is taken bqds (e.g., Amos 4:2: Ps 60:8). In the cultic laws. as can be shown’o, the oath violation is defined as “swearing falsely” or “desecrating the name of God.” In the non-legal texts, which are examined here, it appears in a variety of forms, all of which can be subsumed under one rubric: the violation of the covenant oath.
Finally both ma’al categories share not only the nature of the sin-involving trespass upon the Divine property or name-but also call for a similar retribution. Both trespasses provoke God’s consuming wrath on the family and community of the sinner. The doctrine of corporate culpability for sins against God not only informs the Priestly Code but all of biblical literature.

Ma’al, then, means trespassing upon the divine realm either by poaching on his sancta or breaking his covenant oath; it is a lethal sin which can destroy both the offender and his community.
"The Concept of Ma‘al"

**Brown-Driver-Briggs**

H₄₆₀₄

ma‘al

**BDB Definition:**

1) unfaithful or treacherous act, trespass
   1a) against man
   1b) against God

**Strong’s**

H₄₆₀₄

ma‘al

**mah‘-al**

From H₄₆₀₈; *treachery, that is, sin: - falsehood, grievously, sore, transgression, trespass, X very*
Ma’al - 2 Categories

Sancta Trespass

- Joshua 7 – Achon’s sin
- Cherem (Lev 27:28)
  - “every devoted offering is most holy to YHVH”
- 2 Chr 26:16-18 – King Uzziah
- 2 Chr 36:14 – Ma’al defiles the house of YHVH

Oath Violation

- Ezekiel 17:13-20 – King of Judah breaks oath with the king of Babylon
- Swearing an oath on the Name of YHVH
- Idolatry = ma’al
Understanding metaphysical Sin

The act of sin creates some sort of metaphysical thing that, while it cannot be seen by human eyes, does exist and effects our world. Much like we cannot see wind, but can see/feel its effects. It is the thing that lingers after the commission of the sin. It cannot be brushed aside, it must be dealt with otherwise it will continue to haunt the people involved.

It must be understood as a stain, a stain of filth and impurity.

Sin therefore results in a breakdown and breach of a covenantal relationship.
Creation of a Claim

- Damages were done regardless of intent
- Justice demands recompense
Who is affected by this sin?

**Self**
- Guilt of Crime
- Culpability/Danger
- Indebtedness
- Moral stain

**Offended Party**
- Loss of Property
- Loss of Life or Livelihood
- Offended and/or fearful

Metaphysical Sin
Who is affected by this sin?

Community
- Fear of Repetition
- Community responsibility for moral standards
- Clan Solidarity

Deity
- Stain of Tribal Immorality
- Protective of Clan
- Breech of Covenant
- Stain on Dwelling Place

Metaphysical Sin
Metaphors for Metaphysical Sin

“A burden to be borne”

“A debt to be paid”

“A stain to be cleansed”

“An abomination to be purged”
"The wages of sin is death"
- Romans 6:15-23

The King who forgave his servant’s debt but the servant failed to reciprocate with his fellow servant
- Matthew 18:23-34
A Debt to be Paid

Matthew 6:9-15

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father shall also forgive you.”

Forgiveness contingent on acts of righteousness
A Debt to be Paid

Leviticus 26:38-46

- A debt that transfers down through generations until it has been paid.
- Notice that repentance does not remove the debt.
Debt Repayment

