

Christ in the Sacrifices 15-12-06a

This is the day before Pearl Harbor Day, December 6th, 2015. We continue our study in the book of Leviticus, looking at Christ and the sacrifices. We move this morning into chapter 4, beginning what is called the Sin Offering.

Let's take a moment to go to the Lord in prayer and we will begin. Father, thank You for Your grace and Your faithfulness, Your mercies that are renewed to us each day, the standing that You grant to us, the privileges that You bestow on us because of our position in the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank You for Him and for His willingness to not only live among us and not retain the privileges of His deity, but to go to the cross and to die that death on our behalf, to be raised, to be lifted up, to be seated at Your right hand awaiting the day when He gathers us to Himself and we see the movement of Your plan and purpose and the unfolding revelation of Your glory as the remaining ages unfold.

We thank You for the position in history that we occupy, the time and place in which we live, the opportunities that You grant us to redeem the time, to have our lives count and to substantially reflect Your glory and we pray that as we study Your Word this morning in this so critical portion, the reflection of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Levitical offerings will be clear to us, the charge that it presents to us, the call that it offers to us will be clear so that we can respond and fulfill it. We pray these things in Jesus' name, Amen. As we come to the fourth chapter of Leviticus, as I have mentioned in previous weeks, there is sort of a change.

We've reviewed extensively the first three chapters, the offerings detailed therein, the whole burnt offering which looks at the concept of atonement in the sense of making possible commitment and dedication of ourselves. The only reason that there is any value in us committing, why would God care if we were willing to serve and willing to commit ourselves to Him, it is only because we have been sanctified and atonement has been made that makes us useful to Him. Iron ore containing ferrous material is of no use in doing work.

We need to take that ore and process it into iron and into steel and into various alloys that then make it possible to have tools that hold an edge, tools that will retain their shape and enable us to do work. In much the same way, atonement, which is mentioned once in Leviticus chapter 1, makes possible our fitness for God's purpose. Chapter 2, the things that we do, the work that we perform is pictured in the minchah, the olah, the whole burnt offering, dedication of self, epitomized in the Lord Jesus Christ who dedicated Himself to doing the will of the Father and we follow His example.

He has made it possible in His own faithfulness for us to be faithful people. Chapter 2, the minchah, the example of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ which was perfect and without sin, unleavened, unadulterated and in the same way we can offer work to the Lord God, the work of our hands that is holy and acceptable in His sight because the Lord Jesus has done it. Chapter 3, the peace with God that we've spent a couple of weeks looking at now, seeing that great peace

offering that is offered at the foot of Mount Sinai, the people sprinkled with blood are now able to enter into service and function and covenant obedience before God, separate and distinct from salvation.

This is a point of ascent, it is a point of commitment, it is a point of acknowledgement that there is a purpose in our salvation. We're not just saved to be saved any more than you would sign up in the military just to be able to say, I'm in the military. The government pays people in the army and the navy and the air force and the coast guard and most importantly in the marines to accomplish a purpose, to get something done, not just to have troops and sailors and airmen but there are purposes to be accomplished and we're saved for a purpose, induction, initiation, basic furnishing of equipment and uniforms and so on, that's all at the beginning, getting the paperwork signed, making arrangements for pay and quarters and allowances and so on.

Separate and distinct from, now we are going to go get the mission done. It is after, it is subsequent. You get your basic training, then you get your occupational specialty training and you commit to that.

The current Commandant of Midshipmen was featured at the Naval Academy, he was featured in the alumni magazine this month and there is an extensive article about him, every picture he is in. I've never seen so many pictures of one guy in one article, there's I think 13, 14 pictures of him but I like that because he is a marine colonel and he is an artilleryman and so I think that's great that there is, of course it's a little bit startling that he graduated from navy I think 12 years after I did but nevertheless he has come to occupy that position and to do that job after a lot of experience and a lot of previous training and preparation. It is the same with us.

