

1. If I had to pick a word to describe this section of Leviticus, it would be “resolution”. I’ll come back to that word in a moment. First, discuss where we last left off in Leviticus:
 - a) The last lesson had to deal with “unintentional sins”.
 - b) A question to ask God after that lesson is, “What do You mean by unintentional sins? How do You distinguish that from intentional sins? What’s the penalty difference? ☺ Can You give us some examples? In a sense, Chapter 5 is an answer to that last question. Chapter 5 opens with some examples of what is an unintentional sin, which requires the unintentional-sin-offering as described in the last chapter.
 - c) These Chapter 5 sin examples are not designed to give us a complete list of unintentional sins. The idea is to give us examples of how to recognize when we do sin and then how to deal with it. Most of Chapter 5 is about how to be reconciled with God for unintentional sins. Only the first few verses of chapter 5 give examples.
 - d) Coming back to “resolution”, a key point of this chapter is about how to resolve our relationship with God when we do commit one of these unintentional sins.
 - e) It is important to emphasize, that for the Christian, there are no more animal sacrifices. All of these Levitical sacrifices point to Jesus in some way, shape, or form. What is to be applied is the issue of how God sees sin itself. Just because Jesus has forgiven us of all sins past, present and future does not mean we are now free to sin all we want. God desires a life of obedience based on gratitude for the Cross. Part of that lifetime commitment is when we realize we sin, we are to confess it as wrong and work as a goal to change for the better. We are to turn away from sin and be reconciled with God. The confession of these sins is the methodology for resolution in our relationship with God.
2. Again, Chapter 5 of Leviticus is going to open with examples of unintentional sin. The point these examples is to learn what is a sin and what is not a sin, as well as how to deal with sin.
 - a) God’s goal for the life of the Christian is for us to live a happy, fulfilled life with God in this lifetime. That means sticking close to Him. That means praying regularly for His guidance and trusting that He is guiding us.
 - b) God’s laws are designed for our happiness. They show us God’s standards for right and wrong and how we fall short of those standards.
 - c) The secret of living the Christian life is all about harnessing the power of the Holy Spirit in order to live a life pleasing to God. That is how one overcomes sin in one’s life.
 - i) The idea is to seek God regularly in prayer, read God’s word regularly for direction and guidance, and spend time with other Christians, as God desires we work in unity. If one strives for those three, living a life pleasing to God will follow. Will we make mistakes? Sure, but we’re on the right path.
 - ii) Which leads us back to Leviticus 5: This chapter is full of word pictures of “what to do” when we make mistakes (i.e. realize we sin) and how to “reconcile” it.
 - iii) This lesson deals with word-pictures on how to restore one’s relationship with God once we sin. Sin causes guilt. That guilt blocks a love relationship with God. God provides remedies to alleviate that guilt. That is a main purpose to study Leviticus: To teach us how to deal with sin so we can continue that love-relationship between God and ourselves.
3. This would be a good time to discuss the topic of “spiritual warfare” as it ties to this chapter. Let’s begin with the assumption that Satan exists and He wants to keep you away from God. There are two great lies that Satan will tell to a person about one’s relationship with God:
 - a) The first great lie is that we don’t need God. To expand upon that idea, it is to say, “One can always change their lifestyle later to please God. Right now, go “enjoy” your life and you can always later repent and God has to forgive you.”

- i) The majority of people in this world do believe in God. People who are atheists are a very small percentage of society. There is too much evidence in this world and too many unanswered questions in life to not support the existence of God.
 - ii) Satan has a limited time on earth. The bible teaches that only “x” number of people become believers, and then comes Jesus Second Coming. Since Satan doesn’t know when “x” is, He works hard to prevent people from turning to Christ. The purpose of Satan telling people to delay turning to God is he is trying to reign on this earth as long as possible. He is delaying the “x” person from happening.
 - b) The second common lie told by Satan is for the believer: It is a demon whispering in your ear, “Look how bad you messed up. God will never forgive you of that. You are such a hypocrite in your commitment to God. You might as well not go to church this Sunday!”
 - i) Satan’s goal is to make Christians ineffective witnesses for Jesus. He can’t touch our salvation, but he can make us ineffective witnesses so we don’t pray as much or we don’t share our faith with others. His goal is again to prevent as many new Christians as possible. He does that by making us ineffective witnesses.
 - c) Now let’s tie this concept of demonic influence back to Leviticus:
 - i) This chapter deals with “unintentional” sin in the lives of a person committed to being obedient to God. It is about having resolution with God after we realize we have committed such a sin.