Payment by Self

Monetary Redress

Acts of Righteousness

Physical Punishment

Animal Sacrifice

Metaphysical Sin

Proverbs 11:1

Payment by Another

Proverbs 20:30
Quote by Jacob Milgrom

Israel thoroughly overhauled this concept of impurity in adapting it to its monotheistic system, but the notion of its dynamic and malefic power, especially in regard to the sancta, was not completely expunged from the Priestly Code. Thus Molech worship is forbidden because it contaminates “My sanctuary” (Leviticus 20:3). Whoever is contaminated by a corpse and fails to purify himself “has contaminated the Lord’s sanctuary” (Numbers 19:20, 13). Those afflicted with pelvic discharges also need purification “lest they die through their impurity by contaminating My Tabernacle which is among them” (Leviticus 15:31). The two latter offenders are banished with the leper, “that they do not contaminate the camp in whose midst I dwell” (Numbers 5:3b). True, the rabbis interpreted each of these passages on the assumption that impurity came into direct contact with the holy, specifically that the offender while in an impure state entered the sanctuary or ate of sacred food. However, it is patently clear that these texts are grounded in the axiom, common to all ancient Near Eastern cultures, that impurity is the implacable foe of holiness wherever it exists; it assaults the sacred realm even from afar.
Altar Contamination

Brazen & Unrepentant sins

Involuntary, Communal

Involuntary, Individual
3 Graded Stages of Impurity in the Sanctuary

The dynamic, aerial quality of biblical impurity is best attested by its *graded power*. Impurity pollutes the sanctuary in three stages:

1. The individual’s inadvertent misdemeanor or severe physical impurity pollutes the courtyard altar, which is purged by daubing its horns with the hatta’t blood (Leviticus 4:25, 30; 9:9 ff.).
3 Graded Stages of Impurity in the Sanctuary

2. The inadvertent misdemeanor of the high priest or the entire community pollutes the shrine, which is purged by the high priest by placing the hatta’t blood on the inner altar and before the paroket-veil (Leviticus 4:5–7, 16–18).
3. The wanton, unrepented sin not only pollutes the outer altar and penetrates into the shrine but it pierces the veil to the holy ark and kapporet, the very throne of God (cf. Isaiah 37:16). Since the wanton sinner is barred from bringing his hatta’t (Numbers 15:27–31), the pollution wrought by his offense must await the annual purgation of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, which consists of two steps: the purging of the tent and the purging of the outer altar (Leviticus 16:16–19). Thus the entire sacred area, or, more precisely, all that is most sacred, is purged on Purga­tion Day (Yôm hakkippurim) with the hatta’t blood.
Thus the graded purgations of the sanctuary lead to the conclusion that the severity of the sin-impurity varies in direct relation to the depth of its penetration into the sanctuary. This mathematical relationship between sin and sanctuary is best understood by the accompanying diagram.

Moreover, this diagram provides graphic confirmation that the priestly source propounds a notion of impurity as a dynamic force, magnetic and malefic to the sphere of the sacred, attacking it not just by direct contact but from a distance. The outer altar is polluted though the non-priest may not even enter it, and, finally, the adytum is polluted though no man, not even the priest, may enter. Yet despite the fact that Israelites have had no access, the sancta must be purged “of the impurities of the Israelites” (Leviticus 16:16).
What is the function of Blood in Biblical rituals of Ancient Israel?
The Life is In the Blood

Genesis 9:4-5

“But do not eat flesh with its life, its blood.

Leviticus 17:10-14

‘For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your lives, for it is the blood that makes atonement for the life.

John 6:53-54

“Eat my flesh and drink my blood...”
A – (10) ‘And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

B - (11) For the life of the flesh is in the blood,

C - and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.’

D - (12) Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.’

C - (13) “Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust;

B - (14) for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life.

A – Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’
Sacrifice isn’t about offering death, but about offering up life.

- H. Clay Trumbull
The Blood Cries Out

**Gen 4:10-12**
- Blood cries out, the land is offended

**Rev 6:9-10**
- Avenging the saint's blood

**Numbers 35:33**
- Blood defiles the land, only the life-blood of the murderer can 'atone'

**Ezek 24:7-8**
- uncovered blood rouses vengeance

**Job 16:18**
Deuteronomy 21:1-9

• Bloodstains are thought to bring infertility to the land (2 Sam 21:1-9)
• This rite transfers the "bloodstain" to an uncultivated area
• The murder is reenacted on the cow, but in a bloodless manner (as if to say that the guilt lies elsewhere)
• Any blood is carried away by the stream immediately
• The leaders wash their hands over the cow, declaring innocence
The act of Blood-Avenger isn't (just) about rights of retribution of the victim's kin, it is about the obligation of the community to ensure balance in the land by "atoning" the bloodguilt.