We accept assignments related to obedience based on the fact that we are already saved and now there is a purpose in it and to miss that purpose is to waste our life. I noticed that they have a new incarnation of Macbeth that is coming out, if you've seen that. I've only seen ads for it, I don't know exactly too much about it except that it's one more Macbeth but you know and I have often repeated one of my favorite quotes from that play by Shakespeare, there are people who don't know that's by Shakespeare but the idea that life is a shadow, a poor player on the stage, strutting and fretting, sound and fury, signifying nothing.

That's your life, that's my life apart from Christ, apart from the peace offering, apart from the commitment and the sprinkling of the blood that enters us into service to God. God's objectives are eternal, His work is everlasting and to enter into that and be a part of it is to leave the mundane realms of materiality and enter into the eternal realms of God and His divine plan and purpose and what a privilege we have. But we've got to be conscious that it is a decision to make, it is a commitment to enter into and it is an ongoing thing.

That's why there was one blood on the doorpost Passover to stave off death but there is an ongoing pattern of Levitical sacrifice reflecting commitment to God and the Ola and the Minka and the peace offering. And now we turn to chapter 4 and there is a change. Let's have a pop quiz.

On the first three sacrifices you know that there were various forms of them. You bring a bull, if not a bull something else. What is the distinguishing feature of the various forms of the sacrifice? What separates them? If it's a Minka remember there were three different kinds.

Remember the three different kinds of Minka you could bring in terms of the grain. What form could the grain be in? It could be fine flour, it could be baked cakes or roasted grains. So the distinguishing feature of those subcategories was the form or what it was that you specifically brought right? Let's take a look at Leviticus chapter 4 and watch for the distinguishing feature of the subcategories of this sacrifice.

Leviticus chapter 4, the Lord spoke to Moses saying speak to the children of Israel. That pattern persists. There are designated communicators and messengers in God's ordained functional structure.

Some of us are communicators, others of us are not. It's just the way it is. There's no qualitative judgment made any more than a driver of a bus is more or less quality than a driver of a limousine.

It's just a different function assigned. So the Lord spoke to Moses, speak to the children of Israel. If a person sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and does any of them, if the anointed priest sins, brings guilt on the people, let him offer to the Lord for his sin, young bull without blemish, etc., etc., the anointed priest shall do this in verse 5 and in verse 6 and in verse 7 and in verse 8 and in verse 9 and in verse 11 and in verse 12.

Verse 13 is our next subcategory of the offering. So who does the first one? Who is the malfunctioner in the first category? Verse 3, the anointed priest. Now, down in verse 13, now if the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, the thing they have done, when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a young bull, the elders shall do this, and the anointed priest shall do that, the priest shall do this.

Verse 18, verse 19, verse 20, he shall do with the bull as he did with the bull of the sin offering, and so on, he shall carry it out. Verse 22 is the third category. So review, what's the first category of the sin offering? The anointed priest sins, second category, whole congregation sins, verse 22, when a ruler has sinned, right? Sin that he has committed becomes known to him, he shall do this, that, and the other.

Look at verse 27, the fourth category of this offering, if anyone of the common people sins. So first, we see a difference because in chapter 1, and in chapter 2, and in chapter 3, the variations on the theme of those three sacrifices were distinguished by what? What any given offerer brought. Is it a bull? Is it a goat? Is it a pigeon? Is it roasted grain? Is it baked? Is it ground flour? Right? That's what distinguishes the variations.

Here, it's completely different. Now the issue is not what are you bringing, but who is bringing it? How much emphasis was there on the occasion for bringing a whole burnt offering? Does it say, if anyone receives an inordinate amount of blessing and wants to be thankful to God, let him come. Does it say, if anyone has been delivered from a great danger and wants to express thankfulness, let him come.

