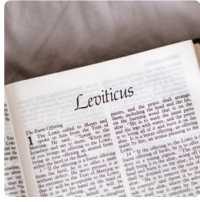


# OpenTheo

## Leviticus 16 - 17



### Leviticus - Steve Gregg

Leviticus 16-17 is a discussion led by Steve Gregg on the law concerning Day of Atonement, which is not about going to heaven but rather the earthly purposes of God's people. The holy place referred to in the text is not the sanctuary where the priest entered daily, but the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. The ritual sacrifices in Leviticus 16 represent Jesus going away to heaven and offering his own blood, which means that the law on animal sacrifices is temporary.

### Transcript

We're going to be looking at the 16th chapter of Leviticus, which has the law concerning the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, still celebrated by Jews today as the Day of Atonement, which is the only thing left, really, to the Jews since the temple has been destroyed. Almost 2,000 years ago, we saw, or take it back, we shall see in chapter 17 and verse 11 that God says, I have given the blood to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for your souls. We haven't come to that yet.

That's in Leviticus 17, 11. And in Hebrews chapter 9, it says, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission. That is no remission of sin.

Now, the temple, and before that, the tabernacle was constructed so that the Jews would have an opportunity to offer blood sacrifices for atonement. And the Day of Atonement was one of those days when they did so. The temple, of course, was destroyed in AD 77, and the Jews had to go back to the temple and make an atonement for their souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for your souls.

Now, the temple, and before that, the tabernacle was constructed so that the Jews would have an opportunity to offer blood sacrifices for atonement, and the Day of Atonement was one of those days when they did so. The temple, of course, was destroyed in AD 77, and the Jews had to go back to the temple and make an atonement for their souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for your souls. Now, the temple, of course, was destroyed in AD 77, and the

Jews have had no temple since that time.

They have no altar, no priesthood, and therefore they cannot observe Yom Kippur or any of the sacrifices that were ordained in the book of Leviticus. And so today, what the Jews do is simply fast on Yom Kippur and hope that that will be an adequate substitute for what God prescribed here in chapter 16. and for the other animal sacrifices that were to atone for sin.

Now, of course, tragically, there's no reason to believe that they're that fasting by itself somehow is a sufficient atonement for sin. After all, on the day of atonement in Leviticus 16, it was necessary to fast and to offer animal sacrifices. And we're told it was the sacrifices, the blood that made the atonement, not the fasting.

But ever since the temple has been destroyed, the Jews either have they have one of two choices. They can either have no sacrifice at all, or they can, I suppose, accept the sacrifice that God provided in his son, which was the fulfillment of the sacrificial system and of the day of atonement. Those who do not wish to receive the sacrifice of Christ for themselves and and count on his blood for an atonement.

Well, there's no other. There's no other other bloody sacrifices available, as he says in Hebrews chapter 10, there remains no more sacrifice for sin. And by that, it means there remains no more sacrifice apart from the sacrifice of Christ.

Now, we saw in the earlier chapters of Leviticus that there are many sacrifices that God ordained to be performed. There were sin offerings. There were trespass offerings that were for sins, and they were for unintentional sins, sins of ignorance.

There was no sacrifice available for sins that were high handed or outright rebellious. The person who simply was rebellious against God was cut off from the people. An expression that often means killed, though I think sometimes it only means excommunicated, as we shall see in some of the chapters we'll be looking at later actually.

But if people had committed sins individually, they could bring a sacrifice anytime they wished. But collectively, the sins of the nation were to be covered on an annual basis by a special ritual. Now, the sins of the nation being covered, we need to understand this is a little probably a little differently than than we are inclined to, because we have Christian perspective about these things.

And obviously, we should have a Christian perspective. We live after the Christian revelation has been given, and we understand the forgiveness of sins. Probably we tend to think of it primarily as our ticket to heaven.

That is, we thank God that Jesus died first so we can go to heaven so our sins can be forgiven. And on the Day of Judgment, we can be counted worthy to to enter into eternal

life. The Jews didn't really have that concept in the Old Testament.

The idea of eternal life, the idea of going to heaven was not really something God had ever spoken about. In the Old Testament, it's very obscure what happens to people after they die. And so the forgiveness of sins had a lot more to do with whether people would be permitted to continue to be God's people on earth.

That's what Israel was. Israel was not a people who were chosen to go to heaven. They were people who were chosen to be used by God to bring forth promises that had made Abraham.

That is, of course, to bring light to the nations, to bring blessing to all families of the earth through a seed of Abram, who would be the Messiah. That's what Israel existed for. It's a mistake to think that Israel existed as the only people on the planet that God ever wanted to save or take to heaven when they die.

Those issues were not even under consideration in the Old Testament. What was under consideration is that God had a people on earth through whom he had earthly purposes to bring about. And it was a great privilege to be the people who knew Yahweh.

It was a great privilege to have Yahweh living in their midst and giving them laws and directing their lives so that they wouldn't be like the other nations, worshiping and afflicted by demons. They had a good and a loving master, one who, if they were on good terms with them, he'd take care of them. He'd provide for them.

He would give them good crops. He would protect them from their enemies. He would keep their women from miscarrying their young and so forth.

These are the promises God made. These are all earthly advantages that God said Israel would have if they remained on good terms with God. And so the atoning of sin in the Day of Atonement and the other sacrifices that were offered were essentially a way of keeping God from being angry at the nation and bringing judgment on the nation.

