

**Paper 89 — Sin, Sacrifice, and Atonement**

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*This chart is a revision of the March 24, 2013 version.*

Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

**Sources for Paper 89, in the order in which they first appear**

- (1) William Graham **Sumner** and Albert Galloway **Keller**, *The Science of Society, Volume II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)
- (2) William Graham **Sumner**, Albert Galloway **Keller**, and Maurice Rea Davie, *The Science of Society, Volume IV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)
- (3) Lewis **Browne**, *This Believing World: A Simple Account of the Great Religions of Mankind* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926)
- (4) E. Washburn **Hopkins**, Ph.D., LL.D., *Origin and Evolution of Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923)
- (5) Henry Nelson **Wieman** and Regina Westcott-Wieman, *Normative Psychology of Religion* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1935)

*Note:* Henry Nelson Wieman wrote the chapter which was used in this paper.

**Key**

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms occurring further apart, usually not in the same row.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)

- (f) **Light green** indicates Bible passages or fragments thereof, which are not paralleled in the source texts.

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## PAPER 89 — SIN, SACRIFICE, AND ATONEMENT

XXXVI: HUMAN SACRIFICE (Sumner  
& Keller 1251)

§295.\* **Redemption and Covenant.** (Sumner  
& Keller 1263)

One of the widest phases of religious sentiment represents all men as under debt to the spirits.

This may be merely because the latter have held off and not inflicted damage when they might have done so (S&K 1263).

The thing to be bought off or ransomed is not infrequently life itself; the ransomed soul is a more developed conception. It is as if life comes into the world under forfeit, by reason of some original obligation or “original sin”.

This topic is closely allied to that of the scape-goat (S&K 1263).

Head-hunting, besides being a result of skull-worship, also provides a substitute for one’s own life (S&K 1264).

89:0.1 Primitive man regarded himself as being in debt to the spirits,

as standing in need of redemption.

As the savages looked at it, in justice the spirits might have visited much more bad luck upon them.

As time passed, this concept developed into the doctrine of sin and salvation.

The soul was looked upon as coming into the world under forfeit—original sin.

The soul must be ransomed;

a scapegoat must be provided.

The head-hunter, in addition to practicing the cult of skull worship, was able to provide a substitute for his own life, a scapeman.

## XXXIII: PROPITIATION (Sumner &amp; Keller 1167)

§278. **Nature of Propitiation.** (Sumner & Keller 1167)

Nudity, again, though it seems to be generally coercitive, is often interpretable as propitiatory, for the daimons get satisfaction out of the sight of human misery, humiliation, and self-discipline (S&K 1168).

The faults hitherto considered have been almost wholly those of **commission**: something wrong has been done; some taboo broken (S&K 1170).

It is also necessary to perform positive cult-obligations and to incur no guilt by reason of **omissions**; for the daimons have might-supported rights that root ultimately in the supposed needs of the ghosts (S&K 1170).

Whatever the nature of the sin, whether of commission or of omission, there was but one recourse for the sinner if he were to evade or lessen the penalty: conciliation or **propitiation** (S&K 1170).

Misfortune will come of itself unless something is done to prevent it, whereas fortune will not arrive unless **something is done** to bring it (S&K 1167).

Considerable development is called for before people arrive at the idea of a **consistently benevolent god** (S&K 1167).

89:0.2 The savage was early possessed with the notion that

spirits derive supreme satisfaction from the sight of human misery, suffering, and humiliation.

At first, man was only concerned with sins of **commission**,

but later he became exercised over sins of **omission**.

And the whole subsequent sacrificial system grew up around these two ideas.

This new ritual had to do with the observance of the **propitiation** ceremonies of sacrifice.

Primitive man believed that **something special must be done** to win the favor of the gods;

only advanced civilization recognizes a **consistently even-tempered and benevolent God**.

Propitiation, in fact, is rather a mode of dodging great ill fortune through acquiescing in an endurable, recurring present loss than it is a deliberate policy of getting good luck. It is **insurance rather than investment** (S&K 1167).

It is to be noted in the cases that the line between coercion and conciliation is not hard and fast; in fact, **avoidance, exorcism, coercion, propitiation merge into one another** (S&K 1168).

XXXI: **THE TABOO** (Sumner & Keller 1095)

§268.\* **Religious Nature of the Taboo.**  
(Sumner & Keller 1095)

The taboo is extended generally to prohibit what would bring **bad luck**; it proscribes words and names, days and seasons, attitudes and actions (S&K 1098).

What might **offend the spirits** or might attract them when not wanted is the object of strenuous taboo (S&K 1098).

Some reputable writers do not recognize the religious element in the taboo: Finsch, for example, assigns it, as it appears on the Gilbert Islands, to economic necessity (S&K 1095-96).

Propitiation was **insurance** against immediate ill luck **rather than investment** in future bliss.

And the rituals of **avoidance, exorcism, coercion, and propitiation all merge into one another.**

## 1. **THE TABOO**

89:1.1 Observance of a taboo was man's effort to dodge **ill luck**,

to keep from **offending the spirit ghosts** by the avoidance of something.

The taboos were at first nonreligious,

“A man being told to make a regular flight of steps to his house instead of the old notched ladder, replied ‘No, that would be *pomali*.’” Nothing is added concerning the reason of the taboo; ... if, however, the context is examined, in this case the Malay attitude toward *pomali*, there can be small doubt as to the **daimonic sanction** (S&K 1096).

§269. **Societal Function.** (Sumner & Keller 1105)

Within the society the taboo is the great **institution-builder**, for, as we have seen, it cuts away at the amorphous mass of folkways, eliminating this and that, until what is left shows a shape and consistency that is more permanent and institutional (S&K 1108).

In general it governs that aspect of societal life called by Spencer “**ceremonial**” (S&K 1109).

[See 89:3.3, below.]

Taboo was the **primordial form of societal regulation**; it reduced society to order for expedient ends and thus gave it shape and consistency (S&K 1107).

“The system of *tapu*, so widely spread throughout the islands of the Pacific, was carried to its highest pitch of development as a social law of the land of the Maori.... It was really **the only law** save that of the spear and the *patu* that the Maori possessed ...” (S&K 1103).

but they early acquired **ghost or spirit sanction**,

and when thus reinforced,

they became lawmakers and **institution builders**.

The taboo is the source of **ceremonial standards**

and the ancestor of primitive self-control.

It was the **earliest form of societal regulation**

and for a long time **the only one**;

it is still a basic unit of the social regulative structure.

§268.\* **Religious Nature of the Taboo.**  
(Sumner & Keller 1095)

A taboo is a prohibition; but a prohibition is just as strong as the power that issues and guarantees it (S&K 1097).

Taboos are in fact generally imposed by the chief or medicine-man, and both of these are fetish-men with indwelling spirits that speak and act through them (S&K 1097).

The taboo, by its nature, does not admit of experimental verification. The native does not dare, by ignoring it, to make the test; or if by chance, involuntarily, he does, still he is more likely to support the theory by promptly dying of fright than to live to note the non-appearance of the consequences (S&K 1098).

§270.\* **The Industrial Taboo.** (Sumner & Keller 1109)

Whatever is of economic value to primitive societies, such as property and women, is subject to taboo (S&K 1110).

89:1.2 The respect which these prohibitions commanded in the mind of the savage exactly equaled his fear of the powers who were supposed to enforce them.

Taboos first arose because of chance experience with ill luck;

later they were proposed by chiefs and shamans—fetish men who were thought to be directed by a spirit ghost, even by a god.

The fear of spirit retribution is so great in the mind of a primitive that

he sometimes dies of fright when he has violated a taboo,

and this dramatic episode enormously strengthens the hold of the taboo on the minds of the survivors.

89:1.3 Among the earliest prohibitions were restrictions on the appropriation of women and other property.

§268.\* **Religious Nature of the Taboo.**  
(Sumner & Keller 1095)

The tabooed thing is likely to be “unclean” or “holy” or both at once, for the two terms run together (S&K 1104).

There are many taboos mentioned in the Old Testament, the most famous being that laid upon the tree of knowledge (S&K IV 581).

“The ten commandments, as apprehended by the white man in their ethical splendor, are not so apprehended by the black man when God ‘ties him with ten tyings’ in the ‘early morning’ of his Christian day.

They are not then to him the expressions of ideals; they are facts, definite laws of abstainings, of omission and commission.

They are the Eldorado of taboo. They replace with a great calm the agitations of the experimental efforts of the past, when everything was at stake and nothing was sure; when man was exhausted in his effort to fill his side of the contract, but might never count upon the party of the second part. In this they are emancipating; they are the way of escape from a man-made yoke...” (S&K 1100).

As religion began to play a larger part in the evolution of the taboo,

the article resting under ban was regarded as unclean, subsequently as unholy.

The records of the Hebrews are full of the mention of things clean and unclean, holy and unholy,

but their beliefs along these lines were far less cumbersome and extensive than were those of many other peoples.

89:1.4 The seven commandments of Dalamatia and Eden, as well as

the ten injunctions of the Hebrews,

were definite taboos,

all expressed in the same negative form as were the most ancient prohibitions.

But these newer codes were truly emancipating



in that they took the place of thousands of pre-existent taboos.

And more than this, these later commandments definitely promised something in return for obedience.

§271.\* Food-Taboo. (Sumner & Keller 1114)

In general, African food-taboos rest upon irrational daimonistic notions and there is more than an indication that they are imposed chiefly upon the flesh of fetish-animals. Since almost every tribe has its special tribal animal, there is probably a considerable admixture of totemism in the restrictive measures (S&K 1116).

The Phœnicians were forbidden to eat the flesh of both swine and cows (S&K IV 593).