Does it say, if anyone has had an exceptionally bountiful harvest and decides that, does it emphasize in the first three chapters the reason for which someone is bringing the ola, or the minka, or the fellowship and peace offering. Does it dwell on that to any extent? How about in chapter 4? There are verse after verse after verse about if he has done a particular kind of thing that does this and it becomes known and he wasn't, it's very much detailed that there is a specific occasion on which this offering is brought. So if nothing else, do you notice a pretty significant divide between chapter 3 and chapter 4? You can't help it.

It takes a totally different tack. These offerings are distinguished by their occasion and they're distinguished by who it is that is bringing them. And that was not in view to any great extent in the first three chapters.

It's not invisible, but it's very much in the background. Here it is right up front. Who's bringing it? Why are they bringing it? Okay, so that is our first observation, is we have a difference here.

Secondly, the distinguishing feature that is pointed out here on who's bringing it isn't how bad a sinner is he. Did he commit a minor sin? Is it a venial sin or is it a mortal sin? That's a sin unto death. Here's a venial, it's sort of a minor, you know, light a few candles, say a few Hail Marys, you know, ring around the rosary a little bit and you're all good to go.

Right? This doesn't distinguish the relative veniality of the sin. What is it about the people who are bringing these? What is their distinguishing feature? It's where they fit into the structure, isn't it? If he's the anointed priest, if he is the designated ruler, if it's all of the people collectively, or is it a common person, an individual? So it's their place in the structure that determines which part of this applies. Who are you and what are you responsible for? Right? So there is a social aspect to this.

Now have you ever in reviewing and attempting to implement 1 John 1.9 in terms of sins we have committed, name your sins, confess your sins, he's faithful and just and forgiven to cleanse, we think, well, I was unkind, I said something I shouldn't have said, did something I shouldn't have done, failed to do something I should have done, failed to say something I should have said, I was out of line, I transgressed, I broke a clear commandment here to not lie, cheat or steal or some such thing. Right? And then on that basis we go to God and say, oh Lord, here's what I've done, here's the standard, here's how I crossed it, I acknowledge that I am a transgressor, that I am a sinner, I have committed this particular sin or this collection of sins, this cluster of sins, this litany of sins in some cases. But we typically look at it, don't we, in terms of what was the standard and what did I do instead? Notice that what this chapter leads with is the standard of how does your sin affect others? Because if you are the anointed priest, you

have an influence on the people.

If you are a ruler, you have influence on a lot of people. If you are acting collectively as a mob and as a group and your whole group has done a thing or if you are an individual within a group, you're like Achan and you take of the forbidden things and you've brought sin into the camp, you have leavened the lump, you have honeyed the peace offering, you've done something to introduce defilement and corruption that is going to brand all of the people even though you are just an individual. So isn't it interesting that when the sin offering is introduced, the issue is not, well how bad of a sin was it? And was it a minor command or a major? Did you violate the civil code or did you violate the moral code? Did you violate the ritual requirements or did you do something that is heinously immoral in terms of the Ten Commandments? Did you break one of the Ten Commandments or did you just walk too far on the Sabbath? It doesn't make that distinction, does it? What is the distinction? Where do you fit into the group of God's people? Where you know there is no anointed priest where there is no congregation? You don't have a wandering priest out there with no people that need a priest? The only reason to have a priest is that there are people who need priestly functions.

There is no ruler, you know, was Robinson Crusoe king of his island? I mean, king of what? King of the coconuts? King of the sand pebbles? What would it be? Obviously, talking about the sin of an anointed priest or the sin of a ruler or the sin of the entire congregation or the sin of someone who is defined as being a part of that congregation immediately suggests that it is the impact of this sin on the people of God that is in view. You just can't help or escape that conclusion, can you? The sin is set in the context of what it does to everyone else. It doesn't say if you commit a sin that really gets up God's nose, you'd better bring a bigger animal than one that he doesn't really care too much about.