 - ii) Committed Christians feel a sense of guilt when we sin. We want to please God and we know we have “let Him down”. Demonic influences are “making it worse” by trying to tell us how displeased God is by our failure. What the bible is teaching is “Hey, there is a solution for your guilt. Yes, that sin is serious and yes, God cannot ignore that sin. However, one can restore one’s relationship with God if one follows this procedure. That is what we are dealing with in Leviticus. This is the process of how to have reconciliation with God.
4. It is important at this point to understand that some sins we can commit are worse than others. All sin is bad in that God is perfect and His standards for salvation are “perfection”. That is why a perfect sacrifice was needed on our behalf. In that sense, any sin makes us less-than-perfect and requiring God’s forgiveness.
- a) With that understood, some sins we commit are worse than others are. Jesus once declared a person to be guilty of a “greater sin” than someone else (Ref.: John 19:11). One can’t be guilty of a “greater sin” unless some sins have more weight than others do.
 - b) In the last lesson, I stated how Jesus said the only unforgivable sin is “Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 12:31-32). That sin is the continual, lifetime denial of Jesus as God. Even if you committed this sin at one time and then seriously turned to Jesus, you are forgiven of that sin. My point here is that if this one sin is unforgivable, and all other sins are forgivable, then this sin is worse than others are. Again, not all sins have equal weight.
 - c) There are Christians who say, “a sin is a sin is a sin” and there is no difference. They are partially right in that any sin makes us less-than-perfect and requires forgiveness. On the other hand, a “perfect” God cannot put murder on the same level as parking ticket. ☺ God will judge all people one day. If we are going to be judged as individuals, then our actions matter and sins are judged based on how “bad” they are.
 - d) Since not all sins are equal in weight, one has to understand that this section of Leviticus focuses upon “unintentional” sin. That term “unintentional” was never defined in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 just taught on how to deal with those sins.
 - i) Chapter 5 begins with examples of unintentional sins. It is God’s way of saying, “Are you not sure what is an unintentional sin? Let me give you some examples”. With that said, let’s jump into Chapter 5.

5. Chapter 5, Verse 1: " `If a person sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge to testify regarding something he has seen or learned about, he will be held responsible.
 - a) It would help to review a little: The first section of Leviticus, Chapters 1-7 are all about different types of offerings from people desiring to seek God. They are designed to teach us what God requires of us in order to have a relationship with Him.
 - i) Chapter 1 was about a "burnt" offering. It is about giving one's all to God.
 - ii) Chapter 2 was about a "grain" offering. It is about giving of one's substance to God. Think of it as a commitment to regular give of one's earnings to God to show how much we trust Him.
 - iii) Chapter 3 was a "peace" offering. The idea is once we have made this initial one-time commitment (Chapter 1) and a lifetime commitment (Chapter 2), we can now enjoy the peace of God (Chapter 3).
 - iv) Chapter 4 starts the issue of dealing with "unintentional" sin. In short, it is about dealing with the sins of a committed Christian when we "mess up" on that commitment. Chapter 4 is about making a sacrifice to restore that relationship.
 - v) Now we comes the first section of Chapter 5, which are examples of unintentional sins. This is not a complete list, simply examples of how to deal with such sins.
 - b) Before we analyze Verse 1, I want to show you a pattern. There are three specific unintentional sin examples given in the first half of Chapter 5. Notice this pattern:
 - i) 1) "If ...sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge." (Vs. 1)
 - ii) 2) "If a person touches anything ceremonially unclean." (Verse 2)
 - iii) 3) "If a person thoughtlessly takes an oath (i.e., speaks) to do anything. (Verse 4)
 - iv) The point is the first example is about something we hear.
 - a) The second example is about something we touch.
 - b) The final example is about something we say.
 - c) The only sensory perception not discussed is smell. I'm not sure it's possible to sin by smelling something bad. That's not covered. ☺
 - v) These three examples are not designed to be a complete list of unintentional sins. They are designed to say in effect, "As you go through life, you are going to come across situations where you discover that you have sinned. Your "senses" will remind you when you have committed these sins.
 - vi) The point is when you recognize that you have sinned, don't ignore it, but deal with as prescribed in the rest of the chapter.
 - vii) OK, I still haven't talked about Verse 1. Better state it again. ☺
6. Verse 1 (again): " `If a person sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge to testify regarding something he has seen or learned about, he will be held responsible.
 - a) Let's suppose a person is on trial for a crime. Let's also say that you or I have some significant evidence that could definitely make that person guilty or innocent. God is saying it is our responsibility to testify in that trial.