The Bible says that God has brought that Jesus says Paul says to Timothy, Jesus has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Life and immortality existed, but they were not brought to light. They were not revealed until Jesus came.

So the Jews didn't know much about the immortality part of things, but they did know because God told them that if they fell out of favor with God, that this would go badly for them as a nation. They'd go into captivity. They'd lose their land.

Their crops would fail. Their women would miscarry. Their enemies would have victory over them.

And those were really bad things to look, especially if you only know about this life. If

this is the only life you know about, for it to be like that is kind of the pits. And so there was reason for the Jews to be concerned that their infractions against God, against his law, were atoned for.

And so once a year, in order to keep God on Israel's side, really, there was this day of atonement where, in addition to whatever sacrifices have been offered through the year by individuals, the high priest representing the people would go into the Holy of Holies and present on the mercy seat there the sprinkling of the blood of certain animals that had been killed, sin offerings and burnt offerings. And so that's what this chapter is about. This entire chapter 16 of Leviticus is about the ritual of the day of atonement.

Yom Kippur is the Hebrew for day of atonement. And let's go ahead and look at this. Now, the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron when they offered propane fire before the Lord and died.

And the Lord said to Moses, Tell Aaron, your brother, not to come at simply any time into the holy place inside the veil before the mercy seat, which is on the ark, lest he die, for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat. Now, right here, we can see immediately that we encountered the expression of the holy place. The word place in the New King James is in italics, which means there's no word in the Hebrew corresponding to it.

It's just into the holy. Now, when we studied the tabernacle, we saw that the tabernacle building itself was divided into two compartments. The most accessible compartment was called the holy place or sanctuary.

The word sanctuary means holy place. And in the New Testament, this first section of the tabernacle building is referred to as the sanctuary, the holy place, the place beyond the veil. The place that's being described here was called the Holy of Holies in the New Testament or the holiest of all.

And yet what we have here is a somewhat different usage when it speaks of the holy or what the New King James translates as the holy place here. It's not referring to the sanctuary. It's not referring to the first part that the priests entered on a daily basis.

It's referring to what we call the Holy of Holies. And it's good for us to get that straight because we're going to read about it. Otherwise, we might think holy place, isn't that where the lamp stand and the table of showbread and the golden altar are? Well, in some context, that's what it's called.

Yes. In this context, it's referring to the Holy of Holies. And the other part is simply called the tabernacle of the congregation.

We can see this in its usage in other places here. But we can see in verse two, for example, it says in the middle of verse two, the holy place inside the veil before the mercy seat. So that is obviously referring to the Holy of Holies beyond the veil.

In verse twenty three, we see then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting. And she'll take off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place. So there's a contrast between this holy place, which is really a reference to the Holy of Holies and the other part, which is here called the tabernacle of meeting.

And so as we read through, I just don't want you if you are very much familiar with the New Testament wording about this and you know that the term holy place usually means what is here called the tabernacle of meeting, then you could be confused. So I point that out at the beginning because we encounter in verse two the definition of what is being referred to as the holy place in this chapter. He says that you should not simply come at any time into the holy place inside the veil before the mercy seat, which is on the ark left.

He died. For I will appear in a cloud above the mercy seat. Thus, Aaron shall come into the holy place with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering and of a ram as a bird's offering.

And he shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body, and he should be girded with a linen sash and with the linen turban, he shall be attired. These are the holy. These are holy garments.

Therefore, he shall wash his body in water and put them on. Now, these are the ordinary priestly garments. This is the description of the task of the high priest who usually wears all that that almost royal looking regalia that they that has the colorful stuff and the breastplate with the gemstones and all that.

That's what the high priest usually wears, but not at first. He enters the holy of holies really dress like a like a common man, like actually not much different than a slave would be dressed in a in that society in the simplest clothing. He doesn't go present himself in the presence of God in his fancy clothes.

He does put those on later in the ceremony after he's done in the holy of holies. Then we do find in verse 23 and following, he puts on his regular high priestly garments. But these first rituals are done with the high priest wearing ordinary, simple linen clothing like the other priests would wear.

He washes his body of water, puts on his clothes and in verse five, he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel, two kids of the goats as a sin offering and one ram as a burnt offering. OK, so we have these animals we've got in verse three, the animals that are being offered for Aaron and for his household that's got to be atoned for first and verse three mentions it's going to be a bull and a ram. The bull is for a sin offering.

The ram will be burnt up as a burnt offering. Then he's going to have to offer something for the people as well. And here we have basically a ram also for a burnt offering as for

himself.

But there's also two goats and they will be disposed of in different manners. One will be a sin offering. The other will be treated in a unique manner, a manner in which no other animal was treated at any other time in the year.

And that is what is called the scapegoat, as we shall see. So he's to take two kids of the goats as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering. This is going to be for the people after he's, you know, considered his own sins and his own atonement.

Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself and make atonement for himself and for his house. Now, it sounds like he does so at this point, but he actually doesn't do it at this point. Just saying this by way of anticipation, it's saying that he's going to have a ram and two goats for the people, but for himself, he's going to offer a bull.

But he doesn't offer it at this stage in the ritual. He doesn't do that till verse 11. So in verse seven, he shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot fell and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement upon it and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

Now, verses, I suppose we could say verses three through ten, simply tell us about in general what's going to happen to these animals. We actually read of the conduct of these sacrifices and the dealing with the scapegoat in the verses that follow. This is sort of like giving a summary of what's going to be done with various animals.