It's not really God that's in view here. It is what have you done relative to the people of God? How important are you in the structure? The things that you mess up. Remember when David numbered the people and he shouldn't have? Did it just affect him? Was the discipline on him or was it on the whole nation? How many thousands of people died because David as a ruler messed up? How many people were affected when Aaron the priest made the golden calf? How many people suffered judgment for that? Who had to drink the ashes and the dissolved gold of the calf? But Aaron is the one that made that.

Did other people ask him? Yeah, but he's the one that made it. And so you've got kind of a combo there because you've got the priest malfunctioning, you've got the people malfunctioning as a congregation. They sat down to eat and rose up to play.

So that's an interesting observation we can make right off the bat as we come into Leviticus chapter 4. The second thing I will say is I have given you, kind of like Paul says, I communicate to you what I received about the Lord's table in the upper room. Paul wasn't there, but he says, I deliver you what I received. The Lord, the same night that he was betrayed, took the cup.

It doesn't say the night before he was crucified. It says the night he was betrayed. And that is a

commentary all by itself on the Corinthian context in which you find that because it's not talking about the ritual of crackers and Kool-Aid.

It is talking about the body of Christ that you sin against. It is the congregation of God's people that you sin against that is in view when Paul the Apostle reviews that night. The night he was betrayed, not the night before he died for our sins, the night before he accomplished our redemption, the night before he offered atonement, the night before he accomplished reconciliation.

What is in view? The night he was betrayed. It is that relationship within the group of disciples, the larger group of disciples, the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what's in view.

And the reason Paul brings up that episode and what Jesus has to say about his body and the reason Paul makes the point that if you partake of fellowship in an unworthy manner, you sin against the body of the Lord, you're sinning against your fellow believers. That's what we have here. That's what's going on here.

It has nothing to do with you goof the ritual. It is a sin against these little ones. It is a sin against those for whom Christ died who are his body.

I have to keep offloading my training. His body. So, if someone who has a position that is hereafter described in and among the people of God, an influential position particularly, that's why it leads with the anointed priest, then goes to the ruler, then goes to the congregation acting as a whole, typically led by the elders.

The congregation doesn't just form an ant swarm or a bee swarm or a locust swarm and have a mind, a collective mind. They're led by their elders. But that's less than a ruler.

These are the influential clan chiefs. They all get together and everybody follows. And then the individual.

But the view here is remediation. The first three offerings were sort of proactive. If anyone brings this offering, here's how he does it.

And the emphasis is on the procedure. If you bring it and it is of this nature, here's your procedure. Here's your details.

Here's what you will do. Here's what the priest will do. If anyone brings.

Here it is if people in these categories sin and at the point that it becomes known, here's what you do. And therefore, in the first three chapters, remember the sweet smelling aroma idea? It will be accepted by God. You don't find that aroma in the first three chapters.

There's another notation coming up in chapter 4 and chapter 5. And I'm going to suggest that there really is sort of an artificial division between chapter 4 and chapter 5. If you look at your Bible, it says in chapter 4, this is the sin offering. Your new King James probably has that

labeled. And in chapter 5, it says the trespass offering.

These are long chapters. I don't have time this morning to read all of it. But we've already reviewed in chapter 4 that the first section is, here's what the anointed priest guilty of sin will bring.

Here's what the ruler will bring. Here's what the congregation represented by its elders should bring. Here's what someone of the common people, verse 27, should bring.

Let's just read that one and then go into chapter 5 because I want you to watch and see if you see a difference between chapter 4 and chapter 5. Because after studying this, I don't. I don't think these are two different sacrifices. And I'll explain why.

But let's start reading at verse 27. This is representative of the first three categories. It's just a little different procedure.

"...anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing something against the commandments of the Lord, which ought not to be done, and is guilty, or if the sin which he committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. He shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering. The priest shall take some of its blood." Notice he kills the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering.

It doesn't even say at the altar. Why doesn't it just say at the altar? It says kill it at the place of the sin offering. Because he's not really qualified to bring the ola at this point, the whole burnt offering.