 - b) Notice the verse says nothing about whether the accused is a believer in God.
 - c) Notice the verse says nothing about whether the accused is bad person and deserves to go to jail for other reasons.
 - d) This is about our responsibility as a "witness", not the accused. God says it is our responsibility to get involved in issues of justice. Ever hear someone walk away saying, "I don't want to get involved?" Guess what, that is a sin.
 - e) Jesus was once asked what is the greatest commandment(s)". Jesus went on to say that the greatest commandments are to (paraphrasing) "Love God with all of one's heart, soul, mind and strength and love one's neighbor as themselves". (Reference: Matthew 22:35-40, Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.)

- i) If we are to love others, should not we speak up if they are falsely accused of say, murder or theft? If we were a witness to the crime, or were a witness to where they were when the crime was committed, it is a sin to not speak up.
 - ii) If we love our neighbor as ourselves, then we need to show love to the victim of the crime. If the person is guilty and we do not testify, we hurt the victim.
 - iii) By the way, in the United States as well as most countries, it is illegal to withhold evidence in a crime. You can be arrested for withholding evidence. Not only is it a sin, but it can get you some jail time!
 - iv) The point is God cares about people. Since He cares, he cares about what happens to them in this lifetime. This is about working in unity to help each other in need.
- 7. Verse 2: `Or if a person touches anything ceremonially unclean--whether the carcasses of unclean wild animals or of unclean livestock or of unclean creatures that move along the ground--even though he is unaware of it, he has become unclean and is guilty.
 - a) The second example of an unintentional sin has to do with "unclean" animals. Leviticus Chapter 11 lists certain types of animals and insects that were forbidden to be touched. For right now, just know that certain types of animals were "unclean" to Jews.
 - b) Notice the sin includes touching any dead animal. Today, we understand all about germs and the danger of touching dead carcasses. The Israelites of that day had no knowledge of germs and God designed this for their protection.
 - i) The underlying lesson has to do with "life". These Levitical laws have to do with respect for life. Once an Israelite touched something "dead", they were ceremonially unclean and had to go through a sacrifice ritual and time frame in order to become clean again.
 - c) The point here is if a person accidentally touches one of these things, they are guilty on an unintentional sin and have to go through the prescribed sin-cleansing ritual.
 - i) God is showing us we can sin and not know it.
 - ii) God still holds us accountable for sins we are unaware of. Once we do become aware of them, we must confess them.
 - d) Does this mean the Christian has to avoid dead animals? Well, for hygienic reasons, we should avoid touching them. Again, there is a practical side to this as well. The underlying point is to have a respect for life and to be aware that God holds us accountable for sins when we are unaware of them. It is when we become aware of them, and then God requires restitution.
- 8. Verse 3: `Or if he touches human uncleanness--anything that would make him unclean--even though he is unaware of it, when he learns of it he will be guilty.
 - a) Verse 3 is an epilogue to Verse 2. The idea is if we touch a human that has touched one of these things, we too are guilty.
 - b) Again, think of germs and someone that is contagious. If a person makes contact with a contagious, sick-person, we are now at risk. God is teaching the Israelites to respect human life by avoiding the people (for awhile) who have contacted bad-germs.
 - c) As a word-picture, the idea is "avoid the sinner" until that person has dealt with the sin.
 - i) God asks that we avoid "joining in" in a sinful activity. This includes things that are "unintentional". The point is simply if a person is engaged in some sinful activity, we should avoid the same activity with that person.
 - d) Remember we're dealing with unintentional sins. The idea is when we become aware of sin, we are to deal with it. We are still guilty even though we weren't aware of it.
 - e) Does this mean we can go to hell for an unintentional sin? That's irrelevant to the point at hand. We accept Jesus for the payment of all our sins, intentional or unintentional.
 - i) The issue at hand has to do with our lives as believers. The idea is when we discover we did something wrong, we realize it was a sin the moment it originally occurred, not the moment we realized it was wrong.

9. Verse 4: " `Or if a person thoughtlessly takes an oath to do anything, whether good or evil--in any matter one might carelessly swear about--even though he is unaware of it, in any case when he learns of it he will be guilty.
- a) The 3rd unintentional sin listed is about taking an oath. The idea is if one takes an oath, it is a sin to break that oath.
 - i) Jesus said, "Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one." (Matthew 5:37 NIV)
 - b) Let's suppose you say, "I swear on a stack of bibles what I am saying is true." Does that mean when you don't swear on a stack of bibles we can't trust you?" That is why Jesus says to avoid oaths. Just say "yes or no" without making a big deal about it.