[The flesh of certain holy or of certain particularly unholy animals was considered taboo, and therefore might not be eaten. (That primitive superstition is responsible for the aversion to pork which marked the ancient Egyptians, and still marks the Jews and Moslems.) (Browne 40)]

“ ... In the island of Aurora, in the New Hebrides, mothers sometimes have a fancy, before the birth of a child, that the infant is connected in its origin with a cocoanut or breadfruit, or some such object, a connection which the natives express by saying that the children are a kind of echo of such things.

89:1.5 The early food taboos originated in fetishism and totemism.

The swine was sacred to the Phœnicians,

the cow to the Hindus.

The Egyptian taboo on pork has been perpetuated by the Hebraic and Islamic faiths.

A variant of the food taboo was the belief that a pregnant woman could think so much about a certain food that

the child, when born, would be the echo of that food.

The child, therefore, is taught not to eat that in which it has had its origin, and is told, what the mothers entirely believe, that to eat it will bring disease” (S&K IV 584).

It is not alone the food upon which restriction descends; the **manner of eating** also comes in for attention (S&K 1119).

Such restrictions are the beginning not only of decency, but even of **etiquette** and nicety of behavior ... (S&K 1119).

**Social distinctions** account for some of the food-taboos of the Atharaka ... (S&K IV 585). [See S&K 1119 re caste distinctions.]

## I, II: RELIGION (**Browne** 42)

5. How religion made society possible—and desirable—how it gave rise to art—the significance of Primitive Religion. (Browne 54)

**Religion** proved in time rather too **effective** a preservative.

It sheltered too extensively and indiscriminately, keeping alive **not merely** the morals necessary to the life of society, **but also** every scrap of ancient ritual and savage taboo (B 54).

But it is well to remember that, had it not been for **religion** and its underlying faith that the universe and its fell “powers” could be controlled, **there would not have been any civilization** to frustrate (B 55).

Such viands would be taboo to the child.

89:1.6 **Methods of eating** soon became taboo,

and so originated ancient and modern table **etiquette**.

Caste systems and **social levels** are vestigial remnants of olden prohibitions.

The **taboos** were highly **effective** in organizing society, but they were terribly burdensome;

the negative-ban system **not only** maintained useful and constructive regulations **but also** obsolete, outworn, and useless taboos.

89:1.7 **There would, however, be no civilized society** to sit in criticism upon primitive man except for these far-flung and multifarious taboos, and the taboo would never have endured but for the upholding sanctions of primitive **religion**.

Religion was the boot-strap by which man raised himself out of savagery.... In a very **real** sense it was his salvation. . . (B 55).

XXXI: THE TABOO (Sumner & Keller 1095)

§273. **Miscellaneous Taboos.** (Sumner & Keller 1127)

After all is said and done, the object of evolving religion is **insurance against** the aleatory element,

and the methods pursued have been consistently and characteristically those of avoidance. But the taboo is the very formulation of the avoidance-policy: **Thou shalt not** (S&K 1132).

Many of the essential factors in man's evolution have been highly expensive, have cost vast treasure in effort, sacrifice, and self-denial,

but these achievements of self-control were the **real** rungs on which man climbed civilization's ascending ladder.

## 2. THE CONCEPT OF SIN

89:2.1 The fear of chance and the dread of bad luck literally drove man into the invention of primitive religion as

supposed **insurance against** these calamities.

From magic and ghosts, religion evolved through spirits and fetishes to taboos. Every primitive tribe had its tree of forbidden fruit, literally the apple but figuratively consisting of a thousand branches hanging heavy with all sorts of taboos. And the forbidden tree always said,

**"Thou shalt not."**

89:2.2 As the savage mind evolved to that point where it envisaged both good and bad spirits, and when the taboo received the solemn sanction of evolving religion, the stage was all set for the appearance of the new conception of sin. The idea of sin was universally established in the world before revealed religion ever made its entry.

XXXII: SIN, EXORCISM, COERCION  
(Sumner & Keller 1133)

§274.\* Sin. (Sumner & Keller 1133)

[See 86:3.3.]

The man who has broken a taboo has sinned, and the wages of sin must be apportioned to him. One tree in Eden was put under taboo; man must renounce its fruit, for on the day on which he ate of it he would surely die (S&K 1133).

It should be noted at the outset that sin is ritual, not rational; and that it is a matter of act, not of thought, intent, or state of mind (S&K 1134).

The belief is always present, by implication at least, that there was once a sinless time, when all were happy; this was the Golden Age.

It was only by the concept of sin that natural death became logical to the primitive mind.

Sin was the transgression of taboo, and death was the penalty of sin.

89:2.3 Sin was ritual, not rational; an act, not a thought.

And this entire concept of sin was fostered by the lingering traditions of Dilmun and the days of a little paradise on earth.

The tradition of Adam and the Garden of Eden also lent substance to the dream of

a onetime "golden age" of the dawn of the races.

There were once **perfect** people, like Homer's "blameless Ethiopians, some at the rising sun, some at the setting" (S&K 1136).

Generally such beliefs in the good old times are accompanied by explanations of their disappearance wherein it appears that man was responsible, by reason of his injudicious and **sinful** behavior, for the existence of death and woes of every description (S&K 1136).

[contd] The drawing of a distinction between sin, crime, and vice may help to clarify all three conceptions. **Vice** is individual and is the original and real thing.

**Religion makes it a sin; law a crime.**

Among primitive people, since law is so largely a matter of religious taboo, **sin and crime** are pretty much the same thing (S&K 1136).

**Calamity to the community** is proof positive of the presence of sin (S&K 1138).

Men have exercised themselves in all ages concerning the relation of goodness and happiness. Theoretically they ought to **go together**; but there were instances enough where the wicked flourished like the green bay tree (S&K 1140).

And all this confirmed the ideas later expressed in the belief that man had his origin in a special creation,

that he started his career in **perfection**,

and that transgression of the taboos—**sin**—brought him down to his later sorry plight.

89:2.4 The habitual violation of a taboo became a vice;

**primitive law made vice a crime; religion made it a sin.**

Among the early tribes the violation of a taboo was a combined **crime and sin**.

**Community calamity** was always regarded as punishment for tribal sin.

To those who believed that prosperity and righteousness **went together**,

the apparent prosperity of the wicked occasioned so much worry that it was necessary to invent **hells** for the punishment of taboo violators;

Tibetan Buddhism distinguishes six hells for different classes of sins ... (S&K IV 597).

§275.\* **Remission.** (Sumner & Keller 1140)

One of the prime methods of self-clearance is confession (S&K 1142).

A rather forehanded case of remission is reported from Alaska, where “a noted woman of Sitka prayed openly in prayer-meeting that God forgive her for the sins she had in mind to commit the following week” (S&K IV 602).

Though later ideas demand admission of sin as the first preliminary to remission, the original object of insisting upon confession seems to have been the same as that for requiring a notification of the presence of disease, like the “Unclean! unclean!” of the leper (S&K 1142).

[See S&K 1143-44 and S&K IV 599-604.]

[See 88:5.1, 92:1.1.]

the numbers of these places of future punishment have varied from one to five.

89:2.5 The idea of confession and forgiveness early appeared in primitive religion.

Men would ask forgiveness at a public meeting for sins they intended to commit the following week.

Confession was merely a rite of remission,

also a public notification of defilement, a ritual of crying “unclean, unclean!”

Then followed all the ritualistic schemes of purification. All ancient peoples practiced these meaningless ceremonies.

Many apparently hygienic customs of the early tribes were largely ceremonial.

### 3. RENUNCIATION AND HUMILIATION

XXXIII: PROPITIATION (Sumner & Keller 1167)

§280.\* **Renunciation.** (Sumner & Keller 1179)

Fasting was a common practice of the Hebrews and Christians, as any concordance of the Bible amply demonstrates (S&K IV 637).

Then there is the renunciation of sex-relations and social ties in general, and at length the system of asceticism appears (S&K 1180).

[See S&K IV 636-37.]

[See 87:2.10.]

The notion that poverty was meritorious and a good in itself was widely entertained but unformulated at the beginning of the thirteenth century; it later gave rise to the mendicant orders (S&K IV 637).

89:3.1 Renunciation came as the next step in religious evolution;

fasting was a common practice.

Soon it became the custom to forego many forms of physical pleasure, especially of a sexual nature.

The ritual of the fast was deeply rooted in many ancient religions and has been handed down to practically all modern theologic systems of thought.

89:3.2 Just about the time barbarian man was recovering from the wasteful practice of burning and burying property with the dead, just as the economic structure of the races was beginning to take shape, this new religious doctrine of renunciation appeared, and tens of thousands of earnest souls began to court poverty. Property was regarded as a spiritual handicap.

These notions of the spiritual dangers of material possession were widely entertained in the times of Philo and Paul,

[If [the gods delight in human pain and misfortune], then one of the ways to propitiate them is through renunciation, actual or ostensible, of life's goods and pleasures; and another is positive self-torture or "mortification of the flesh" (S&K 1179).]

**Renunciation** is sacrifice, though it might be termed **negative** as compared with the offering of actual goods.... The taboo, coercitives, asceticism, **penance**, and the "state of grace" are all interconnected ... (S&K 1180).

[Renunciation] is the method, in its refined form, of **increasing life's fraction by lowering the denominator of demands**

**instead of striving always to increase the numerator of satisfactions.** It comes to be one of the great **life-philosophies** (S&K 1182).

§282.\* **Self-Discipline.** (Sumner & Keller 1187)

**Self-discipline** means to the majority of readers something like self-**torture** (S&K 1187).

and they have markedly influenced European philosophy ever since.

89:3.3 Poverty was just a part of the ritual of the **mortification of the flesh**

which, unfortunately, became incorporated into the writings and teachings of many religions, notably Christianity.

**Penance** is the **negative** form of this oftentimes foolish ritual of **renunciation.**

But all this taught the savage self-control, and that was a worth-while advancement in social evolution. Self-denial and self-control were two of the greatest social gains from early evolutionary religion.