Deut 32:42 - God is the Blood-Avenger

Gen 9:5 - murderers are to be brought to justice by man's hand
Atonement - kipper
לפור

Literal meaning vs. Metaphorical/functional meaning

To wipe
To Ransom
To Cover
To Purge
To Re-Cover
Atonement

Who or what is the object of ‘Atonement’?

Lev 8:14-15
Numbers 8:19

Atonement protects against outbreak of divine wrath or outbreak of destruction
Kofer (H3724) - bribe, ransom, compensatory payment
  • Used in a legal sense

Numbers 25:11-13

Numbers 35:31-33 - murder can only be paid for with the blood of the murderer
  • Also see 1 Sam 3:14

Exod 21:29-30 - Talion laws

Isaiah 27:9 vs. Prov 16:6 - Payment by punishment, payment by righteousness
Metaphorical functional meaning

"Soothing Aroma"

Deuteronomy 21:1-9

Psalm 72:14, 116:15

Psalm 49:8-10

Abstraction of Commodity

Blood Money

Acts 20:28

Matthew 20:28
Propitiation - An action directed at the injured party to appease anger by making up for the breach in relationship. (making recompense for injury)

Expiation - An action directed towards that which caused the breakdown in relationship, thus nullifying the offensive act (paying the debt of the metaphysical sin in order to remove it).
Jeremiah 17:1

“The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron;
With the point of a diamond it is engraved
On the tablet of their heart,
And on the horns of your altars,

Lev 8:14-17

Purification vs. Atonement
If not the offerer, what then is the object of the hatta’ṭ purgation? All considerations lead but to one answer: that which receives the purgative blood, i.e., the sanctuary and its sancta. By daubing the altar with the hatta’ṭ blood or by bringing it inside the sanctuary (e.g., Leviticus 16:14–19), the priest purges the most sacred objects and areas of the sanctuary on behalf of the person who caused their contamination by his physical impurity or inadvertent offense.
Removal of Sin & Impurity

- The blood acts as a ritual detergent, removing the stain.
- The blood poured out at the altar base acts as a ‘blood-money’ payment as recompense
- The animal flesh is given to the priest as an act of righteousness, similar to almsgiving.
- This is why they must eat it in order to affect atonement (Lev 10:16-20)
The Blood Covenant

Romans 3:21-26
“whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood”

Hebrews 9

“Sanctify the people with his own blood”

Hebrews 13:10-13

John 6:53-54

“Eat my flesh and drink my blood...”
Summary of **כפר**

**Physical**
- To ‘wipe’ or ‘rub’
- Purges the meta-physical stain of sin/impurity from God's house or the universe
- Provides restitutionary payment for one's misdeeds
- Repairs a breach in covering

**Spiritual**
- Changes the person or object's relational standing with respect to the Deity
- Restores the covering protection of the covenant
Functions of Blood

- Means of Payment
- Means of Purification
- Means of Indexing
What is “blood indexing” and the power of transference?

Blood Daubing on the people
-Exodus 24:6-8, Leviticus 8:22-24, Leviticus 14:10-18
Priests must bathe
Tabernacle and altar are anointed with oil
Priests are anointed with oil
Altar is purified and consecrated with blood
Altar is dedicated to YHVVH
Blood from the same animal is placed on the priests and on the consecrated altar
Blood Indexing – Power of Transference

“God exists outside of time”
Revelation 13:8

Live bird and the Leper
Leviticus 14:2-7

Whatever touches the altar...
Exodus 29:37

Moses sprinkled half the blood on the altar and the other half on the people
Exodus 24
Hebrews 6:4-6

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Set-apart Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of Elohim and the powers of the age to come, and fall away, to renew them again to repentance — having impaled for themselves the Son of Elohim again, and put Him to open shame.
Earthly Tabernacle A Shadow of the Heavenly Tabernacle

 ✓ Exo 25:40 "So see, and do according to the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain.