 - c) The point here is that God cares about what we say. God wants us to have reputations as men and women of our word. If we can't be trusted in our vows and promises, how can anyone believe us when we talk to them about God?
 - d) One of the 10 Commandments is not to bear false witness against your neighbor. (Reference: Exodus 20:16).
 - i) The first of these three unintentional sins is an example on that command. Verse 1 was about keeping one's mouth shut when one should be speaking up. That is an example of "bearing false witness".
 - ii) The third example of an unintentional sin is about taking an oath, is also an expanded commentary on that same commandment. It is about keeping whatever oath we made. To break that oath is "bearing false witness".
 - e) Now stop and think of all the promises we have made to God and others we have broken:
 - i) God knows all things and cannot "forget". He knows all of our broken vows.
 - ii) Yes, those are sins. They are unintentional sins, but sins nonetheless.
 - iii) The main point is God wants us to be men and women of our word. That means keeping whatever commitments we make, period. This is about our integrity.
 - iv) The issue of divorce applies here: Wedding ceremonies include making a vow before God. Does that mean one should never get divorced? That's a big topic. Divorce is never listed as an unforgivable sin in the New Testament. I've yet to see one divorce that didn't involve a lot of pain. Vows are broken, and there is usually a large price to pay in this lifetime. Remember these vow-sins are forgivable. This is about realizing that breaking a vow is a sin.
10. Verse 5: " `When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned ⁶ and, as a penalty for the sin he has committed, he must bring to the LORD a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.
- a) OK, time to get back to the barbeque pit. ☺ There are no more examples of unintentional sin in this text. The rest of the chapters are about how to deal with the sins.
 - b) Think about these unintentional sins in perspective of the number of verses:
 - i) There are four verses that give examples of types of unintentional sins.
 - ii) There are fifteen verses left in Chapter 5 about how to deal with those sins.
 - iii) Given that fact alone, what do you think is more important to God: Describing the sins or learning how to make resolution for the sins?
 - c) My point is the emphasis of the text is how to deal with unintentional sins. God is interested in alleviating our guilt so we can have a more peaceful relationship with Him.
 - i) God knows we are imperfect beings. God is not going to lower His standards to appease us. Instead, God wants us to be aware of our imperfections and let Him work through us to make us better people.
 - d) The first thing Verse 5 says is that we are to confess that sin.
 - i) The idea is to state that the sin was wrong, and it is our desire to turn away from it. The idea of confession is to agree with God that our behavior was wrong.

- ii) This is the first time actual confession is mentioned. It is implied in earlier verses. If a person was interested in turning from sin to God, then that person would at the least, internally realize that their lifestyle was wrong. My point is even though the word “confess” is not mentioned until here in Chapter 5, it is not the first time in Leviticus that God deals with the issue of how to turn from sin.
 - iii) Since the sins here are unintentional, the confession is part of the process of realizing what we were doing was wrong.
 - e) Verse 6 gets back to the sin offering as first described in Chapter 4.
 - i) We’re now back to sacrificing animals for our sins. The last chapter gave a lot more details on how to make an offering for sins. I’m not going to go into great details of Chapter 4 again. The focus will be on “what’s new” here in Chapter 5.
 - ii) The only unique thing mentioned in this verse is the “female lamb or goat” is to be offered for this sin. The rest of the procedure is the same as Chapter 4.
 - iii) Remember back in Chapter 4, the sin ritual varies based on “who” sinned:
 - a) If a priest sins or a whole congregation sins, a bull must be offered.
 - b) If a civil leader sinned, a male goat was to be brought.
 - c) Finally, Chapter 4 stated that if a “common person” sinned, then they must bring a female goat. The idea is “lower in social status, a cheaper animal will suffice.” God holds us accountable based on our position in life. Therefore, a priest has to bring a more expensive offering.
 - iv) Notice that the sheep or goat is to be young. The verse specifies a young sheep, which is a lamb or a young goat, which is a kid. The idea is to give a sacrifice “in the prime of its life”. Innocent young animals have to suffer for our sins. Remember these are unintentional sins. We thought we were “young and innocent”. These unintentional sins have to be accounted for. By bringing young animals, it teaches us about the price we have to pay even for unintentional sins.
 - v) Here in Chapter 6, it deals with “anyone” committing an unintentional sin. The sinner here must bring a female goat or sheep. Just as the female is subservient to the male, all sinners are subservient to God. This has nothing to do with men and women and superiority, it has to do with showing our willingness to be subservient to God in all that we do, including unintentional sins.