Self-control gave man a new **philosophy of life;**

it taught him the art of **augmenting life's fraction by lowering the denominator of personal demands**

**instead of always attempting to increase the numerator of selfish gratification.**

89:3.4 These olden ideas of **self-discipline** embraced flogging and all sorts of physical **torture.**



“ ... The priest of the Great Mother consecrated himself to her service with an act of self-sacrifice as great as that of any modern monk or priest. He knew what it was to fast, he was merciless to his flesh on the *Dies sanguinis*, and was no stranger to the pain of self-scourging.”

The final act of consecration, by which one became a minister of the cult, was castration... (S&K IV 643).

[Compare S&K IV 640-41 re Hindus and Jains; contrast 94:7.2 re the attitude of Buddhism toward extreme self-discipline.]

Pious works not alone pile up credits for the individual; a surplus of them is also available for all in the cult-union, including both the living and the dead (S&K 1194).

The foregoing introduces us bluntly to the idea that the cult-activities in propitiation are to be regarded as resting upon a sort of ledger account kept by some supernatural agency (S&K 1194).

§283. Vows. (Sumner & Keller 1195)

[contd] The vow is a sort of contract with the spirits;

The priests of the mother cult were especially active in teaching the virtue of physical suffering,

setting the example by submitting themselves to castration.

The Hebrews, Hindus, and Buddhists were earnest devotees of this doctrine of physical humiliation.

89:3.5 All through the olden times men sought in these ways for

extra credits

on the self-denial ledgers of their gods.

It was once customary, when under some emotional stress, to make vows of self-denial and self-torture.

In time these vows assumed the form of contracts with the gods

and, in that sense, represented true evolutionary progress in that the gods were supposed to

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[Often something definite was expected in return, as when Ezra proclaimed a fast at the river of Ahava, “that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. . . . So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us” (S&K IV 637).]

and it may promise either renunciation or positive sacrifice (S&K 1195).

India is a land of extreme vows, as has already appeared.... Lippert thinks these vows of self-torture in India were the substitute for positive sacrifice of which poverty did not permit (S&K 1195-96).

§281.\* **Continence.** (Sumner & Keller 1183)

When the Maori went to war, “they were separated from their wives, and did not again approach them until peace was proclaimed ...” (S&K 1184). [*See S&K 1184 for more cases.*]

[Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband (1 Cor. 7:2).]

[Compare S&K 1186.]

do something definite in return for this self-torture and mortification of the flesh.

Vows were both negative and positive.

Pledges of this harmful and extreme nature are best observed today among certain groups in India.

89:3.6 It was only natural that the cult of renunciation and humiliation should have paid attention to sexual gratification. The continence cult originated as

a ritual among soldiers prior to engaging in battle;

in later days it became the practice of “saints.”

This cult tolerated marriage only as an evil lesser than fornication.

Many of the world’s great religions have been adversely influenced by this ancient cult, but none more markedly than Christianity.

The Apostle Paul was a devotee of this cult, and his personal views are reflected in the teachings which he fastened onto Christian theology:

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[Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman* (1 Cor. 7:1).]

*“It is good for a man not to touch a woman.”*

[For *I would that all men were even as I myself*. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

*“I would that all men were even as I myself.”*

*I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I* (1 Cor. 7:7-8).]

*“I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them to abide even as I.”*

Paul well knew that such teachings were not a part of Jesus’ gospel, and his acknowledgment of this is illustrated by his statement,

[But *I speak this by permission, and not of commandment* (1 Cor. 7:6).]

*“I speak this by permission and not by commandment.”*

But this cult led Paul to look down upon women. And the pity of it all is that his personal opinions have long influenced the teachings of a great world religion. If the advice of the tentmaker-teacher were to be literally and universally obeyed, then would the human race come to a sudden and inglorious end. Furthermore, the involvement of a religion with the ancient continence cult leads directly to a war against marriage and the home, society’s veritable foundation and the basic institution of human progress.

And it is not to be wondered at that all such beliefs fostered the formation of

The struggle to maintain a **celibate priesthood** was carried on by such determined prelates as Popes Leo IX and Gregory VII. [Etc.] (S&K IV 640)

**celibate priesthoods**

[See S&K IV 638 re cases of celibate priesthoods in other religions.]

in the many religions of various peoples.

[Compare: Religion runs out into sensuality and obscenity beyond description... [T]here is unlimited license and debauch; all taboos, even that proscribing incest, are suspended; the carnal runs out into unimagined variety and inventiveness (S&K 1192-93).] [See also S&K IV 642.]

[See 143:2.]

#### XI: SACRIFICE (Hopkins 151)

There have been various theories as to the origin of sacrifice but none is satisfactory, because, though all are correct in their interpretation of certain phenomena, all are deficient in that they are intended to make one interpretation cover all phenomena (H 151).

Before man had a clear conception of a spirit inhabiting a body, when he fears rather the power of the jungle than any demon in it, ... he makes, in this attitude of mind, first of all a gesture indicating his appreciation of the power. If he is accustomed to prostrate himself before his chief, that is the gesture he employs; if merely to bow the head or stretch forth the arms, that is his gesture here (H 151-52).

It is a reflex in the individual of instinct (as a dog fawns) or social usage as applied to an extraneous object of respect; its intent is to show the man's humility in the presence of a recognized power (H 152).

89:3.7 Someday man should learn how to enjoy liberty without license, nourishment without gluttony, and pleasure without debauchery.

Self-control is a better human policy of behavior regulation than is extreme self-denial.

Nor did Jesus ever teach these unreasonable views to his followers.

#### 4. ORIGINS OF SACRIFICE

89:4.1 Sacrifice as a part of religious devotions, like many other worshipful rituals, did not have a simple and single origin.

The tendency to bow down before power and to prostrate oneself in worshipful adoration in the presence of mystery

is foreshadowed in the fawning of the dog before its master.

Further, the act which in social relations is apt to accompany such a gesture accompanies it here in many instances of savage procedure; that is, the savage offers something to the power, just as he offers a little something when he bows to his chief, or greets an awesome strange power in human shape. This offering is, so to speak, **one** with the gesture of prostration (H 152).

[The savage] makes no gift at all; he performs his act of abnegation because he believes that the exercise of restraint strengthens his own power in which we are forced to think of as a spiritual way; his *mana* is strengthened, is the way he thinks of the matter; or, one may say, he thinks of it in terms of increased vitality. It is for this reason that **teeth are pulled out** and **hair is plucked** deliberately (this word is important) and other **pain-producing** acts are undergone, to stimulate power (H 157-58).

It is not so much the Aeschylean doctrine of *παθεῖν μαθεῖν* (wisdom comes from suffering) as it is the **Christian sanctification through sorrow** which is adumbrated in these savage examples of **abnegation** and initiation (H 159).

It is but **one** step from the impulse of worship to the act of sacrifice.

Primitive man gauged the value of his sacrifice by the pain which he suffered. When the idea of sacrifice first attached itself to religious ceremonial, no offering was contemplated which was not **productive of pain**.

The first sacrifices were such acts as

**plucking hair**, cutting the flesh, mutilations, **knocking out teeth**, and cutting off fingers.

As civilization advanced, these crude concepts of sacrifice were elevated to the level of the rituals of **self-abnegation**, asceticism, fasting, deprivation,

and the later **Christian doctrine of sanctification through sorrow**, suffering, and the mortification of the flesh.

89:4.2 Early in the evolution of religion there existed two conceptions of the sacrifice:

Under the head of a “gift-sacrifice” is sometimes, brought by straining a point, such a “gift” as was made by Agamemnon when he sacrificed Iphigeneia. In reality, this was a form of placation made under duress to overcome divine anger, piacular rather than “a special form of gift-sacrifice”; at bottom it was the payment of a debt, making up for an injury.

[Contradicts 89:8.6, below.]

According to one view of sacrifice as explained by the Brahmans, every sacrifice is the paying of a debt, or rather, in giving a sacrifice everyone “buys himself off,” *ātmanam nishkrīṇīte*, redeems himself, pays his debt by proxy (Ait. Brah., 2, 3, 11) (H 165-66).

A substitute is always as acceptable as the original victim (H 164 fn.).

There is, as already explained, a (not uncommon) form of sacrifice,—for example, in Borneo,—where one slaughters a pig or some such animal and by it sends a message or inquiry to the Manes or gods; its spirit takes the message and its liver shows the answer (H 168).

[And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not curse the ground any more for man’s sake; (Gen. 8:21)]

the idea of the gift sacrifice,

which connoted the attitude of thanksgiving,

and the debt sacrifice, which embraced the idea of redemption.

Later there developed the notion of substitution.

89:4.3 Man still later conceived that his sacrifice of whatever nature might function as

a message bearer to the gods;

it might be as a sweet savor in the nostrils of deity.

This brought incense and other aesthetic features of sacrificial rituals which developed into sacrificial feasting, in time becoming increasingly elaborate and ornate.

XXXV: ANTECEDENTS OF HUMAN SACRIFICE (Sumner & Keller 1223)

§289. **The Food-Interest.** (Sumner & Keller 1223)

With the higher development of spiritual conceptions, methods of **conciliation and propitiation** worked toward the front, replacing, at least in outward form, the negative recourse of **avoidance** and **exorcism** (S&K 1223).

89:4.4 As religion evolved, the sacrificial rites of **conciliation and propitiation** replaced the older methods of **avoidance**, placation, and **exorcism**.

XXXIV: SACRIFICE (Sumner & Keller 1199)

§286.\* **Atonement.** (Sumner & Keller 1210)

[contd] It has been noted that sacrifice often represents a sort of **neutrality-toll levied by** the gods (S&K 1210).

89:4.5 The **earliest** idea of the sacrifice was that of a **neutrality assessment levied by** ancestral spirits;

only later did the idea of atonement develop.