You're going to have a bull for a sin offering for the priest, a ram for a burnt offering for the priest, a ram for a burnt offering for the people, two goats for the people. One's going to be a sin offering, one's going to be a scapegoat. It's going to be led off to the wilderness, summarizing everything that's going to go on during that day.

But now it goes through the ritual itself and with something like the detail that we have come to become accustomed to in the first seven chapters, but maybe not quite as much detail. In verse 11, it says, an errand shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself and make atonement for himself and for his house. Which would be all the priests and their families, and shall kill the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself.

Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals from the fire of the altar before the Lord, not somewhere else. May they have an abiding, who were a good lesson for everybody about that. And with his hands full of sweet incense, beaten fine and bring it inside the

veil that would be into the Holy of Holies.

And he shall put incense on the fire before the Lord that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the testimony left. He died. So he's got this censer.

It's like a golden bowl of some kind, probably held by chains, perhaps three chains that came together at the top to hold it from. And he put a handful of incense in it. He take coals from the altar and some other kind of carrying device and go into the Holy Holies.

He put the coals and the incense together in the center and fill the Holy of Holies with smoke or the incense. That's what he's doing here. Verse 14, and he should take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side.

And before the mercy seat, he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his fingers seven times. Then he shall come out of the Holy of Holies back to the altar on the outer court and kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people. So he's offered the bull as his own suffering.

And now before he offers any of the burnt offerings, he's going to offer the sin offering for the people as well and do the same. Actually, do the very same thing he did with the bull going to kill the goat of sin offering, which is for the people. Bring it inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.

So shall he make atonement for the holy place? That is, it's the I guess the dedication of the Holy of Holies in its first usage because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions for all their sins. And so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting, which would be the other part of the building, which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. There should be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes to make atonement in the holy place until he comes out, then he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the congregation of Israel.

And he should go out to alter that is before the Lord and make atonement for it and should take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat and put it on the horns of the altar, which would be the bronze altar all around. And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it and sanctify it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. OK, so although he's making this atonement for the people, it is also said that he's atoning for or cleansing the tabernacle itself and the altar.

First, the Holy of Holies, then the outer the tabernacle proper, and then in the outer court, he goes out and does the same for the altar. Now we have the scapegoat ritual. And verse 20 says when he is made an end of atoning for the holy place, the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, he shall bring the live goat and Aaron shall lay both his hands

on the head of the live goat, confess over all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.

The goat shall bear on itself all the iniquities to an uninhabited land, and he shall release the goat in the wilderness. Now, this goat is never to be seen again. The sins of the people are confessed on the head of the goat.

Now, since these are kind of the sins of ignorance, it's not clear exactly which sins Aaron would know to confess. It's possible he would just do a litany of all the possible sins that Israel could have committed running through the law and, you know, confessing that probably someone has inadvertently broken this law and this law and this law and this law. It's hard to know exactly how long this confession would take and how many sins we can confess and how he would know which sins to confess.

But in all likelihood, since this happened only once a year, he covered all the bases and probably confessed every sin in the in the book. And that put the sins on the goat. Then the goat was led away into the wilderness and released, presumably to die, because a goat is a domestic animal.

It needs human care. You take it out in the wilderness and it'll either starve, although goats do forage better than most animals do and can eat just about anything. But it's out there among the predators, unprotected by a shepherd or a goat herd.

It will be almost certainly eaten. And the idea is that it should be that it's no one cares what happens to the goat once it's gone. The image is that the goat is carrying away the sins somewhere else, never to be seen again.

Now, there is a tradition among the Jews that on occasion the goat would come wandering back into the camp after it had been let go in the wilderness. Yeah, you know, the goat might have followed the man back or known how to come back. And so the Jews added to the ritual another aspect, and that was that the man would leave the goat out in the wilderness and push it off a cliff.

So it would die. They didn't just leave it alive because they didn't want the sins coming back into the camp with the goat. So although the ritual in the Bible did not require killing the goat, that later became the policy of Israel, because, as I say, apparently on occasion, the goat would be known to come back into the camp.

So off goes the goat in verse 23, it says, Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting, shall take off the linen garment which he put on when he went into the holy place and shall leave them there. So he's going to change his clothes there in the tabernacle, but not in the Holy of Holies. And he'll leave the clothes that he wore into the Holy of Holies there in the tabernacle of meeting.



And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place, put on his garments and come out to offer the burnt offering in the offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people. Since he has offered the sin offering in his humble garb, presenting himself before God, he is now considered to be cleansed and capable of representing God in the more holy, fancy regalia of his office. So he puts it back on and then he goes out to offer the burnt sacrifices, which is the two rams, of course.

The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. That's the sin offerings he's already sprinkled the blood of. There's still the body and so forth of those animals to be dealt with.

Remember, the sin offering involved sprinkling of blood from the animal, but then they had to dispose of certain parts of the body in different ways. The fat is burned on the altar and it says parenthetically in verse 26, and he who released the goat as a scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water and afterward may come into the camp. Then it says the bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, their body should be carried outside the camp and they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh and their awful.

And that awful is, of course, that awful stuff that's in their intestines. Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water and afterward he may come into the camp. So this is fairly standard with the exception that we read that the skins of the animals are burned on this occasion.

In most cases, it seems in the burnt offering, excuse me, the sin offering, I think the skins are preserved and given to the priest, if I'm not mistaken. But if that's the difference here, it's, you know, this is a different day. This is a different kind of event.