He's bringing a sin offering instead. This is remediation that has to take place before the other can take place. "...the priest shall take some of his blood with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of the burnt offering." This is different.

Some of the previous ones it is taken into the tabernacle and sprinkled at or before the veil. But here for the individual common person it's put on the horns of the altar. And we'll talk about the reason for that.

You can probably already begin to deduce it. What's the difference in blood in the holy place and blood on the horns of the altar? Think about people who grabbed hold of the horns of the altar and so on. That will become clear.

"...he shall remove its fat, as fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering." Notice he keeps alluding to the previous offerings, but you're not bringing a peace offering and you're not bringing a burnt offering because you're not qualified. You have to get this out of the way first. So instead of doing the fat of the peace offering, you're having to do the fat of the sin offering.

Instead of offering a whole burnt offering, you're having to bring the sin offering to the same place. But there's this idea that what you ought to be doing you're not doing and you're having to do remediation instead. So there's sort of an indirect or implied rebuke here, as instead of just giving objective notices, it refers back to, you know, not only did you sin, but now you have wasted time and opportunity because of that sin.

Because of that sin, you are not only having to remediate that sin, but you are disqualified, unable, and don't have the time and opportunity to do the things you could have been doing. Dedication yourself, dedicating your work, enjoying fellowship with God, all of that is set aside. You're busy catching up.

This is like failing an assignment and while the rest of the class goes forward, you have to go back and redo that assignment and submit it to get a passing grade. While everyone else is moving forward, you're back filling in a hole that you should have done right the first time. So there's a double indemnity here.

The priest will burn it on the altar, verse 32, if he brings a lamb, here's what he does, lays his hand on it, the priest will take some of it, 34, remove the fat, 35, as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering, notice, keeps harking back, you could have been doing a peace offering, but no, you're here doing a sin offering because of your sin, because of your lack of caution and lack of care, lack of alertness. You're playing catch up. Somebody behind you is bringing those other sacrifices, you're here having to do the sin offering.

Verse 35, the priest will burn that on the altar according to the offerings made by fire to the Lord, so the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed and it shall be forgiven him. Notice he does not make atonement for his sin, the sacrifice doesn't make atonement for his sin, the priest does. It's a picture of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Without the mediator there is no atonement for sin, the priest makes the atonement for him by processing the sacrifice. Now look at chapter 5, if a person sins in hearing the utterance of an oath and is a witness whether he has seen or known, if he does not tell it he bears his guilt, or if a person touches any unclean thing, whether it is the carcass of an unclean beast, carcass of an unclean livestock, carcass of unclean creeping things, unaware of it he is unclean and guilty, or if he touches human uncleanness, verse 3, then he is defiled when he realizes it. Verse 4, if he swears, speaking thoughtlessly.

Verse 5, when he is guilty in any of these matters he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing. Now we said that there is a change from the first three chapters in chapter 4 on the organization of the sacrifice, how it is determined what should be done. It's not based on what you bring, it's based on who has done a thing.

Now in chapter 5 the further details of this offering are what did you do? If any person, and it doesn't say was it a ruler, was it the anointed priest that heard an oath and didn't confirm it,

was it the ruler, was it all of the people, was it a common person, it doesn't specify who it was now, it says what did the person do or fail to do. I would submit to you that this is yet another, you know how you outline, you've got Roman numeral 1, then you've got capital A, then you've got Arabic numeral 1, and then you've got small a, and you've got that whole hierarchy of outlining, right? I hope I've got that right. But you outline, you have parts and sub-parts.

I would submit to you that beginning in chapter 4 you have major part sin offering, then you have a, anointed priest, b, ruler, c, congregation, represented by the elders, d, common man, e is still the sin offering, but instead of who did it, here's how you perform the procedure, if what was done, here's the procedure. But it's not a different sacrifice. It is still a remedial sin offering that is brought, but the detail changes based on what was done rather than who did it.