As man got away from the notion of the evolutionary origin of the race, as the traditions of the days of the Planetary Prince and the sojourn of Adam filtered down through time,

In fact, there lies behind the aforesaid neutrality-toll the **widespread** notion that man is by his actions, wittingly or unwittingly, always in **sin**—even that he has come into the world already sinful and under peril (S&K 1210).

the concept of **sin** and of original sin<sup>1</sup> became **widespread**,

An “unknown god” might, at any time, resent lack of propitiation. The only safe course, under these circumstances, was to atone regularly and punctiliously for what sins one must have committed or must be committing that he could not know about. It was a sort of blanket insurance-device, covering visitations of the aleatory element not otherwise provided against (S&K 1211-12).

There are so many creditors among the deities that it seems to be more than a life’s work for a man to get out of debt (S&K IV 649).

§284.\* Nature of Sacrifice. (Sumner & Keller 1199)

[contd] A gift or a bribe may be “given” to a human being;

when it is presented to a daimon, however, the proper term is to “dedicate” or “make sacred” or “sacrifice.”

From renunciatory forms of propitiation the series now passes to the positive giving or sacrifice of property, and even of life itself, in order to avoid misfortune or to secure good luck (S&K 1199).

so that sacrifice for accidental and personal sin evolved into the doctrine of sacrifice for the atonement of racial sin.

The atonement of the sacrifice was a blanket insurance device which covered even the resentment and jealousy of an unknown god.

89:4.6 Surrounded by so many sensitive spirits and grasping gods, primitive man was face to face with

such a host of creditor deities that it required all the priests, ritual, and sacrifices throughout an entire lifetime to get him out of spiritual debt.

The doctrine of original sin, or racial guilt, started every person out in serious debt to the spirit powers.

89:4.7 Gifts and bribes are given to men;

but when tendered to the gods, they are described as being dedicated, made sacred, or are called sacrifices.

Renunciation was the negative form of propitiation;

sacrifice became the positive form.



Positive methods of propitiation include, in addition, whatever else would please and predispose human beings, such as **praise, glorification, flattery, and entertainment** in general (S&K 1199).

The whole medley of **forms** taken by sacrifice and worship becomes **ritualized** just as do the negative forms of the cult ... (S&K 1199).

[Robertson Smith, in his *Religion of the Semites*,] makes much of the reverence and trust felt toward the gods on account of the common consanguineal bonds existing between them and their worshippers. Even the victim, an **animal**, was within the sacred circle of **kin**; and the sacrificial meal was therefore a sort of communion between blood-kin (S&K 1200).

§288. **The Burden of Sacrifice.** (Sumner & Keller 1219)

The fact that the **work-animal** is not sacrificed is significant (S&K 1220).

The act of propitiation included **praise, glorification, flattery, and even entertainment.**

And it is the remnants of these positive practices of the olden propitiation cult that constitute the modern forms of divine worship.

Present-day forms of worship are simply the **ritualization** of these ancient sacrificial techniques of positive propitiation.

89:4.8 Animal sacrifice meant much more to primitive man than it could ever mean to modern races.

These barbarians regarded the **animals** as their actual and near **kin**.

As time passed, man became shrewd in his sacrificing,

ceasing to offer up his **work animals**.

The Indians depleted their stock in similar manner [as the Koryak]; “and in making these sacrifices, and all gifts to the Great Spirit, there is one thing yet to be told—that, whatever gift is made, whether a horse, a dog, or other article, it is sure to be **the best** of its kind that the giver possesses ...” (S&K 1220).

Erman thinks the **boastful** records of a Rameses III worthy of credence. In a reign of thirty-three years, he had given to the various temples

113,433 slaves, 493,386 head of cattle, 88 barks and galleys, and **2,756 golden images.**

Further contributions were **331,702 jars of incense, honey, and oil; 228,380 jars of wine and drink; 680,714 geese; 6,744,428 loaves of bread; and 5,740,352 sacks of coin.**

To get this wealth the king **taxed his subjects**; he did not create it himself (S&K 1221).

[All people, savages and civilized, have opined that spirits live on spirit-food, not the gross flesh but the **soul** of the flesh, and have made the **material part** their own share while leaving the essence or some part not desirable as human food for the **gods** (Hopkins 172).]

The fact that the victim was devoured in good part by the sacrificers, while the god was there to eat his part, makes of the sacrifice a sort of **communion-meal**, with a large significance of its own (S&K 1222).

At first he sacrificed **the best** of everything, including his domesticated animals.

89:4.9 It was no empty **boast** that a certain Egyptian ruler made when he stated that he had sacrificed:

113,433 slaves, 493,386 head of cattle, 88 boats, **2,756 golden images,**

**331,702 jars of honey and oil, 228,380 jars of wine, 680,714 geese, 6,744,428 loaves of bread, and 5,740,352 sacks of coin.**

And in order to do this he must needs have sorely **taxed his toiling subjects.**

89:4.10 Sheer necessity eventually drove these semisavages to

eat the **material part** of their sacrifices, the **gods** having enjoyed the **soul** thereof.

And this custom found justification under the pretense of the ancient sacred meal,

a **communion service** according to modern usage.

## 5. SACRIFICES AND CANNIBALISM

XXXV: ANTECEDENTS OF HUMAN SACRIFICE (Sumner & Keller 1223)

§293. **Survivals and Legends.** (Sumner & Keller 1243)

Civilized men might think that cannibalism was a usage of low savagery, far removed from our interest and serving only to show how low human beings can sink. Evidently that is a **gross misconception** of it.

It was a leading feature of society at a certain stage, around which a great cluster of **mores** centered ... (S&K 1249).

Our **horror** of cannibalism is due to a long **tradition**, broken only by hearsay of some far distant and extremely savage people who practise it; therefore we think it, in itself, and “naturally,” revolting to everybody and possible only to degraded races (S&K 1249).

Where everybody believed that cannibalism was the only expedient possible under certain circumstances, beneficent alike for the eater and the eaten, or necessary for the preservation of the strength of the former alone, **group-interest called for the practice** (S&K 1250).

89:5.1 Modern ideas of early cannibalism are **entirely wrong**;

it was a part of the **mores** of early society.

While cannibalism is **traditionally horrible** to modern civilization,

it was a part of the social and religious structure of primitive society.

**Group interests dictated the practice** of cannibalism.

It grew up through the urge of necessity and persisted because of the slavery of superstition and ignorance. It was a social, economic, religious, and military custom.

§289. **The Food-Interest.** (Sumner & Keller 1223)

[See S&K 1224.]

Men dealt with the daimons as with human beings raised to a higher power ... (S&K 1223).

Of all gifts to the spirits a large fraction have consisted of food; it was the vital interest, the thing most generally and steadily in demand. The first need, for spirit as for man, was to be nourished ... (S&K 1223).

§290.\* **Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1225)

[contd] If it were not for the long-standing taboo against the eating of human flesh, the contention that cannibalism was widespread and perhaps universal amongst mankind would rouse little opposition (S&K 1225).

Animal-ways present no series, no significant and steady tendency, which would force us to any conclusion as to the original state of man.... All that we could conclude from the facts about animals is that some men were cannibals and some were not, which we know already (S&K 1226).

89:5.2 Early man was a cannibal; he enjoyed human flesh, and therefore he offered it as a food gift to the spirits and his primitive gods.

Since ghost spirits were merely modified men,

and since food was man's greatest need, then food must likewise be a spirit's greatest need.

89:5.3 Cannibalism was once well-nigh universal among the evolving races.

The Sangiks were all cannibalistic, but originally the Andonites were not,

nor were the Nodites and Adamites; neither were the Andites until after they had become grossly admixed with the evolutionary races.

§291. **Corporeal Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1230)

In the year 1200 A.D. the Nile failed and famine ensued. Children were eaten by their parents. The civil authorities burned such cannibals alive and all was astonishment and horror over this outbreak of savagery. But the people got used to the practice and acquired a **taste for human flesh** (S&K 1235).

The explanation of cannibalism as due to lack of meat-food, or of food in general, though supported by some little evidence, is controverted by the great preponderance of cases (S&K 1230).

Instances of cannibalism due to utter destitution, as where the **Eskimo** are cannibals only **in times of famine**, are not marvellous or even significant; stories of shipwrecks in relatively recent times show the breakdown of any food-taboo under stress (S&K 1231).

[Compare S&K 1227 and S&K IV 662-63.]

§292.\* **Animistic Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1235)

In **Queensland** women **kill and eat their children in order to recover their strength** (S&K 1238).

“Children are eaten when they die, but the crime of infanticide is not very common, unless in the case of a **first child**” (S&K 1238).

89:5.4 The **taste for human flesh** grows.

Having been started through hunger, friendship, revenge, or religious ritual, the eating of human flesh goes on to habitual cannibalism.

Man-eating has arisen through food scarcity, though this has seldom been the underlying reason.

The **Eskimos** and **early Andonites**, however, seldom were cannibalistic except **in times of famine**.

The red men, especially in Central America, were cannibals.

It was once a general practice for primitive mothers to **kill and eat their own children in order to renew the strength** lost in childbearing,

and in **Queensland** the **first child** is still frequently thus killed and devoured.

Thus cannibalism was a sort of **war-measure** and a means of infusing terror (S&K 1241). [*See S&K 1240 re cannibalism in Africa.*]

Cannibalism might then be retained by an individual or group as a measure of “**frightfulness**”; cases of modern “outbreaks of savagery” are familiar (S&K 1241).

§290.\* **Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1225)

Further, we are not disturbed in our use of ethnography by the objection, on the part of those who revolt at facing truths unpalatable to their taste, that all cases of cannibalism represent mere **degeneration**. **Some** of them do; but there is nothing behind the general challenge to ethnographic evidence except sentimentality (S&K 1226).

In the northern New Hebrides, “after a bitter fight they would take a slain **enemy** and eat him, as a sign of rage and indignation; they would cook him in an oven, and each would eat a bit of him, women and children too. When there was a less **bitter feeling**, the flesh of a dead enemy was taken away by the conquerors to be cooked and given to their friends” (S&K 1228).