Verse 29, this should be a statute forever for you in the seventh month on the seventh day of the month. You shall afflict your souls and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who sojourns among you. For on that day, the priest shall make atonement for you to cleanse you that you may be cleaned from all your sins before the Lord.

It is a Sabbath of solemn rest for you and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. Now, two things in verses 29 through 31 are emphasized.

One is that it is to be a Sabbath as almost all the holy days were. Of course, there was the weekly Sabbath every Saturday, but then whenever they had special festivals, the week-long festivals like Passover and Pentecost and Tabernacles, which were a week long each, the beginning and end of those weeks, the first and last days of those festival weeks were treated as Sabbath days, whether they fell on a Saturday or not. They were special days.

Likewise, the day of atonement, Yom Kippur, regardless what day of the week it fell on, it was a Sabbath, even if it was not on a Saturday. And so that's what is emphasized. Like all the holy days, even the new moons, the first days of the month were Sabbath.

That just means a rest. They had to take time off from their ordinary activities and their ordinary pursuits and focus on the business at hand, which was God and the worship of God. And in this case, being atoned so that they could continue worshiping God without interruption.

The other thing that these verses 29 through 31 bring out is that it says twice you shall afflict your souls. Now, this expression is not immediately transparent to us, but it is a Hebraism that means to fast. It means to eat nothing.

We have a similar expression from David in Psalm 35 and verse 13, where he says, but as for me, when they were sick and this is talking about people who treated him badly and who have been pleased to find him afflicted, he says, I didn't have that attitude toward them when they were sick. My clothing was sackcloth. I humbled myself with fasting.

My prayer would return to my own heart. When he says I put on sackcloth, I humbled myself with fasting. He's talking about mourning because of their affliction that they were in.

And so such a contrast between his attitude toward them and their attitude toward him he's making. But he said I humbled my soul with fasting. Here the expression in Leviticus 16 is you afflict your souls.

And the Jews understood that this meant they fast. And Yom Kippur was the only day in the Jewish year that God commanded people to fast. The Jews did later add additional fast days to their calendar.

After the Babylonian exile, they fasted on the anniversaries of certain days, like the day the day that Jerusalem had been besieged by Babylon or the day that the walls had been breached and the Babylonians had gotten into the city or the day that Goliath the governor was killed, which brought their Babylonians down upon them or the day that the temple was burned down. These were considered to be particularly tragic days after the Babylonian exile. People commemorated them these four different days during the year with a fast to mourn and to commemorate these tragedies.

But God didn't command them to do that. In fact, they actually after the Babylonian exile, they came to Zechariah the prophet and said, does God want us now that now that the Babylonian exile is technically over and we can come back to Jerusalem? Are we supposed to keep fasting on these four days? And God said through Zechariah, I never told you to fast in those days in the first place. In other words, sure, give it up.

You know, who needs it? God had only told them to fast on one day a year, but people often will add duties, you know, through tradition. As both Jews in Old Testament times and Christians in modern times have done, the Pharisees in the time of Jesus actually had added the tradition of fasting twice a week, two separate days of the week they would fast. And John the Baptist followers followed the same procedure.

But Jesus disciples did not. And actually, Jesus and his disciples were criticized by the disciples of John and by the Pharisees for that very reason. Why don't your disciples fast? They said.

Now, what Jesus said in answer to that was that fasting was a sign of mourning and mourning is not appropriate when you're at a wedding feast. So he said in Matthew nine, beginning of verse 14, it says the disciples of John came to him saying, why do we and the Pharisees fast often? But your disciples do not fast. And Jesus said to them, can the friends of the bridegroom mourn? Notice, he equates fasting with mourning.

Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them. Then they will fast. That is, they will have occasion to mourn because they will miss the bridegroom.

Now, it's interesting, Jesus did indicate that his disciples would fast after he would be gone. And they did. Sometimes we read in Acts chapter 13, that the leaders of the church of Antioch were fasting and ministering to the Lord when the Holy Spirit spoke to them and said, separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the ministry to which I've called them.

So we find that the leaders of the church were fasting. And I'm pretty sure Paul also fasted. I might not be remembering correctly, but I'm pretty sure Paul fasted before choosing the elders in the churches.

Let me see if I'm right about that. I hate being right so often. But in Acts 14, 23, it says, And when they had appointed elders in every church and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

So we see church leaders fasting, especially on the occasion of appointment of other leaders or the sending out of missionaries. We find fasting going on there. But also because the Jews were commanded to fast on the Day of Atonement, the Day of Atonement even came to be called the fast.

And as I said, ever since the temple has been destroyed, that's pretty much all that the Jews do for an atonement. That's all they can do on Yom Kippur is to fast. They can't offer animal sacrifices anymore.

And so they hope that their fasting will cover for them. We find in Acts 27, 9, a reference to Yom Kippur, but it's simply referred to as the fast. Acts 27 and verse 9 says, Now,

when much time had been spent and sailing was now dangerous because the fast was already over.

That means Yom Kippur. This is in the middle of September. Paul advised them saying, Men, I perceive this voyage has ended disaster.

When it says the fast was already over, it just means it was late fall because Yom Kippur occurred, as we shall see on what we saw in verse 29, in the seventh month on the tenth day of the month. And to on the Jewish calendar, the seventh month, Tishri is it kind of overlaps our September and October. So Yom Kippur is toward the end of September.