 - f) The final phrase is “and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin”.
 - i) If you recall from the last lesson, the priest does a lot of the work. The “sinner” is the one who has to cut up the animal. The priest is the one who places some of the animal parts on the fire pit. The priest must then take the remainder outside the camp and burn it up.
 - ii) We as Christians are to serve as “priests” to one another. In this case, it is a person who sins unintentionally, and then realizes something they did was wrong.
 - a) The priest helped that sinner alleviate their guilt by confession to God.
 - b) We as priests are called to help other “fellow-sinners” deal with their guilt by leading them to God and help each other mature in our faiths.
 - c) “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16 NIV)
11. Verse 7: “If he cannot afford a lamb, he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to the LORD as a penalty for his sin—one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. ⁸ He is to bring them to the priest, who shall first offer the one for the sin offering. He is to wring its head from its neck, not severing it completely, ⁹ and is to sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering against the side of the altar; the rest of the blood must be drained out at the base of the altar. It is a sin offering. ¹⁰ The priest shall then offer the other as a burnt offering in the prescribed way and make atonement for him for the sin he has committed, and he will be forgiven.

- a) Back in Chapter 1, we had a burnt offering. If you recall, there was a pattern based on economic status. That pattern was, "Bring a bull for a sin offering. If you can't afford a bull, bring a sheep or goat. If you can't afford a sheep or goat, bring a bird".
 - i) That same pattern is here in Chapter 5. The last few verses described a sin offering for unintentional sin. Verses 5-6 said to bring a goat or sheep. Now Verse 7 is saying that if one cannot afford a lamb or a goat, bring two young birds.
 - b) The important thing to understand that when it comes to dealing with sin, God wants us to confess it as being wrong. Being poor is no excuse. The sin still has to be dealt with. If one commits an unintentional sin, one cannot use being poor as an excuse for those sins.
 - c) If you recall back in Chapter 1, a bird sacrifice was an option for a burnt offering.
 - i) The procedure on how to sacrifice the bird is a similar procedure in these verses.
 - ii) Now we get a little gross: The bird's head is to be ripped, but not completely. Some of the blood is to be sprinkled on the altar. The blood must be drained on the side of the altar. All of this bloody mess is a reminder of how "gross" sin is to God and the fact we have to atone for it.
 - iii) If there is one big message Christians need to get from all of these offerings is how "disgusting" sin is to God. Christians simply confess our sins without giving much thought as to how bad that sin really is. All of these animal sacrifice pictures help us to realize just how bad sin is, from God's perspective.
 - d) These verses also say that two birds must be sacrificed. One bird is specifically for the sin (offering) that was committed and the other was for a burnt offering. It is to say in effect, "Bird #1 is being offered as a substitute for the specific sin that was committed. Bird #2 is to remind the sinner that they are completely giving of themselves to God."
 - e) In the earlier verses with the sheep or goat offering, only one animal was killed. Here, the procedure is repeated twice. I suspect, it has to do with the fact that "birds are cheap" in that they are relatively easy to catch. The idea is "sin is not cheap", even if a bird is only what one can afford. You cannot get away from sin with just a cheap sacrifice. A second bird is a reminder to the sinner that we dedicate all of our lives to God.
12. Verse 11: "If, however, he cannot afford two doves or two young pigeons, he is to bring as an offering for his sin a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering. He must not put oil or incense on it, because it is a sin offering.¹² He is to bring it to the priest, who shall take a handful of it as a memorial portion and burn it on the altar on top of the offerings made to the LORD by fire. It is a sin offering.¹³ In this way the priest will make atonement for him for any of these sins he has committed, and he will be forgiven. The rest of the offering will belong to the priest, as in the case of the grain offering.' "
- a) For these verses, we go even lower on the economic scale. The verses say in effect, "If the sinner cannot afford two birds, I'll take a bunch of wheat."
 - b) The specific thing to be offered is a tenth of an ephah of fine flour. This is about half a gallon of flour. It was enough where it took some sacrifice of a poor person, but still at a level he could afford.
 - c) This flour had to be "fine flour". That means it had to be sifted repeatedly to remove all lumps. The word picture is about working to remove the sin of our lives.
 - d) Verse 11 says that one cannot put oil or incense on it.
 - i) Back in Chapter 2, the focus was on the grain offering. It is to give part of our earned substance to remind our selves of our continuing devotion to God.
 - ii) In that Chapter 2 grain offering, both oil and incense were added.
 - iii) Here in Chapter 5, both oil and incense were to be avoided with the "sin" grain.