§292.\* **Animalistic Cannibalism** (Sumner & Keller 1235)

“The most acceptable explanation is that men, driven by a far-reaching desire for **revenge**, ate the war-prisoners or the slain,

In recent times cannibalism has been deliberately resorted to by many African tribes as a **war measure**,

a sort of **frightfulness** with which to terrorize their neighbors.

89:5.5 **Some cannibalism resulted from the degeneration of once superior stocks,**

**but it was mostly prevalent among the evolutionary races.**

Man-eating came on at a time when men experienced intense and **bitter emotions** regarding their **enemies**.

Eating human flesh became part of a solemn ceremony of **revenge**;

to the end of annihilating them utterly and in the most shameful manner” (S&K 1240).

Sorcerers [in Central Australia] allege that they must eat human flesh to keep up their supernatural powers (S&K IV 664).

It is to be noted in passing that many cannibals will devour only their fellow-tribesmen; there is a so-called “endocannibalism,” by which is preserved in the tribe the whole body of soul-strength belonging to it. In such case the eating of the deceased is an honor to them.

Here is a sort of exclusive spiritual inbreeding, of interest chiefly in its accentuation of familial and tribal solidarity (S&K 1237).

A common practice also is to eat the body of an enemy, with a view to the appropriation of his valor and strength, just as the heart of the lion is devoured to increase one’s own heart-quality or “courage.”

Other seats of the soul are singled out for appropriation and there appears, further, the notion that some extra punishment is thus inflicted upon the dead foe; that his soul is destroyed or damaged in some way (S&K 1237).

it was believed that an enemy’s ghost could, in this way, be destroyed or fused with that of the eater.

It was once a widespread belief that

wizards attained their powers by eating human flesh.

89:5.6 Certain groups of man-eaters would consume only members of their own tribes,

a pseudospiritual inbreeding which was supposed to accentuate tribal solidarity.

But they also ate enemies for revenge with the idea of appropriating their strength.

It was considered an honor to the soul of a friend or fellow tribesman if his body were eaten,

while it was no more than just punishment to an enemy thus to devour him.

The savage mind made no pretensions to being consistent.

Funeral-cannibalism is also reported of the Birhors of Hindustan, who formerly used to kill and eat their **aged parents** ... Reclus, without citing authority, says that in this tribe “the parents beg that their corpses may find a refuge in the stomachs of their children, rather than be left on the road or in the forest” (S&K IV 667).

**§290.\* Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1225)

“ ... Families [among the Fang and other interior tribes] hesitate to eat their own dead, but they **sell or exchange** them for the dead of other families” (S&K IV 660).

**§291. Corporeal Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1230)

In one district of the Solomon Islands victims, mostly women, were purchased in an neighboring island, **fattened for the feast**, and “killed and eaten as pigs would have been” (S&K 1233).

Sometimes cannibalism seems even to be a sort of groping population-policy, “to keep the tribe from increasing beyond the carrying capacity of the territory” (S&K 1235).

**§293. Survivals and Legends.** (Sumner & Keller 1243)

As accounting for the decline of cannibalism, a line of thought which seems to cover a maximum of the facts and to incur a minimum of the objections is as follows (S&K 1247).

89:5.7 Among some tribes **aged parents** would seek to be eaten by their children;

among others it was customary to refrain from eating near relations; their bodies were **sold or exchanged** for those of strangers.

There was considerable commerce in women and children who had been **fattened for slaughter**.

When disease or war failed to control population, the surplus was unceremoniously eaten.

89:5.8 Cannibalism has been gradually disappearing because of the following influences:



§292.\* **Animistic Cannibalism.** (Sumner & Keller 1235)

Perhaps also there may be in the communal eating of the criminal the idea of collective responsibility for putting to death a tribal comrade.

The blood-guilt, if any, must be incurred by all. The ritual of execution is like that of sacrifice; it ceases to be a crime only when done by all (S&K 1241).

The Chinese, according to Marco Polo, formerly ate all who were executed by authority (S&K 1242).

If the phenomena of cannibalism are viewed as a whole, it is clear that man-eating is a matter of ceremonial and ritual rather than of mere alimentation (S&K 1236).

It is not the whole body that is eaten; it is the few and selected parts, those supposed to contain the vital principle (S&K 1236).

There seems to have been an idea among primitive races that by eating the flesh or some portion of the body recognized as the seat of power, or by drinking the blood of a human being, the person so doing absorbs the nature or life of the one sacrificed (S&K 1237).

89:5.9 1. It sometimes became a communal ceremony,

the assumption of collective responsibility for inflicting the death penalty upon a fellow tribesman.

The blood guilt ceases to be a crime when participated in by all, by society.

The last of cannibalism in Asia was this eating of executed criminals.

89:5.10 2. It very early became a religious ritual,

but the growth of ghost fear did not always operate to reduce man-eating.

89:5.11 3. Eventually it progressed to the point where

only certain parts or organs of the body were eaten, those parts supposed to contain the soul or portions of the spirit.

Blood drinking became common,

§293. **Survivals and Legends.** (Sumner & Keller 1243)

[Compare 89:5.15 re “the concoction of various medicines from parts of the human body”.]

Cannibalism becomes narrowed down in practice, becoming a prerogative only of **men**,

of **chiefs**, of **shamans**, and it takes on the quality of the antique and traditional, the holy, solemn, ritual, and judicial (S&K 1243).

Where the English government set out to stop [human sacrifices among the Bella-Coola Indians], the priests **dug up corpses and ate them**, several being thus poisoned (S&K 1238).

If then, human flesh is tabooed in favor of **superiors**, it is in the natural order that it shall come to be **set apart for the daimons**.

Such is the case, for it comes to be a holy food, reserved for them; it is “unclean,” as holy things are wont to be,

and it was customary to mix the “edible” parts of the body with medicines.

89:5.12 4. It became limited to **men**; women were forbidden to eat human flesh.

89:5.13 5. It was next limited to the **chiefs**, priests, and **shamans**.

89:5.14 6. **Then it became taboo among the higher tribes. The taboo on man-eating originated in Dalamatia and slowly spread over the world.**

**The Nodites encouraged cremation as a means of combating cannibalism<sup>2</sup>**

since it was once a common practice to **dig up buried bodies and eat them**.

Human sacrifice sounded the death knell of cannibalism.

Human flesh having become the food of **superior men**, the chiefs, it was eventually **reserved for the still more superior spirits**;

and thus the offering of human sacrifices effectively put a stop to cannibalism, except among the lowest tribes.

When human sacrifice was fully established, man-eating became taboo;

human flesh was food only for the gods;

and man may not eat of it except on special religious occasions (S&K 1247-48).

[Cannibalism] passes into practices that recall it more or less distinctly, such as the concoction of various medicines from parts of the human body and the **animal-substitutions** connected with human sacrifice, which is itself the chief survival of cannibalism (S&K 1243).

There is a theory, interesting rather than demonstrable, according to which **dog-eating** is to be regarded as a survival of cannibalism (S&K 1244).

**The dog was undoubtedly the earliest and most widespread domestic animal** and so, very likely, the first to act as a substitute for a human victim, as he is now a substitute in the New Hebrides ... (S&K 1244).

man could eat only a small ceremonial bit, a sacrament.

89:5.15 Finally **animal substitutes** came into general use for sacrificial purposes,

and even among the more backward tribes

**dog-eating** greatly reduced man-eating.

**The dog was the first domesticated animal**

and was held in high esteem both as such and as food.

## 6. EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

XXXVI: HUMAN SACRIFICE (Sumner & Keller 1251)

§294.\* Nature of the Offering. (Sumner & Keller 1251)

There has already come before us a type of human sacrifice that is neither directly nor indirectly connected with man-eating: the provision of an escort for the dead to the spirit-world (S&K 1251).

It is astonishing to one who holds the current notions about human sacrifice to read that “there is not a people that has not practised this custom at some period or other of its history.

Hindus, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, even Israelites, differ, in this matter, from the negroes of our own times

in nothing save the object they assign to this kind of sacrifice. The longer the matter is studied, the less is one inclined to balk at this universal” (S&K 1251).

89:6.1 Human sacrifice was an indirect result of cannibalism as well as its cure.

Providing spirit escorts to the spirit world also led to the lessening of man-eating as it was never the custom to eat these death sacrifices.

No race has been entirely free from the practice of human sacrifice in some form and at some time,

even though the Andonites, Nodites, and Adamites were the least addicted to cannibalism.

89:6.2 Human sacrifice has been virtually universal;

it persisted in the religious customs of the Chinese, Hindus, Egyptians, Hebrews, Mesopotamians, Greeks, Romans, and many other peoples, even on to recent times among the backward African and Australian tribes.

[See S&K IV 673-75.]

In **Chaldæa** of the most ancient periods there were human sacrifices; but later they became rare and **animals were used instead** (S&K IV 675).

**§297.\* Survivals of Human Sacrifice.**  
(Sumner & Keller 1273)

In Japan, “human sacrifice appears to have been practiced, and, if we may judge by the numerous legends handed down, was not entirely suppressed until long after the period when **clay images** were produced as a substitute.” Legend ascribes the substitute images to about the **beginning of the Christian era**. Human sacrifice is said to have been abolished through the compassion of the **Emperor**, when he heard the weeping and crying of victims who had been buried alive (S&K 1276).

**§294.\* Nature of the Offering.** (Sumner & Keller 1251)

**About 900 A.D.**, the Norsemen were in the Orkneys, and their leader, catching a defeated enemy “made them carve an eagle on his back with a sword and cut the ribs all from the back-bone and draw the lungs out, and gave him to Odin for the victory he had won” (S&K 1256).

The later American Indians had a civilization emerging from cannibalism and, therefore, steeped in human sacrifice, especially in Central and South America.

The **Chaldeans** were among the first to abandon the sacrificing of humans for ordinary occasions, **substituting therefor animals**.