All right. Now, they fasted, which was to indicate mourning or repentance. They rested as they would on any holy day as a Sabbath and in Leviticus 16, 32, and the priest who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place shall make the atonement and put on the linen clothes and the holy garments.

This means that in future generations, once Aaron is dead and someone else is occupying his office, the ritual shall continue year by year, it's saying, with his son. Then he shall make atonement for this holy sanctuary. He shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the congregation.

This shall be an everlasting statute for you to make atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did, as the Lord commanded Moses. Now, the main New Testament commentary on this chapter is in Hebrews chapters nine and ten.

And if you look over there, we'll see that the writer of Hebrews is quite focused on this particular ritual of this particular day, Yom Kippur. And although he may make allusion to it in other places, in chapters nine and ten, the writer of Hebrews has this directly in his sight. We've seen the opening verses of Hebrews nine not so long ago when we were studying the tabernacle, where the writer just kind of lists the articles and the configuration and so forth of the tabernacle as God had had him had most set it up.

And it says at the end of verse five of these things, we cannot now speak in detail, but there is one part of the tabernacle he does want to speak about in detail, and that is the Holy of Holies. And when we talk of the Holy of Holies, we're really not talking about anything other than the day of atonement, because that's the only day that that room is ever entered. And verse six says, Now, when these things have been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle performing the services, but into the second part of behind the veil, the Holy of Holies, the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins.

So, of course, that's a good summary of what we just read in Leviticus 16, but he says specifically the people's sins committed in ignorance. As I mentioned when we were

studying the sin offerings and the trespass offerings, which were both said to be only for the sins committed in ignorance, it raises questions as to whether God has any forgiveness for people whose sins were not committed in ignorance, for somebody who becomes a willful sinner. And we talked about that difficult passage that at least some people find difficult in Hebrews 10, 26.

In fact, we can look there again at the moment, because Hebrews 10, 26 says, For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation, which will devour the adversaries. That is, after we've come to the knowledge of the truth, if we sin willfully, we sin willfully, there's really no place to go for a sacrifice. Now, sin willfully has got to be understood, I think, perhaps the way the NIV paraphrases it, because the NIV is to a very large extent a paraphrase, but the NIV renders it if we go on sinning willfully.

And I think that is what is implied. If we sin willfully, it doesn't mean if we commit one act of willful sin, but if we choose a life of sin after having been Christians, that is, if we reject Christianity and go back to our sinful way. And we need to understand that the early church understood something differently than we do.

We sometimes think of sinfulness as a normal part of a Christian's life, because Christians are not just forgiveness, right? That's what we're told. That's what the bumper stickers say. Christians aren't perfect.

They're just forgiven. Well, that's not exactly true. It is true that Christians aren't perfect, but it's not supposed to be true that they are just forgiven.

In addition to being forgiven, they are supposed to be transformed. In addition to being forgiven, Christians are supposed to be repentant. And as a result of repentance, they are living differently than they did before they were sinners.

Unfortunately, it is in American evangelicalism become fairly common place to assume that a person is a Christian because they say a prayer, they go forward, they get baptized. But it is not always assumed that they're going to live a changed life. They are just forgiven.

They lived like they did before, but now they're forgiven and they weren't before. That's what the assumption is. But in the Bible, that is never assumed to be true.

When you become a Christian, you don't just get forgiven. You get forgiven because you have repented, because you've turned around, because instead of living in sin, you're now living for God. And in that state, you are receiving the benefits that are offered to you called salvation, including forgiveness.

So the statement that Christians are not perfect, they're just forgiven is kind of a false

dichotomy, as if there's only two possibilities. Either you're perfect or you're entirely imperfect and just forgiven for being that way. But there's a middle place that is Christianity, where although you are not yet perfected, as Paul said in Philippians 3, he said, I'm not yet perfected.

Yet, he said, this one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind and looking to those things that are before, I press on toward the mark of a high calling of God in Christ Jesus. And that's, of course, in Philippians 3, Paul says that I'm not perfected yet, but I'm not the same as I used to be either. I'm pressing in.

I'm seeking after. I'm pursuing Christ likeness. Now, that's what salvation amounts to, biblically speaking.

And therefore, when the writer of Hebrews says, if we sin willfully or if we go on sinning willfully, what he means by that is if we decide not to follow Christ anymore, if we choose, if we will to live a life of sin. Now, Christians do not will to live a life of sin. This is something that we need to have clear in our minds for our own sakes, if nothing else, because many people feel condemned all the time because they say, well, you know, when I read about sins done in ignorance, well, I wasn't ignorant when I committed that sin or things done in unintentional.

I wasn't unintentional. I mean, I did the thing intentionally. I must be.

I must be guilty of that which is not forgivable. I must have sinned willfully. I must have nothing to look forward to but a fearful expectation of judgment and fire indignation, which will consume the adversaries because I have sinned willfully.

Now, willfully means this, that you choose to be a sinner. It doesn't mean that at a given moment when tempted to do the wrong thing, you choose to give in to the temptation rather than continuing to fight against it. It is true that is a choice you make, but it's not the kind of choice that's being talked about here.

Everyone who sins does so in a sense, making a choice. But that doesn't mean that they are choosing to become a sinner again. A Christian who sins, sins out of weakness.

A Christian does not want to sin, except at certain moments. At certain moments, there's a part of them that wants to sin, but even then there's the deeper part of them really doesn't want to. If you're really a Christian, if you really have a new heart, you really don't want to be a sinner.