 ✓ Exo 26:30 "And you shall raise up the Dwelling Place according to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain.

 ✓ Act 7:44 "The Tent of Witness was with our fathers in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Mosheh to make it according to the pattern that he had seen,

 Act 7:45 which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Yehoshua into the land possessed by the gentiles, whom Elohim drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of Dawid,"
**Heb 8:3**

For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and slaughters. So it was also necessary for this One to have somewhat to offer.

**Heb 8:4**

For if indeed He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the Torah,

**Heb 8:5**

who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly, as Mosheh was warned when he was about to make the Tent. For He said, "See that you make all according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

Yeshua is our high priest now in the heavenly tabernacle.
In Leviticus 16:18-34, we see that All three Altars are purged or cleansed to remove All 3 categories of graded impurity from all of Israel.
Keep in mind, that we now are moving into understanding the Heavenly Tabernacle and what Yeshua and His Blood does in the HEAVENLY REALM.
Isaiah Chapter 1:1-31

Isa 1:18 “Come now, and let us reason together,” says יהוה. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Isa 1:19 “If you submit and obey, you shall eat the good of the land;

Isa 1:20 but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword,” for the mouth of יהוה has spoken.
The Miracle of the Crimson Wool

These lengths of wool were specifically dyed crimson on account of the verse which reads, "Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall whiten as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be white as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). It is related that a great miracle occurred concerning this crimson-colored wool: For in addition to the piece which was tied to the scapegoat, a similar length was tied to the entrance of the Sanctuary where all could behold it, high up like a banner...
The sage Rabbi Yishmael taught (Yoma 6, 8) that when the scapegoat reached its destination in the desert, this wool miraculously turned white before the eyes of all Israel, in keeping with the words of the prophet—and thus providing a Heavenly sign that the sins of the people had been atoned for.

Babylonian Talmud states:

"Our rabbis taught: During the last forty years before the destruction of the Temple the lot ['For Adonai'] did not come up in the right hand; nor did the crimson-colored strap become white; nor did the western most light shine; and the doors of the Hekel [Temple] would open by themselves" (Yoma 39b).
Joh 19:30  So when יְהוֹשֻׁעַ took the sour wine He said, “It has been accomplished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Joh 19:31  Therefore, since it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the stake on the Sabbath - for that Sabbath was a high one - the יִהוּדִים asked Pilate to have their legs broken, and that they be taken away.

Joh 19:32  Therefore the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was impaled with Him,

Joh 19:33  but when they came to יְהוֹשֻׁעַ and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

Joh 19:34  But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and instantly blood and water came out.
1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that יהושע is the Messiah has been born of Elohim, and everyone who loves the One bringing forth also loves the one having been born of Him.

1 John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and guard His commands.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love for Elohim, that we guard His commands,¹ and His commands are not heavy, Footnote: ¹See 5:2, 2 John v. 6, John 14:15.

1 John 5:4 because everyone having been born of Elohim overcomes the world. And this is the overcoming that has overcome the world: our belief.

1 John 5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world but he who believes that יהושע is the Son of Elohim?
1Jn 5:6 This is the One that came by water and blood: יֵהוָשָׁע Messiah, not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the Truth.

1Jn 5:7 Because there are three who bear witness:

1Jn 5:8 the Spirit, and the water, and the blood. And the three are in agreement.

1Jn 5:9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of Elohim is greater, because this is the witness of Elohim which He has witnessed concerning His Son.

1Jn 5:10 The one who believes in the Son of Elohim has the witness in himself, the one who does not believe Elohim has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the witness that Elohim has given concerning His Son.

1Jn 5:11 And this is the witness: that Elohim has given us everlasting life, and this life is in His Son.

1Jn 5:12 He who possesses the Son possesses life, he who does not possess the Son of Elohim does not possess life.

1Jn 5:13 I have written this to you who believe in the Name of the Son of Elohim, so that you know that you possess everlasting life, and so that you believe in the Name of the Son of Elohim.
Viduy/Tachanun and Psalm 51

There cannot truly be total repentance without confession of our sin.