About **two thousand years ago** a tender-hearted Japanese **emperor** introduced **clay images** to take the place of human sacrifices,

but it was **less than a thousand years ago** that these sacrifices died out in northern Europe.

§295.\* **Redemption and Covenant.** (Sumner & Keller 1263)

Where a person volunteers to serve as sacrifice, we have what might be called religious suicide. Such is the case among some primitive tribes in China where a voluntary human sacrifice is offered, in some cases annually, so as to preserve the group from disease, hunger, and distress (S&K IV 680).

§294.\* **Nature of the Offering.** (Sumner & Keller 1251)

In 1814, on the appearance of a contagion affecting men and reindeer, the [Chukchi] shamans called for a human sacrifice as the only recourse, naming one of the most respected and beloved elderly men of the tribe.

The people would not kill him

but, as the disease did not abate, the old man devoted himself for his people. Nobody would execute him until finally his own son, at his command, put the knife into his breast (S&K 1254).

[The cases of the intended sacrifice of Isaac and that of Jephtha's daughter will occur to the reader of the Old Testament; and the fact that child-sacrifice is forbidden witnesses to its existence (S&K 1255).]

Among certain backward tribes, human sacrifice is still carried on by volunteers, a sort of religious or ritual suicide.

A shaman once ordered the sacrifice of a much respected old man of a certain tribe.

The people revolted; they refused to obey.

Whereupon the old man had his own son dispatch him; the ancients really believed in this custom.

89:6.3 There is no more tragic and pathetic experience on record, illustrative of the heart-tearing contentions between ancient and time-honored religious customs and the contrary demands of advancing civilization, than the Hebrew narrative of

Jephthah and his only daughter.

[And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD,

and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering (Judg. 11:30-31).]

[And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she *was his* only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter (Judg. 11:34).]

[And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows....

And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man (Judg. 11:37-38).]

As was common custom,

this well-meaning man had made a foolish vow,

had bargained with the "god of battles," agreeing to pay a certain price for victory over his enemies.

And this price was to make a sacrifice of that which first came out of his house to meet him when he returned to his home.

Jephthah thought that one of his trusty slaves would thus be on hand to greet him, but it turned out that

his daughter and only child came out to welcome him home.

And so, even at that late date and among a supposedly civilized people, this beautiful maiden,

after two months to mourn her fate, was actually offered as a human sacrifice by her father,

and with the approval of his fellow tribesmen.

And all this was done in the face of Moses' stringent rulings against the offering of human sacrifice.

A special variety of human sacrifice ... is one which occurs in connection with the beginning of some **important** undertaking. As it is often found attendant upon the laying of a foundation, it has been called **“foundation-sacrifice.”**

The original purpose was to secure a **ghost** to **watch over**, to defend, or to give notice of any peril to some valued **structure** (S&K 1256-57).

It is reported that the Chinese used to throw a young girl into melted bell-metal, to **better the tone of the bell** (S&K 1257).

The Southern Slavs **wall in the shadow of a passer-by**; and the immuring of a girl or woman in the foundation of a new house is referred to in Bosnian and Herzogovinian songs (S&K 1259).

The Chinese and Tatars, in building a city-wall, interred within it the bodies of **workmen who died** (S&K 1257).

But men and women are addicted to making foolish and needless vows, and the men of old held all such pledges to be highly sacred.

89:6.4 In olden times, when a new building of any **importance** was started, it was customary to slay a human being as a **“foundation sacrifice.”**

This provided a **ghost** spirit to **watch over** and protect the **structure**.

When the Chinese made ready to cast a bell, custom decreed the sacrifice of at least one maiden for the purpose of **improving the tone of the bell**; the girl chosen was thrown alive into the molten metal.

89:6.5 It was long the practice of many groups to build slaves alive into important walls.

In later times the northern European tribes substituted the **walling in of the shadow of a passerby**

for this custom of entombing living persons in the walls of new buildings.

The Chinese buried in a wall those **workmen who died** while constructing it.



[In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho:

he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub,

according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun (1 Kings 16:34). [*See also S&K 1258.*]

Faint survivals of foundation-sacrifices appear in the dedication of a modern structure, where the articles deposited in the hollow of the foundation-stone are far from including anything as impressive as an immured victim (S&K 1257).

§295.\* **Redemption and Covenant.** (Sumner & Keller 1263)

Offerings of the first-fruits are made to their forefathers by almost every clan [of the Kuki-Lushai] (S&K IV 680). [*See also S&K 1264.*]

[Ransom and redemption] are conceptions, commonly dismissed as symbolic, which are survivalistic and capable of explanation only in the light of the evolution of religion. Ransom and redemption go back to the body of primitive ideas and practices which we have been reviewing, and especially and most directly to human sacrifice as a means of reconciliation and propitiation ... (S&K 1265).

89:6.6 A petty king in Palestine, in building the walls of Jericho,

“laid the foundation thereof in Abiram, his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub.”

At that late date, not only did this father put two of his sons alive in the foundation holes of the city’s gates, but his action is also recorded as being

“according to the word of the Lord.”

Moses had forbidden these foundation sacrifices, but the Israelites reverted to them soon after his death.

The twentieth-century ceremony of depositing trinkets and keepsakes in the cornerstone of a new building is reminiscent of the primitive foundation sacrifices.

89:6.7 It was long the custom of many peoples to dedicate the first fruits to the spirits.

And these observances, now more or less symbolic, are all survivals of the early ceremonies involving human sacrifice.

One's child, especially his **first-born**, was the most obvious life to give for his own; then a slave or a prisoner (S&K 1266).

In the case of the **Phoenicians** child-sacrifice developed, on such lines of logic, into an important societal institution. The Romans could not stamp it out (S&K 1266).

An Englishman in India is figured as having had a son by a native woman, and as, at the instance of an old gate-keeper, performing the ceremony sacrifice by beheading two goats. While so doing he matters the prayer: "Almighty! In place of this my son I offer **life for life**, blood for blood, head for head, bone for bone, hair for hair, skin for skin" (S&K 1265).

In the story of **Abraham**, his willingness to comply with the divine command for the sacrifice of his son is construed as a merit to be richly rewarded (S&K 1268).

In distress it is asked what God demands: "Shall I give my **first-born** for my sin; the fruit of my body for my transgression?" The first-born is to be given, like the first-fruits (S&K 1268).

The following Hindu legend recalls the **story** of Abraham. [Etc.] (S&K IV 680)

The idea of offering the **first-born** as a sacrifice was widespread among the ancients,

especially among the **Phoenicians**, who were the last to give it up.

It used to be said upon sacrificing, "**life for life.**"

Now you say at death, "dust to dust."

89:6.8 The spectacle of **Abraham** constrained to sacrifice his son Isaac,

while shocking to civilized susceptibilities, was not a new or strange idea to the men of those days.

It was long a prevalent practice for fathers, at times of great emotional stress, to sacrifice their **first-born** sons.

Many peoples have a tradition analogous to this **story**,

for there once existed a world-wide and profound belief that it was necessary to offer a human sacrifice when anything extraordinary or unusual happened.

## 7. MODIFICATIONS OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

“Even the first-born child, in the same fashion as the animals, had at first been sacrificed to a bloody Jehovah. Later on it was still in theory dedicated to the Lord but its ransom was compulsory. Five shekels of silver paid to the Levites redeemed it.” Each grown man was to pay a half-shekel as “a ransom for his soul to the Lord” (S&K 1268).

[See Leviticus 27:1-34.]

At the festal time comes the angel of Jahweh and kills the first-born of the Egyptians. The Israelites, however, had protected themselves by sacrificing a lamb and sprinkling their door-posts with blood (S&K 1269).

89:7.1 Moses attempted to end human sacrifices by inaugurating the ransom as a substitute.

He established a systematic schedule which enabled his people to escape the worst results of their rash and foolish vows. Lands, properties, and children could be redeemed according to the established fees, which were payable to the priests.

Those groups which ceased to sacrifice their first-born soon possessed great advantages over less advanced neighbors who continued these atrocious acts. Many such backward tribes were not only greatly weakened by this loss of sons, but even the succession of leadership was often broken.

89:7.2 An outgrowth of the passing child sacrifice was the custom of

smearing blood on the house doorposts for the protection of the first-born.

This was often done in connection with one of the sacred feasts of the year, and this ceremony once obtained over most of the world

Among the **Mexicans** the divine primordial mother, Centeotl, at her **festivals**, goes about through the land and abodes of men. To protect life, they pierced their ears, noses, tongues, arms, thighs, collected the blood and hung it in ancient vessels on the door-posts of the houses (S&K 1269).

§294.\* **Nature of the Offering.** (Sumner & Keller 1251)

“The exposed and later famous men, like **Sargon, Cyrus, Moses, Romulus** and Remus, play a great rôle.... Without sacrificing the child, it is offered to the god who expresses his satisfaction by preserving the child...” (S&K 1262).

Another modified form of human sacrifice is the **Roman** *ver sacrum*, or “sacred springtime.” Though all the **first-born of a year** were vowed to Mars, that is, to death, they might save their lives, if they could, outside the tribe (S&K 1262).

“According to the account of Festus, accepted by modern scholars, the *ver sacrum* took the following shape: In times of severe distress the Government dedicated to the gods, for the purpose of moving them to compassion for the people, the entire offspring of both man and beast during the forth-coming year. The children were **allowed to live until they had grown up;**

from **Mexico to Egypt.**

89:7.3 Even after most groups had ceased the ritual killing of children, it was the custom to put an infant away by itself, off in the wilderness or in a little boat on the water. If the child survived, it was thought that

the gods had intervened to preserve him, as in the traditions of **Sargon, Moses, Cyrus, and Romulus.**

Then came the practice of dedicating the **first-born sons** as sacred or sacrificial,

**allowing them to grow up**

then the marriageable youth of both sexes had to leave the town and seek their fortunes abroad, and make a new home for themselves elsewhere..." (S&K 1262).