So if it is an anointed priest, he's got to process a and then look for the nature of what he did. So there's a, it's like a spreadsheet sheet. Have you ever looked at a table where you've got to find the right row, and then you find the right column, and then you look and here's, here's your answer? Well, the row is who has done it, anointed priest, ruler, whole congregation, common, okay, I'm a common person.

Right now, what did I do? Did I hear an oath and not confirm it? Did I do this? Did I do that? Did I do the other? So it's a, it's a table. And based on that, you follow the instructions for both common man and nature of the offense. But it's all on the table for sin offering.

So this is my suggestion. We'll see if it bears out. What is the application? If you had to leave at this point, either today or in any future point when someone's reviewing this particular study, what is, what is the result? What is the application? So what? Well, let me ask you two questions.

Is it important whether or not you have sinned? Does it make a difference? Obviously the answer is yes. When there is sin in the camp, God takes it seriously. When someone has a sinful attitude like Balaam, God takes it seriously.

God will station an angel with a sword in the path. Does God take sin seriously? Yes, He does. Why does He devote so much space in Scripture to sacrifices and offerings for sin? Both here, take a look at the book of Hebrews, the detailed argument that is made and the exposition of the work of Christ as it is illuminated by and anticipated by the Levitical offerings.

God takes this very seriously. So should we take seriously what God takes seriously? If you have any wits about you at all, obviously yes. If God thinks it's important, it's important.

Secondly, what is the definition of sin? Is it what I think is sin? Is it what society thinks is sin? Is it what science tries to claim is sin in a realm that it can't even access? Or is it what God defines as sin? Science is incapable of telling you whether or not abortion is evil. In fact, the scientific evidence would weigh on the side of eliminating anything that would weaken the species. But of course it has to make a moral judgment that survival of the species is good and extinction of the species is bad.

To me, humanity looks like a serious termite infestation on the surface of this planet. Look at the destruction and the havoc that has been wrought by human presence on the planet. You think about the idyllic days when there were just animals and nature was in harmony and balance and coral was free to grow all under the sea and everything was in a wonderful balance.

And what does man do? He comes and destroys and pollutes and drives species to extinction, shamelessly exploits and tortures animals, kills bugs indiscriminately because man thinks they're bad for him. What did a potato bug ever do to me? But we wipe them out by the uncounted billions and a lot of other harmless and innocent bugs along with them because we spray insecticides promiscuously all over the planet. We are a scourge and nothing makes me smile more than people talking about, oh, if we can escape the planet and go and visit other worlds and other galaxies.

And I think, right, it's like a virus. It's right now it's quarantined to one planet. Let's spread it.

Let's destroy other planets. We've worn this one out and exploited it and used up all of its resources and trashed and destroyed all the other biological forms of life. Let's go somewhere else and do the same thing.

But of course, from a scientific point of view, you could claim that, well, survival of the fittest. This is nature's way. Well, if it's survival of the fittest, why do we go to extraordinary lengths to preserve and to help to reproduce our most unfit members, people that have got the genetic shortcomings and deficiencies? We coddle and confirm and nurture our weakest members.

Well, this is counterintuitive. It doesn't make any sense from a scientific point of view that we're going to go extinct if we promote our weak and limit our strong. So I say all of that to say you need an absolute immaterial standard for what is right and what is wrong.

You can't base it on materialities because for any material argument for goodness or badness, I can give you a perfectly legitimate counterargument. You cannot derive morality or ethics. You say, well, it's the greatest good for the greatest number.

Says who? Suffering bad, pleasure good. Says who? I can show you that suffering produces stronger, more durable species because it eliminates the weak. That a famine and disease, the plague in Europe weeded out a lot of people that were weak and the people that conquered the remainder of the planet were people descended from the strongest of the species who survived the plague.

Doesn't any knowing person prune a rose bush and get rid of the weak branches so that the stronger ones can produce more blooms? Do we not prune our fruit trees so that they will, doesn't God Himself prune the trees so that it will bear more fruit? Well, what if you're one of the pruned branches? Hey, wait a minute. I'm getting pruned for the greater good. Somebody has to define what is good and what is bad.