 - iv) Oil speaks of the Holy Spirit (see Chapter 2 for details). The Chapter 2 offering is given by a "cleansed sinner" to show his or her devotion to God. This offering here in Chapter 5 is for sin. God cannot have any part with sin, and therefore oil was to be avoided in this offering.

- v) Back in Chapter 2, special incense was added to the grain offering. It is a special smell associated with God. This Chapter 5 offering is for sin. Therefore, the incense, like the oil is to be avoided in this case.
 - e) This ends the discussion of unintentional sin and the “common person”.
 - i) What I hope to stick in our long-term memories is just how seriously God is about sin. This includes sins we were ignorant about and later realized it was wrong. It is still sin to God, and that sin still requires a blood sacrifice.
 - ii) To the Christian, Jesus paid the price even for these unintentional sins. When we become aware of them, we are to confess them to God. Hopefully, these gross and bloody word pictures help us to remember how serious and how “messy” these sins are from God’s perspective.
 - iii) Remember that God’s position on sin does not change from the Old Testament to the New Testament. In the New Testament, a permanent provision for all sins was provided. What reading Leviticus does is give the Christian a great appreciation of just what the cross means for us.
13. Verse 14: The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁵ "When a person commits a violation and sins unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD's holy things, he is to bring to the LORD as a penalty a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel. It is a guilt offering. ¹⁶ He must make restitution for what he has failed to do in regard to the holy things, add a fifth of the value to that and give it all to the priest, who will make atonement for him with the ram as a guilt offering, and he will be forgiven.
- a) There is one key phrase here: “In regard to any of the LORD's holy things”.
 - i) This chapter is all about unintentional sins. We are still on that topic.
 - ii) Now we have a little more grievous unintentional sin: “God’s holy things”.
 - b) Remember the three examples of unintentional sins earlier in the chapter?
 - i) One was hearing about a crime and then keeping one’s mouth shut. It is a sin of “omission” because we “omit” to tell anyone. It is the opposite of the sin of “commission” because we “commit” some sort of sin.
 - ii) The second example was about accidentally touching something “unclean”. What is unclean is a long topic that we’ll get to in later chapters. It is usually a dead animal. It is a sin to touch that animal and it is a sin to touch a person who has touched the animal. It teaches us about quarantining problems.
 - iii) The final example was to say something one regrets, like an oath. God expects us to honor our oaths, even if we regret committing them.
 - iv) My point here is that all of these sins deal with other people. Yes, we turn to God to alleviate the sin and deal with the problem. A purpose of these sacrifices is that we need to get God involved in order to remedy the situation.
 - c) Getting back to Verses 14-16, we now have an unintentional sin against God himself.
 - i) The most common example would be when someone is supposed to give a gift to God and then does not follow through. If an Israelite unintentionally sinned, and say owns sheep and goats, one of those animals now “belongs” to God for a sin offering. These verses are about the sin of delaying making that sacrifice.
 - d) In other words, Verses 14-16 are the penalty charges for delaying the inevitable. ☺
 - i) Sin harms our relationship with God. The guilt of sins eats at us internally. We can’t delay dealing with that sin as it harms our life.
 - ii) Verse 16 says, “add a fifth of the value”. That means when one has committed a sin of not giving what belongs to God at the right time, there is a 20% penalty.
 - iii) The priest is to determine (appraise) the value of the offering, and determine what is the 20% penalty to be paid over and above that in coinage (“shekels”, Verse 15).

- e) So how can a Christian violate “in regard to any of the LORD's holy things”?
 - i) Let's say you made a commitment to give 10% of your net earnings to God. Once you've made that commitment, that money now belongs to God. To withhold giving it to God is a violation of this law. Better pay up, the late fees are bad! ☺
 - ii) Let's say you made a commitment to help another Christian. That promise is now “holy” in that this action is for God. If we fail to complete that action, this is a sin that has to be dealt with.
 - f) The good news is that this type of sin is forgivable. The final phrase of this paragraph is “and he will be forgiven”. God is saying in effect that what we are doing is wrong, but it is not a death penalty sin. It can be remedied.
 - g) Notice the animal to be sacrificed is a ram. There are no, “I am too poor to afford a ram” provisions for this sin. The penalty is “more stiff” than the other unintentional sins.
 - i) The only time a ram was mentioned so far in the bible is when Abraham was about to offer Isaac; God provided a ram as a substitute (Genesis 22:13).
 - ii) Abraham was to offer his son Isaac to God. The word picture is of something that now belongs to God. So is this specific sin. The ram was offered as a substitute.