[contd from three rows up] This amounted to mass-exposure and led to **colonization** (S&K 1262).

§296\*. **Sacral or Sacrificial "Prostitution."**  
(Sumner & Keller 1272)

[contd] This practice, termed also temple-harlotry, has its relation to **human sacrifice**, obligation, and ransom (S&K 1272).

The underlying idea is not unlike what was in the minds of the people concerned when a woman who **met a party of head-hunters** was allowed to **surrender herself sexually** to save her life.

A girl might be dedicated, in such a relation, to the god instead of being slain in sacrifice; then she might be bought off with the **earnings** of her sojourn in the temple (S&K 1272).

and then exiling them in lieu of death;

this was the origin of **colonization**.

The **Romans** adhered to this custom in their scheme of colonization.

89:7.4 Many of the peculiar associations of sex laxity with primitive worship had their origin in connection with **human sacrifice**.

In olden times, if a woman **met head-hunters**, she could redeem her life by **sexual surrender**.

Later, a maiden consecrated to the gods as a sacrifice might elect to redeem her life by dedicating her body for life to the sacred sex service of the temple;

in this way she could **earn** her redemption money.

The ancients regarded it as highly elevating to have sex relations with a woman thus engaged in ransoming her life.

“But not seldom religious tradition refused to move forward with the progress of society;

the goddess [Aphrodite at Byblos] retained her old character as a mother who was not a wife bound to fidelity to her husband, and at her sanctuary she protected under the name of religion, the sexual license of savage society ...” (S&K IV 685).

Sacral prostitution was known in Egypt and Assyria, and to the ancient Semites; it spread westward with the Babylonian and Phœnician religions and “flourished in Israel down into the later era of kings” (S&K 1273).

“No more welcome gift could a [Phœnician] woman bring to the deity than the payment she received for surrendering her body...” (S&K IV 685).

[The women dedicated to the service of the temples in India] were once generally patterns of piety and propriety but are not so now.

It was a religious ceremony to consort with these sacred maidens, and in addition, this whole ritual afforded an acceptable excuse for commonplace sexual gratification. This was a subtle species of self-deception which both the maidens and their consorts delighted to practice upon themselves.

The mores always drag behind in the evolutionary advance of civilization,

thus providing sanction for the earlier and more savagelike sex practices of the evolving races.

89:7.5 Temple harlotry eventually spread throughout southern Europe and Asia.

The money earned by the temple prostitutes was held sacred among all peoples—a high gift to present to the gods.

The highest types of women thronged the temple sex marts

“No doubt they drive a profitable trade under the sanction of religion, and some courtesans have been known to amass enormous fortunes. Nor do they think it inconsistent with their method of making money to spend it in works of piety. Here and there Indian bridges and other useful **public works** owe their existence to the liberality of the frail sisterhood” (S&K IV 684).

[O]ften the **dowry** for marriage was thus **collected**, and there was no dishonor involved (S&K IV 686).

Among the Dyaks of Borneo there is a class of priestesses whose loose mode of life does not make marriage impossible for them but rather the contrary (S&K 1272).

§297.\* **Survivals of Human Sacrifice.**  
(Sumner & Keller 1273)

[contd] Perhaps **redemption** and sacral **prostitution** might be called **modifications** or mitigations rather than survivals of the sacrifice of human beings ... (S&K 1273).

In Uganda, at the cessation of a dance, a little girl “was laid out at the base of the tree as though she was to be sacrificed, and every detail of the sacrifice was gone through in **mock** fashion.

and devoted their earnings to all kinds of sacred services and **works of public good**.

Many of the better classes of women **collected** their **dowries** by temporary sex service in the temples,

and most men preferred to have such women for wives.

## 8. REDEMPTION AND COVENANTS

89:8.1 Sacrificial **redemption** and temple **prostitution** were in reality **modifications** of human sacrifice.

Next came the **mock** sacrifice of daughters.

A slight incision was made in the child's neck, but not such as to seriously hurt her.... The girl on whom this ceremony was performed, was, my informant learnt, **dedicated by native custom to a life of perpetual virginity**" (S&K 1274).

[See S&K 1187 and 85:4.4.]

§298.\* **Exuvial Sacrifice.** (Sumner & Keller 1278)

[T]hat which has been taken to be most directly and indisputably survivalistic of human sacrifice is the actual **offering of parts of the body** (S&K 1278).

**Mutilations** are another form of the exuvial sacrifice (S&K 1283).

Ideas concerning the fetish-quality of **hair** and **nails** and their use in magic lend them especial importance as exuvial sacrifices (S&K 1280).

One of the most consistent of exuvial sacrifices is that of the **blood** (S&K 1282).

In Fiji, for example, at the death of a king or queen, every man or a member of a family, particularly children, cuts off a **finger** or **toe** joint, in some cases a whole finger, fastens it in a reed stalk and hangs it up in the house of the dead (S&K IV 689).

This ceremony consisted in bloodletting, with **dedication to lifelong virginity**,

and was a moral reaction to the older temple harlotry.

In more recent times virgins dedicated themselves to the service of tending the sacred temple fires.

89:8.2 Men eventually conceived the idea that

the **offering of some part of the body** could take the place of the older and complete human sacrifice.

Physical **mutilation** was also considered to be an acceptable substitute.

**Hair, nails,**

**blood,**

and even **fingers** and **toes** were sacrificed.



Of the various exuvial sacrifices effected by mutilation, with consequent blood-letting and identifying scars, the one performed in **circumcision** is perhaps the most historic. This is a practice found in all parts of the world and under conditions precluding origination elsewhere than in daimonism.

That it comes, in later ages, to be a **hygienic** device disconnected with any faith, has led some to believe that it was originally a rational procedure; they should realize that many unpremeditated primitive practices reveal the rationality of that which has survived the automatic processes of selection (S&K 1285).

In one Indian district, one hundred years ago, every woman, “previous to **piercing the ears** of her eldest daughter, preparatory to her being betrothed in marriage, must undergo the amputation of the first joints of the third and fourth fingers of her right hand.” But the mores have become milder. “Instead of the two **fin-****gers** being amputated, they are now merely **bound together** and thus rendered unfit for use” (S&K 1284).

To resume with Wilken: **cutting of the hair** is often a **religious** ceremony and has so remained; oaths are taken by the hair or beard, as seats of strength or soul (S&K 1280). [See also S&K IV 690-91.]

The later and well-nigh universal ancient rite of **circumcision** was an outgrowth of the cult of partial sacrifice;

it was purely sacrificial,

no thought of **hygiene** being attached thereto.

Men were circumcised;<sup>3</sup> women had their **ears pierced**.

89:8.3 Subsequently it became the custom to **bind fingers together** instead of cutting them off.

Shaving the head and **cutting the hair** were likewise forms of **religious** devotion.

The mutilation of the sex-organs extended even to castration, a practice of the priests of certain cults, preserved in classical legend, and prolonged into the **eunuch-making** of relatively recent times (S&K 1287).

[?]

As foregoing cases indicate, many of these marks, originally religious, became ornamental as well as political; and **rude scarring developed into artistic tattooing** with intricate ornamental patterns (S&K 1289).

§295.\* **Redemption and Covenant.** (Sumner & Keller 1263)

The establishment of what was thought to be a successful adjustment for conciliation and propitiation leads to the conception of a **covenant**, that is, of a contract or alliance between the men who owe to the god their blood and that of their children and the divinity that takes the ransom (S&K 1270).

The **making of eunuchs** was at first a modification of the idea of human sacrifice.

Nose and lip piercing is still practiced in Africa,

and **tattooing is an artistic evolution of the earlier crude scarring** of the body.

89:8.4 The custom of sacrifice eventually became associated, as a result of advancing teachings, with

the idea of the **covenant**.

At last, the gods were conceived of as entering into real agreements with man; and this was a major step in the stabilization of religion. Law, a covenant, takes the place of luck, fear, and superstition.

89:8.5 Man could never even dream of entering into a contract with Deity until his concept of God had advanced to the level whereon the universe controllers were envisioned as dependable. And man's early idea of God was so anthropomorphic that he was unable to conceive of a dependable Deity until he himself became relatively dependable, moral, and ethical.

89:8.6 But the idea of making a covenant with the gods did finally arrive.

XXXIV: SACRIFICE (Sumner & Keller 1199)

§285.\* **Bargain-Sacrifice; Prayer.** (Sumner & Keller 1205)

[contd] Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the sacrifice as a process of dealing with the daimons is the fact that it is a **bargain**.

It is a piece of the **business** of living;

a premium paid on an **insurance** policy against the aleatory element;

a **purchase of good luck**.

It is not at all intended to be a **free gift**, something for nothing, given purely out of love for the spirits or a disinterested desire to see them pleased (S&K 1205).

Evolutionary man eventually acquired such moral dignity that he dared to

**bargain** with his gods.

And so the **business** of offering sacrifices gradually developed into the game of man's philosophic bargaining with God.

And all this represented a new device for

**insuring** against bad luck

or, rather, an enhanced technique for the more definite **purchase of prosperity**.

Do not entertain the mistaken idea that these early sacrifices were a **free gift** to the gods,

[Contradicts 89:4.2, above.]

a spontaneous offering of gratitude or thanksgiving; they were not expressions of true worship.

89:8.7 Primitive forms of prayer were nothing more nor less than bargaining with the spirits, an argument with the gods. It was a kind of bartering in which pleading and persuasion were substituted for something more tangible and costly. The developing commerce of the races had inculcated the spirit of trade and had developed the shrewdness of barter; and now these traits began to appear in man's worship methods. And as some men were better traders than others, so some were regarded as better prayers than others.

Where prayer does not include the element of promise of sacrifice, or a reminder of its performance, that element resides in the common assumption that only the prayers of the "just" stand much chance of being answered.

The prayer of a just man was held in high esteem.