And here's the thing. You can make all the arguments you want in society about this is good and this is bad and these people ought to have rights and those ought to be allowed to do what they want. The standard for right and wrong is God.

Who defines what is sin here in the Bible? Who did the congregation of Israel all get together and have a vote on what their standards were going to be? No, God dictated right and wrong from heaven and that's the standard. And you can rail and shake your fist at it all you want, but if God says it's wrong, it's wrong. People don't understand this.

They say, well, there's all these inane regulations in the Levitical code, you know, things about how to dress and whether or not to shave your beard and one thing and it's just ridiculous. Why not eat some of these foods? Not all of them are like pork or shellfish where they might have some basis in forbidding them. It's just, it's just, you know, it chews the cud and cleaves the hoof or not.

And that, you know what the point of that is? If God says it's wrong, if God says it's forbidden, it's forbidden. It doesn't have to have a rational basis. It doesn't have to make sense to you.

It's wrong because God says it's wrong and that should be enough. It's a part of faith and it's a part of obedience to submit ourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt us in due time. And it is arrogant to say, well, my standard is better than God's standard.

My view is superior. I have a better grasp of the long-term implications of this given policy and this given claim of what is good and what is bad and what is right I really am in a better position, the hubris involved in that is the original sin. I will ascend my throne above the stars of God.

I will be like the Most High. I will determine what is right and what is wrong. That's how the universe got in the trouble that it's in.

So the fundamental thing to remember here as we move into Leviticus chapter 4, first of all, God defines sin. Not popular opinion, not a poll, not your inner voice, not me and my friends think. God defines what is sin.

God also is the author of and the provider of the solution to sin. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saves us. And the blood of Jesus Christ continues to cleanse us.

He is the deliverer at Passover. He is the preserver and the protector and the defender ever after. It is all of God.

It is all of grace. So as we face our challenges, as we make our decisions, it is imperative that we recognize the sovereignty, the moral authority of God. There is no other valid or reliable arbiter of what is right and what is wrong.

And there is certainly no remedy for sin for those who try to take that mantle on themselves and say, I will define what is right and what is wrong. Okay, so whatever it is you still think is wrong, how are you going to fix it? The problem with mass shootings and other forms of violence, as I said the other night, is not too many guns. You know, this latest couple that perpetrated things near where I was born out there in California, they said, well, if we had different gun laws, maybe they wouldn't have as many.

They had 12 unexploded bombs in their apartment. You are going to have bomb laws now? If people want to wreak havoc, they will find a way to wreak havoc. They can pour chlorine into your water supply in excess amounts.

They can put rat poison in food. Remember that when I was a yonker, they had people opening up pills and putting poison and arsenic in your pain relievers. That is why you have got all this child proofing.

Think about the millions of hours of wasted time, people trying to get these things open, all because a couple of dingbats poisoned the Tylenol or whatever it was. People will always find a way to express their corruption and their sinfulness. We have mental instability and you can't fix it.

You can't drug it. You can't train it. You can't educate it.

You can't propagandize it out of the human heart. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Desperately wicked, deceitful people are not going to fix the desperate wickedness and deceit in other people's hearts.

It is the blind leading the blind and they are all going to go into the ditch. Science will never make morally accountable and perfect people. It can't be done.

Science has no access to that realm. It is in the realm of thought. It is in the realm of God.

So think about that when we think about our sins, when we bring them before God and request cleansing and forgiveness on the basis of the work of Jesus Christ. It is an effect not only on ourselves but on those around us and there is both the place we occupy in the structure of God's people. Are we a parent? Are we a child? Are we an employer, an employee? Are we a friend? Are we a co-worker? Are we just someone that is observed by others? And it is what we have done.

Both of these are in view in Leviticus 4 and 5 and we'll pick up when we come back from the break.