You want to be holy. You want to be righteous. You want to please God.

That's what makes you a Christian, is you've got a different heart than you used to have. And that heart is characterized by those desires. But there's another part of you that makes war against the law of your mind, Paul said.

It's in your members. The flesh lusts against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh. These are contradictory to each other, so you cannot do what you want, Paul said.

Not all the time anyway. So that there is a time where a part of you really does want to sin, but not the deepest part of you. But sometimes the deepest part of you doesn't have the energy or the will to fight off that other side sufficiently, so you fall.

That's not the same thing as what the writer's talking about, sinning willfully. Willful sinning means it is your will to sin. It is your will to live in sin.

Let me point out something about this, because I feel like too many Christians do feel condemnation because of a misunderstanding of this fact. If you look at Ephesians chapter 2, Ephesians 2, Paul begins by talking about the way we were, or the way at least his readers were, before they were Christians. The reason I make that distinction is because many people like Calvinists assume that Paul is describing every human being who's not yet saved, where in fact all he's really saying for sure is that the Gentile pagans that he's writing to were this way before they were converted.

It may be true of many others besides them. It might even be true of everybody. But he doesn't say it's true of everybody, he's talking about them.

He's writing to actual people who had worshipped idols and been fornicators and been drunkards and all that stuff in their lifestyle before. Not all unbelievers fit the description here, but he describes their former life this way in verse 3. Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves, including Paul himself and his readers, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires. And the word desires there in verse 3 is the Greek word tholomata, which is wills, like the wills of the flesh and of the mind.

Now Paul says as non-Christians previous to our conversion, we fulfilled in our lives two wills. The will of our flesh and the will of our mind. And the reason for those two is because those two were at that time in agreement with one another.

My mind and my flesh were on the same team. My mind has a will and my flesh has a will. And before I was a Christian, I fulfilled both of them.

Because in fulfilling the will of my flesh, I was also fulfilling the will of my mind at the time. I didn't have a mind not to sin. But when I have repented, repentance means changing the mind.

So what happens when you repent? Something changes. What? The will of the mind changes. The will of the flesh doesn't because the flesh just doesn't change.

But the mind does. So before you're a Christian, you are sinning and in doing so you're fulfilling the wills of the flesh and of the mind. But when you become a Christian, your mind changes.

So what? It's got a different will. So Paul says in Romans 7, with my mind, I agree with the law of God that is good. But I find in my members another law making war against the law of my mind.

That is the law my mind now approves. I have repented. I'm now a believer.

I'm now a Christian. I want to do the right thing. My mind, the will of my mind is to be holy.

But there's still this will of the flesh that hasn't changed. So now I'm a person in tension between two sets of desires. That wasn't true when I was a non-Christian.

I didn't care that I was sinning. It didn't bother me. My mind and my flesh had the same will.

And as a sinner, I fulfilled the wills of my flesh and my mind. Now I cannot fulfill both of those wills simultaneously because my will of my mind is to be holy and the will of my flesh is to be selfish. So now there's a conflict between two wills.

But the issue is, which will is me? And that's why Paul says that when I sin, I'm doing what I hate. And if I hate it, that's not me. If I hate the sin I'm doing, then it must be against my will, or else I wouldn't hate it.

I don't hate things that aren't against my will. If I hate the thing I'm doing, then it's against my will. It's not my will is who I am.

As I think in my heart, so am I. And so he's saying, as a Christian, there are times when part of me, my flesh, wants to do the wrong thing and sometimes does it. But that's not really... I'm not really willing to do that. And when the writer of Hebrews says, if we go on sinning willfully, it means if we want to go on living sinfully.

And no Christian really does. Because a Christian wants to please God. Now that's being so.

That means it's not talking about sins that you fall into, even though you realize at the time you're not doing the right thing. And even if it did, I pointed out on the earlier lecture, Paul suggested in Acts 13, that the things that we can be forgiven of through Christ are things that people could not be forgiven of under the Old Testament law. All the sins that were atoned for by the sin offering, the trespass offering, and the day of atonement were unintentional sins.

But in Acts 13, in verse 39, Paul said, by Christ, everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. So Paul says there are things that under the law of Moses you could not be justified from. You couldn't be atoned for.



But that's not true with Jesus. There's nothing that you can't be atoned for. You know, except of course, your total rejection of him.

And that's not because of a defect in him. It's because you're not believing. Those who believe in him are justified, he says.

If you decide not to believe in him, then of course it doesn't apply to you. Now getting back to the writer of Hebrews chapter nine and the day of atonement, as he wishes to discuss it. It says in verse seven that he offered these blood sacrifices for himself and the people's sins committed in ignorance.

And verse eight says the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the holiest of all, that's the holiest of the holy of holies, was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. Now the way in was not made manifest. The way in for whom? For us.

The way in was made manifest for the high priest. That's in fact what the ritual did. It manifested the way that he could go in there, but only once a year and only alone.

And it couldn't be done by anybody else. The general access to God's presence was not made available or made manifest under the system of the first tabernacle. There had to be a new covenant.

There had to be a new sacrifice, a new system altogether that would make way for us to enter into the holy of holies. So it says in verse 11, but Christ came as a high priest of the good things to come with a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands. That is not of this creation, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood.

He entered the most holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. So this is the contrast between Jesus and the high priest of the Old Testament, but it is the antitype. Jesus has done the same thing, in a sense, that the high priest did.