But the just, or the "justified" are those whose cult-obligations have been scrupulously discharged... Their accounts are squared up with the spirits (S&K 1208).

A just man was one who had paid all accounts to the spirits, had fully discharged every ritual obligation to the gods.

Primitive prayers, as the reader of them observes at once, do not ask for spiritual things; much less are they an expression of "attitude of soul" (S&K 1208).

89:8.8 Early prayer was hardly worship;

It is entirely typical of prayer that the requests are, above all, for life, health, and wealth of the individual and his immediate circle and for offspring (S&K 1209).

it was a bargaining petition for health, wealth, and life.

And in many respects prayers have not much changed with the passing of the ages.

A recent traveller [in Tibet] encountered monasteries “containing enormous prayer-wheels in which they said there were one million prayers. Each time the wheel is turned a bell rings, and one million prayers are ascended to Heaven” (S&K 1210).

Bits of cotton with prayers printed on them and tied to strings or to high poles placed over houses belong to the same class of objects as the prayer-wheels;

each time these bits of stuff flutter in the breeze it is as if the prayer written on them had been recited ... (S&K IV 647).

XXXVI: HUMAN SACRIFICE (Sumner & Keller 1251)

§295.\* **Redemption and Covenant.** (Sumner & Keller 1263)

The idea of sacrament enters into the sacrifice; that is, all who participate in a thing which, occurring in religion, is rare, terrible, mysterious, of powerful effect upon the imagination, yet effective for salvation from danger and from evil—which, outside of religion, may be shocking and abominable—all such come into close communion with one another (S&K 1271).

They are still read out of books, recited formally, and written out for

emplacement on wheels

and for hanging on trees,

where the blowing of the winds will save man the trouble of expending his own breath.

## 9. SACRIFICES AND SACRAMENTS

89:9.1 The human sacrifice, throughout the course of the evolution of Urantian rituals, has advanced from the bloody business of man-eating to higher and more symbolic levels.

The early rituals of sacrifice bred the later ceremonies of sacrament.

The amount of cannibal food is reduced to a small crumb or to a **drop of blood**, mixed with other edibles or drinks (S&K 1271).

The composite **idea of ransom, redemption, and covenant** has been developed, interpreted, rationalized, and refined from its original, to become one of the profoundest and most transcendental of religious mysteries;

and at the same time it has exercised a **powerful socializing influence** upon ever wider groups of fellow-worshippers (S&K 1271).

[Compare S&K IV 682-83.]

Those who participate in the sacrificial eating of the victim, or the **drinking of his blood**, are brought into sacred relations. The use of blood to lend sanctity to acts, even between groups or between members of different groups, is common enough; **brotherhoods** are thus formed and agreements are sanctioned by dipping weapons in the blood of sacrifice;

In more recent times the priest alone would partake of a bit of the cannibalistic sacrifice or a **drop of human blood**,

and then all would partake of the animal substitute.

These early **ideas of ransom, redemption, and covenants** have evolved into the later-day sacramental services.

And all this ceremonial evolution has exerted a **mighty socializing influence**.

89:9.2 In connection with the Mother of God cult, in Mexico and elsewhere, a sacrament of cakes and wine was eventually utilized in lieu of the flesh and blood of the older human sacrifices. The Hebrews long practiced this ritual as a part of their Passover ceremonies, and it was from this ceremonial that the later Christian version of the sacrament took its origin.

89:9.3 The ancient social **brotherhoods** were based on the rite of **blood drinking**;

the early Jewish fraternity was a sacrificial blood affair.

Paul started out to build a new Christian cult on

“the blood of the everlasting covenant” is a familiar expression (S&K 1270).

“the blood of the everlasting covenant.”

And while he may have unnecessarily encumbered Christianity with teachings about blood and sacrifice, he did once and for all make an end of the doctrines of redemption through human or animal sacrifices. His theologic compromises indicate that even revelation must submit to the graduated control of evolution.

We are told that the death of Christ was a sacrifice for all; it paid the cult obligation.... The old cult-works to assure future life were thus done away with; Paul repudiated them as a burden (S&K IV 681).

According to Paul, Christ became the last and all-sufficient human sacrifice; the divine Judge is now fully and forever satisfied.

89:9.4 And so, after long ages the cult of the sacrifice has evolved into the cult of the sacrament.

For some authors the [Christian sacrament of communion] is a survival from the cannibalism of remote ages, from anthropotheophagy.

Thus are the sacraments of modern religions the legitimate successors of those shocking early ceremonies of human sacrifice and the still earlier cannibalistic rituals.

Many still depend upon blood for salvation, but it has at least become

If we heard that the Chinese or Moham-medans had a religious custom in which they used currently the figure of eating flesh and drinking the blood of a man or god, and if we had no such figure of speech in our own use, we should consider it very shocking (S&K IV 684).

figurative, symbolic, and mystic.

**10. FORGIVENESS OF SIN****VIII: SIN AND FORGIVENESS**  
(Wieman 147)

[PREAMBLE] (Wieman 147)

Our problem is to get beneath [the patterns by which religion has dealt in the past with sin, conversion, **salvation** and redemption] to the true needs and realities involved, and to **develop** a pattern fitted to our time which will enable religion today to deal adequately with these matters (W 147).

Now the sense of sin is nothing else than the sense of reality, and people cannot live effectively and intelligently without a sense of reality.

But the sense of "sin" as a pattern of thought handed from one cultural context to another does not help the people of this age to find the ancient reality.... [P]reaching cannot do it nor propaganda nor revivals. These cannot galvanize into vitality an **outworn pattern of thought** *about* reality,

even though the living **reality** is **with us still** (W 147-48).

89:10.1 Ancient man only attained consciousness of favor with God through sacrifice.

Modern man must **develop** new techniques of achieving the self-consciousness of **salvation**.

The consciousness of sin persists in the mortal mind,

but the **thought patterns** of **salvation** therefrom have become **outworn** and antiquated.

The **reality** of the **spiritual need** **persists**,

but intellectual progress has destroyed the olden ways of securing peace and consolation for mind and soul.



SIN (Wieman 148)

[contd] Sin is disloyalty to God. Another way of saying it is that sin is the insubordination of any interest or impulse to the complete sovereignty of God. Still again, sin is any state of being which is not completely dominated and controlled by one mastering devotion to the whole reality of God (W 148).

The disloyalty that is sin has four different forms.

There is the sin of incomplete loyalty;

there is the sin of divided loyalty;

the sin of no loyalty or indifference;

and, finally, the sin of idolatry. This last is most damaging of all, most subtle and yet most deadly. It is the sin that is incurred in the steadfast loyalty to some one specific object in lieu of God (W 148).

THE SENSE OF GUILT (Wieman 153)

The sense of guilt in its most naïve form will be determined by the mores (W 153).

89:10.2 Sin must be redefined as deliberate disloyalty to Deity.

There are degrees of disloyalty:

the partial loyalty of indecision;

the divided loyalty of confliction;

the dying loyalty of indifference;

and the death of loyalty exhibited in

devotion to godless ideals.

89:10.3 The sense or feeling of guilt is the consciousness of the violation of the mores;

it is not necessarily sin.

There is no real sin in the absence of conscious disloyalty to Deity.

89:10.4 The possibility of the recognition of the sense of guilt is a badge of transcendent distinction for mankind.

[The sense of guilt] springs from the realization of the **glory** that might be and ought to be. It is the mark of the dignity and the **greatness** of man, of human life and history, and not of the **meanness** of it (W 155-56).

It does not mark man as **mean** but rather sets him apart as a creature of potential **greatness** and **ever-ascending glory**.

Such a sense of unworthiness is the initial stimulus that should lead quickly and surely to those faith conquests which translate the mortal mind to the superb levels of moral nobility, cosmic insight, and spiritual living; thus are all the meanings of human existence changed from the temporal to the eternal, and all values are elevated from the human to the divine.

#### CONFESSION OF SIN (Wieman 156)

[contd] **Confession of sin** is vital to religious health. Only through confession and **repudiation of disloyalty** can one reinstate and preserve his loyalty in the midst of that constant and inevitable unfaithfulness which life imposes (W 156).

89:10.5 The **confession of sin** is a manful **repudiation of disloyalty**,

Of course my confession in **nowise nullifies other consequences of the disloyalty**. These may go on very disastrously unless it is possible for me to do something else to correct them in addition to my confession (W 156).

but it **in no wise mitigates the time-space consequences of such disloyalty**.

Finally confession of sin enables one to yield himself to the purging, remaking process of **growth which is God** (W 157).

But confession—sincere recognition of the nature of sin—is essential to religious **growth** and spiritual progress.

## FORGIVENESS OF SIN (Wieman 157)

The forgiveness of God is the renewal, after disloyalty, of the interplay of innumerable activities weaving connections of meaning and mutual support between the individual and his physical and social environment, healing and building anew the maimed and broken connections caused by the disloyalty (W 158).

[Repeated from 89:2.3: The belief is always present, by implication at least, that there was once a sinless time, when all were happy; this was the Golden Age (S&K 1136).]

89:10.6 The forgiveness of sin by Deity is the renewal of loyalty relations

following a period of the human consciousness of the lapse of such relations as the consequence of conscious rebellion.

The forgiveness does not have to be sought, only received as the consciousness of re-establishment of loyalty relations between the creature and the Creator.

And all the loyal sons of God are happy,

service-loving, and ever-progressive in the Paradise ascent.

89:10.7 [Presented by a Brilliant Evening Star of Nebadon.]

1. "Original sin" may belong, as a dogma, to a more developed stage of civilization, but the conviction that anyone may at any time sin, and so be a candidate for punishment, is entirely correlative with the common experience of all mankind ... (S&K 1210).

2. The Tauraré burn their dead. The ashes are preserved in holly reeds and at each meal some of them are consumed (S&K IV 668).

3. *Contrast:* [Circumcision] is a common rite in initiation-ceremonies, being performed on both sexes ... (S&K IV 691).