



Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual (Writings from the Ancient World Supplements)

Yitzhak Feder

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This pioneering study examines the use of blood to purge the effects of sin and impurity in Hittite and biblical ritual. The idea that blood atones for sins holds a prominent place in both Jewish and Christian traditions. The author traces this notion back to its earliest documentation in the fourteenth- and thirteenth-century B.C.E. texts from Hittite Anatolia, in which the smearing of blood is used as a means of expiation, purification, and consecration. This rite parallels, in both its procedure and goals, the biblical sin offering. The author argues that this practice stems from a common tradition manifested in both cultures. In addition, this book aims to decipher and elucidate the symbolism of the practice of blood smearing by seeking to identify the sociocultural context in which the expiatory significance of blood originated. Thus, it is essential reading for anyone interested in the meaning and efficacy of ritual, the origins of Jewish and Christian notions of sin and atonement, and the origin of the biblical blood rite.

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