He has entered the holy of holies with blood. However, not with the blood of the bull of the sin offering and the goats of the sin offering, but with his own blood. And he has therefore obtained eternal redemption for us.

And then he goes on to say in verse 22, verse 21, says, Likewise, he sprinkled the blood both on the tabernacle and all the vessels of ministry and according to the law, almost all things are purged with blood and without shedding of blood, there is no remission. Therefore, it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, that is, this animal blood. But the heavenly things themselves, of which the tabernacle was only a copy, would be purified with better sacrifices than these, specifically the sacrifice of Christ.

For Christ has not entered into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but he has entered into heaven itself. That's the true holy of holies. The true holy of holies is where God really lives.

He doesn't live in temples made with hands. And so Christ has entered into the immediate presence of God in heaven, that he might appear in the presence of God for us. And not that he should offer himself often as the high priest enters the holy place every year with the blood of another.

He then would have to have suffered often since the foundation of the world. But now, once at the end of the ages, he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. So the high priest did it once a year, repeatedly, in other words, with the blood of other creatures, not of himself.

Christ doesn't have to do it repeatedly. He doesn't have to every year. And he did it because his blood could accomplish more than what the blood of bulls and goats could accomplish.

In fact, his blood could accomplish once and for all redemption. And it is appointed unto men once to die. And this is not intended to say as much about the generic fact as we often will quote it, for example, when we're thinking about refuting something like reincarnation.

Oh, well, it's only appointed to men once to die. Well, that is true. But the point he's making here is that Christ is a man and he only has to die once.

Unlike a high priest who had to kill bulls year after year, Jesus died once and that was enough because men only die once. That's what he's saying. After this, there's the judgment.

So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. And he says to those who eagerly wait for him, he will appear a second time apart from sin for salvation. And that refers to the fact that the high priest, once he disappeared into the tabernacle, the people had to wait and see if he'd come out alive.

And if he did come out alive, it meant that the atonement was successful, that God accepted it, that they were free for another year from their sins, their national sins, that their judgment had been averted again for another 12 months. And so it was a relief to them to see the priest reappear from the Holy of Holies, where he had disappeared behind the veil. And so for us, it'll be a relief to see Jesus reappear.

Jesus has gone into the Holy of Holies when he ascended and he went beyond the veil of the clouds and disappeared from sight. He will return through the clouds and come back into view. And that will be that what he's saying then is from the time that Jesus left, or perhaps we should say from the time that Jesus shed his blood to the time that he

returns is the spiritual reality that the Holy of Holies ceremony on the Day of Atonement represented.

Leviticus 16 and its ritual represents Jesus going away to heaven after he's offered his own blood, sprinkling it there on the Holy of Holies, on the mercy seat there in heaven. And as the priest would make intercession for the people, they're burning incense. So Christ makes intercession for us and continues to do so until the days end.

And today is the day of salvation. Now is the appointed time. Today is the day of salvation, Paul said elsewhere, and the day of salvation is the day of atonement.

The church age is the day of atonement. The church age from the time Jesus left till he reappears out of the Holy of Holies is that which is the fulfillment of that day of atonement. Now, I only want to take a few minutes, if possible.

Do I want to? Let me think here. There's a very short chapter 17 that I would like to be able to take before we break. And there's only two simple items in it.

They're important items, but they are items that we've encountered before. We don't have to say as much about now. And that is the issue of blood and the fact that blood when it was shed had to be presented at the tabernacle.

Now, the basic theme of chapter 17 is in verse three. This was to be spoken to Aaron and his sons and all the children of Israel. So this applied to priests and people.

It's a general rule for everybody. And the command is given in verse three of chapter 17. Whatever man of the house of Israel kills an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp or who kills it outside the camp and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, blood guilt shall be imputed to that man.

He has shed blood and that man should be cut off from among his people to the end of the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, and they may bring them to the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting to the priest and offer them as peace offerings to the Lord. Now, then talk about how the high priest shall sprinkle the blood in the altar and all of that. And it says they will do that in verse seven.

So they shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations. Now, that's basically the concern here is that when animals are slain.

Anywhere other than at the tabernacle, their blood is to be brought to the tabernacle. Why? Because animals that are slain just out anywhere might be. If it's not supervised by the priest, it might be that people would be offering them to demons.

The word demons there means goat demons, goat gods. The pagans tended to depict desert demons as goats or satyrs. And that's what it's referring to, that he doesn't want them to be tempted to offer sacrifices to other gods or demons out there in the wilderness.

So they have to, whenever they kill an animal, bring the blood to the tabernacle, make sure that it's offered to God rather than to some other deity. Now, it's vague in verse three when it says, whenever a man kills, the word kills there in verse three, some say it should be translated sacrifices. Others believe it's a generic word for slaughtering, like slaughtering animals for food.

And so there's some dispute among scholars as to whether this is referring merely to animals that are offered for sacrifice or any animal that's killed for food or anything for the family. I think it's both because what we see is verse three, which is the summary of the whole rule is it begins with whatever man of the house of Israel. And then you get two other times that phrase is used in verses eight and 10.

And that seems to break it down into two parts. Verse eight is, uh, whatever man of the house of Israel or of the strangers who are sojourn among you, who offers burnt offering for sacrifice and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer it to the Lord. That man should be cut off from the people.