14. Verse 17: "If a person sins and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though he does not know it, he is guilty and will be held responsible. ¹⁸ He is to bring to the priest as a guilt offering a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. In this way, the priest will make atonement for him for the wrong he has committed unintentionally, and he will be forgiven. ¹⁹ It is a guilt offering; he has been guilty of wrongdoing against the LORD."
- a) This paragraph continues the issue of unintentionally sinning against any of God's requirements. Notice Verse 17 says, “Even though he does not know it, he is guilty and will be held responsible.” In other words, “Ignorance of the law is no excuse”.
 - b) God's standards are perfection. That includes unintentional sins and sins we are naïve about when we commit them. Thank God a perfect substitute was made on our behalf!
 - i) Why are God's standards “perfection”? Why can't God give us a passing grade if say, we only sin 16% of the time? ☺ The problem is we would never know if we get it wrong less than 16% of the time. At least with “perfection”, we can fully understand what is required of us, without having doubts about our lives. That is another reason why a “perfect” sacrifice is necessary: This way we can have assurance about our salvation.
 - ii) At the same time, God wants us to mature in our relationship with Him. When we do become aware of any of these issues, we are to confess them and realize how “expensive” these sins are from God's perspective.
 - c) With all of that said, these verses reiterate what is stated earlier in these chapters. These verses are a “wrap-up reminder” of what to do when we sin against God. This paragraph is God saying in effect, “Don't mess with your commitments to Me! When you commit a sin, deal with it. When you realize you've sinned, deal with it immediately. Don't procrastinate! The late payments are painful. Holding that sin inside of you will only make it worse and the guilt will eat at you!” Let's end this! Bring Me your goat!” ☺
15. Chapter 6, Verse 1: The LORD said to Moses: ² "If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving his neighbor about something entrusted to him or left in his care or stolen, or if he cheats him, ³ or if he finds lost property and lies about it, or if he swears falsely, or if he commits any such sin that people may do—
- a) The first seven verses of Chapter 6 go well with Chapter 5. The remainder of Chapter 6 goes well with Chapter 7, so I'm going to split Chapter 6 over two lessons.
 - b) These first three verses list more examples of sins. They can be summarized by the idea of “breaking one's trust to another person”.

- i) Let's say a neighbor tells us, "I'm going on vacation. Can you watch my stuff while I'm gone?" We agree. While he is gone, some his stuff is stolen. You and I as caretakers are held accountable since we were in charge. If we fail to pay that compensate that person, we have "stolen" from the person who went on vacation.
 - ii) The verse expands upon the idea of the caretaker:
 - a) If we lie about what happened to their stuff, we sinned.
 - b) If we cheat our neighbor when returning the stuff, we sinned.
 - c) The idea here is God cares about our relationship with other people. If we are God's representatives to the world, then God cares how we act around other people.
 - i) This gets back to being honest. If people can't trust us with their "stuff", how can they ever trust us when we tell them about God?
- 16. Verse 5: When he thus sins and becomes guilty, he must return what he has stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to him, or the lost property he found, ⁵ or whatever it was he swore falsely about. He must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day he presents his guilt offering. ⁶ And as a penalty he must bring to the priest, that is, to the LORD, his guilt offering, a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. ⁷ In this way the priest will make atonement for him before the LORD, and he will be forgiven for any of these things he did that made him guilty."
 - a) Like the last chapter, when the person wants to "make up" for this sin, there is a 20% penalty ("add a fifth of the value", Verse 5).
 - b) Further, it is not just a matter of saying to your neighbor, "I'm sorry for what I did, here is your stuff back plus 20% interest". One must also do a sin offering to God!
 - c) This gets back to one of my favorite principals of life, "Without God, we can't".
 - i) When we are entrusted with goods that belong to someone else and they are lost, we are accountable to God and that makes us accountable to our neighbor. God is the motivational factor to help us do what is right in life and have an honest relationship with those people living around us.
 - ii) In other words, it is not enough to pay the neighbor back. We must also realize we have sinned before God and confess that sin.
 - iii) The classic example is King David, when he committed adultery with Bathsheba.
 - a) Psalm 51 records his confession about that sin. Verse 4 says, "Against you, (and) you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight," (NIV)
 - b) Let's face it, due to David's sin, he should have apologized to Bathsheba, her family and the Israelites as a whole. David's first priority is to acknowledge the sin before God. That is what Psalm 51:4 is all about. That is what these verses here in Chapter 6 are all about.
 - d) This is similar to the idea of a "fiduciary responsibility". That is a business term of putting someone else's interest in front of our own. For example, accountants and lawyers hold a fiduciary responsibility to put their clients interest in front of their own. If there is some sort of conflict of interest, it needs to be disclosed.
 - e) Restitution between two people involves God. It is our accountability to God that motivates us to remedy the situation. This is true for the atheist as well. The atheist feels guilty for what they did as wrong. They don't realize it, but it is God who created them with that sense of guilt.
 - i) For the person who believes in God, it is our realization of our accountability to God that we want to resolve that situation with our neighbor. We have to have that peaceful loving relationship with God. Sin blocks that relationship. We resolve situations with our neighbor, if for no other reason, than to please God.
 - ii) That is why Verse 7 is so important here. It says, "He will be forgiven". It is a reminder that if we confess our sins and make restitution for the situation (as much as we can), we will be forgiven.

17. At this point, I'm going to stop. We've burnt enough animals for one lesson. ☺
 - a) The remainder of Chapter 6, along with Chapter 7 reviews the offerings of the first five chapters. The difference is the text of the next lesson focuses on the offerings from the priests' perspective as opposed to the perspective of the person making the offering.
 - b) Since Christians are called to be priests, that will be the emphasis of the next lesson.
18. The focus on this lesson is on "dealing with unintentional sins". There are several key ideas I would like you to remember:
 - a) First is that ignorance of God's laws is no excuse. When we become aware of a sin in our lives, we are to deal with it, and deal with it as soon as possible.
 - b) The Christian life is a maturation process. We go through periods as adults where we look back at earlier parts of our lives and realize what we did "back then" was wrong. We realize we still have bad habits that stem from that old situation. We have to deal with our past. That can be an example of "unintentional sins", where some bad behavior from our past keeps manifesting itself. We have to bring that sin to "God's altar" and burn it up.
 - c) Notice there is no limitations for unintentional sins. God does not say, "If you sin unintentionally forty two times, come on down. On the forty third time, give it up". ☺ My point is when we realize we sin, we keep on turning from it and confessing it to God. There is no limit to His forgiveness. God works on our lives at His pace, not ours. God is capable of making us stop doing bad behavior at any moment. God is teaching us, by our faults of our dependence upon Him and just how "bloody messy" sin is in our lives.
 - d) Notice all of these sins are forgivable. God did not say to the Israelites to go stone a person to death who commits one of the sins listed in these examples. There were other sins such as murder that were capital offenses. The issue in focus is not one's eternal salvation; it is about one's relationship with God. Going through these animal sacrifice rituals restored one's relationship with God in this lifetime.
 - i) To the Israelites, some sins have a higher penalty than others. The same applies to our society. Some laws have a stiffer penalty than others. When it comes to eternal salvation, the only unforgivable sin is to deny God's provision for sin. Therefore, the focus of this lesson is not on eternal salvation, but on one's day-to-day relationship with God. Guilt blocks that relationship. Sin must be dealt with so that sin can be alleviated.
 - ii) Getting back to my opening sentence of this lesson, the key word is "resolution". God holds us accountable for all sins, even unintentional sins. God provides a way for us to clear up our relationship with Him and relieve any and all guilt for committing that sin. These sin offerings are God's provision for resolution.
 - iii) We as Christians don't have to kill a goat to have peace with God. What we do have to realize is that God takes unintentional sins seriously. These too, must be avoided and confessed as wrong when they are committed. We must also accept that we are forgiven once we do confess those sins. (See 1st John 1:9).
 - e) We need to remember that when we confess the sin, God does forgive us. The hard part is learning to forgive ourselves. We may read this lesson and think, "God is really tough on sin. He even wants us to confess unintentional sins." In a sense, we're much tougher on ourselves. We carry guilt around for years because we think we should do better than we do. If God is big enough to forgive us, then we have to realize "that should be enough" and let go of the guilt.
 - f) Finally, if at all possible, we need to make restitution with others around us. Sins against other people require interest penalties. The idea is when we sin against someone around us, we are to try to make it up, with interest against them. The idea is that God cares about His reputation and we are His witnesses to others around us.

19. Let's pray: Father, One of the most difficult things in life is to have to focus on our past mistakes. Bring to the surface sins from our past so we can deal with them and confess them to You. As painful as this process is, we realize that it draws us closer to You. Work within us to clean us of our sins, be they intentional or unintentional, so that we can live in greater conformity to Your will. Help us to be good witnesses to those around us. Provide the boldness within us to confess our sins and remedy these situations as soon as we can. May You be glorified in all that we do. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.