Then verse 10 and whatever man of the house of Israel or the stranger who sojourn among you, who eats any blood, I will set my face against that person. It's a matter of eating and sacrificing that is at issue here. But see, the two were not really that different from each other because sacrifices often were, you know, a portion of the animals offered the rest was eaten.

And, um, the concern seems to be with killing animals at any time for any purpose. Apparently there were people who would offer some kind of a sacrifice outside the tabernacle. And, and that was not necessarily, um, not necessarily forbidden because it says in verse five to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field and that they may bring them to the Lord.

It sounds like it's saying they can offer sacrifice out in the open field, but they have to bring the blood to the tabernacle to Lord, unless he's saying the sacrifices, which they have up until this time offered in the open field need to be brought to the tabernacle. It's not entirely clear, but what is being said clearly is that the blood of sacrifice has to be brought and the blood probably of animals that to eat or has to be brought to the tabernacle in order to make sure that the priest can keep track of things and make sure that people are not offering this blood to demons. Now, this particular law was only temporary and it's interesting because it would only apply as they're wandering in the wilderness for the most part, because once they would, uh, a generation after this go into the land of Canaan, they would be spread out over the whole country.

It would be actually impossible for everyone who wanted to kill an animal for his family to eat. It'd be impossible for him to take it to the tabernacle simply because the tabernacle is in one spot in the country and it might be seven days walk for them that you can't slaughter an animal in your farm plan. You didn't run down seven days journey to the tabernacle and, and, uh, you know, sprinkle the blood and come home and eat the meat.

It'll be rotten by then. And therefore, after they came into the land, the law was changed and we see it in Deuteronomy because Deuteronomy is, uh, the law given again, a generation later, a generation later than, than Leviticus after the Jews had wandered for 40 years and we're now just about ready to go into the promised land and settled their new rules. In a few cases applied, many of the old rules were simply repeated, but in this case, this particular rule was changed in Deuteronomy 12 verse 15.

It does say in verses one through 14, that they can, that they have to offer all their sacrifices at the tabernacle. But verse 15 says, however, you may slaughter and eat meat with your, with within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the Lord, your God, which he has given you the unclean and the clean may eat it, uh, of the gazelle, et cetera, et cetera. It says, um, but in verse 17, you can't, uh, eat the first six, 16 says you can't eat the blood.

You have to pour that out like water and you can't eat, uh, the tide that you have to give to God. But otherwise it says in verse 15, you can eat meat that slaughtered within your gates, meaning where you live as opposed to the tabernacle because it became impractical. But in the wilderness wanderings, people were camped all around the tabernacle.

A whole, the whole nation was within walking distance of the tabernacle. And so all killing of any animal, the blood had to be brought to the tabernacle. Now there were some exceptions treated at the end of the chapter, but it says the reason that he doesn't want people to eat blood, according to verse 10 and 11 and 12, he says in verse 11, for the life of the flesh is in the blood.

I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that makes atonement for your soul. Therefore, I said to the children of Israel, no one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you eat blood.

Now, the other things that are mentioned, like in the verse 13 and 14, it talks about animals that are hunted out in the field to eat. There are animals you could eat that were hunted deer and so forth, uh, because they would meet the qualifications for clean animals. But it says in verse 13, whatever man of the children of Israel or of the stranger.

So sojourns among you who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten. He shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust for it is the life of the flesh. It's blood

sustains its life.

Therefore, I said the children of Israel, you should not eat the blood. So if you're out in the field, you know, far away from the tabernacle, you hunt an animal. You've got to drain the blood right away.

You can't just carry that beast in and, you know, 12 hours later when you get to the tabernacle, I mean, it'll be all coagulated. You can't put the blood out. So he says, if you're that far away out in the field hunting, you pour the blood out right there on the ground.

You just drain the animal completely, and then you cover the blood with dust. That makes it inaccessible. You can't take, you know, it's dirty blood, so you can't offer it to another God, but also probably in covering it with dust.

It is to keep other animals from eating the blood, make it muddy. If you just leave it on top of the ground, there are certain animals that will come and lick it up. And it's the Lord's.

So you make it so it's not going to be eaten by man or beast. And every person verse 13, who eats what dies naturally or what is torn by beast, whether he's a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water and be unclean until evening, then he shall be clean. But if he does not wash or bathe his body, then he shall bear his guilt.

This is a case where someone eats an animal that's not slaughtered properly and therefore, of course, not drained quite properly. It's an animal that is edible. It might be a farm animal, but it's been, it dies on its own.

You just come out in the morning, it's dead or you find it. It's carcass has been torn by wild beast. Well, you're not really supposed to eat those, but if you do, you're unclean until evening.

Because of course, the animal has been dead for a while and you have not been able to drain the fresh blood out upon killing it. And therefore it's still got, you know, you do your best to get rid of the blood that's left in it, but you're not going to be able to do a thorough job. Therefore, in eating such an animal, you make yourself unclean, but only till evening.

And that's, uh, and so these are the laws really about eating blood and more, uh, also about bringing the blood to the tabernacle while they are in the wilderness. Uh, again, a law that would be impractical later as they were spread out throughout the land of Israel, which indicates right there that there were certain laws that were temporary. You know, just because the law is given doesn't mean that it will be always applicable.

And we know that many of these laws cease to be applicable also when Jesus came because he fulfilled them, but even coming into the land of Canaan changed a few things. And so some of the laws are simply for the present circumstance in which they're given. Okay.

We're going to stop there. And