

The Perfect Gift



Malachi 1

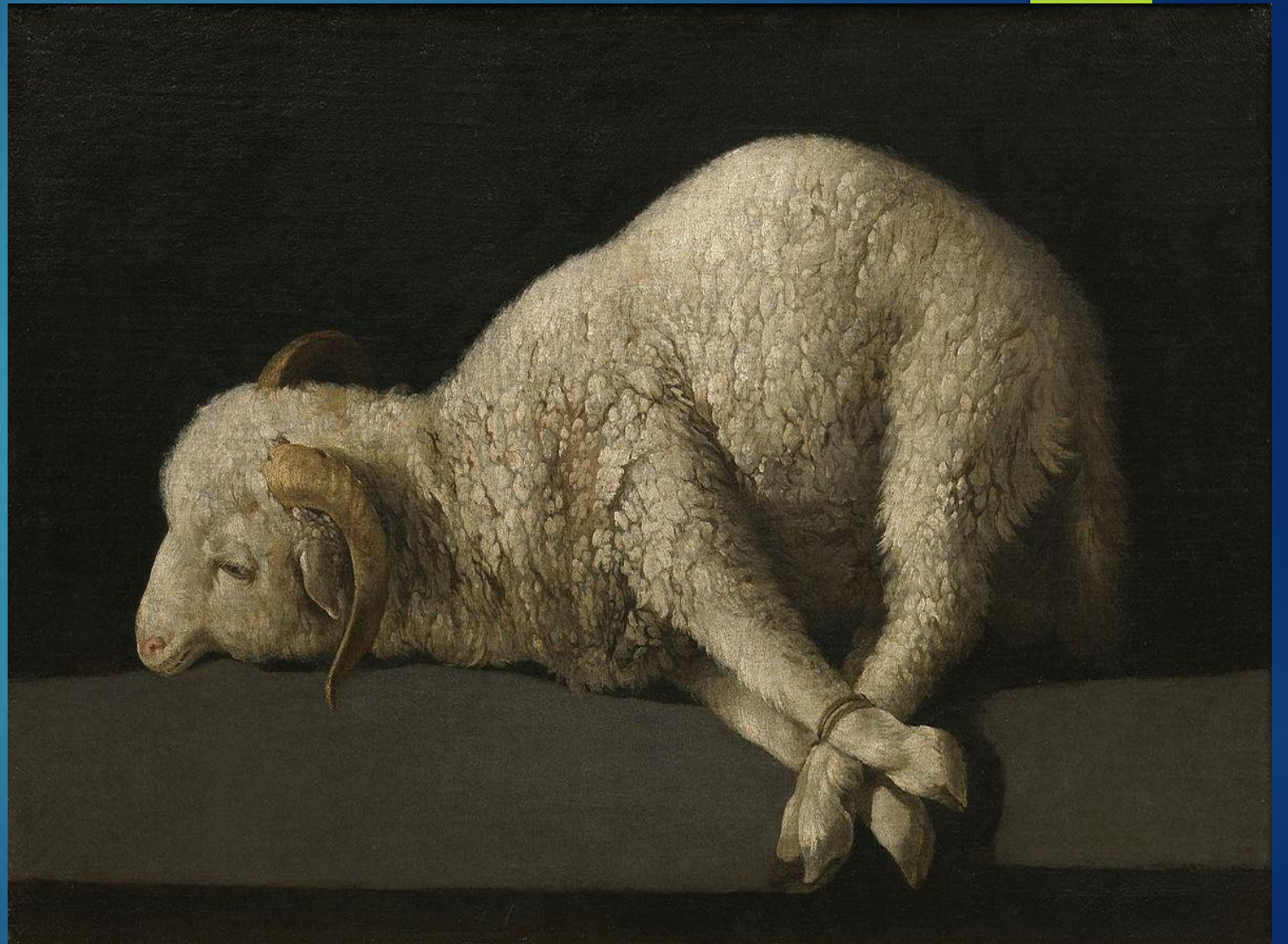
⁶ I, the Lord All-Powerful, *have something to say to you priests.* Children respect their fathers, and servants respect their masters. *I am your father and your master, so why don't you respect me?*



You *priests*
have
insulted
me, and now
you ask,
“*How did we
insult
you?*”



⁷ You embarrass me
by offering
*worthless food on
my altar*. Then you
ask, “How have we
embarrassed you?”
You have done it
by saying, “*what’s
so great about
the Lord’s altar?*”



17 The Lord told Moses 18 to tell Aaron and his sons and everyone else the rules for offering sacrifices. He said:
The animals that are to be completely burned on the altar 19-20 must have nothing wrong with them, or else I won't accept them. Bulls or rams or goats^[a] are the animals to be used for these sacrifices.



²¹ when you offer a sacrifice to ask my blessing,^[b] there must be nothing wrong with the animal. This is true, whether the sacrifice is part of a promise or something you do voluntarily. ²² Don't offer an animal that is blind or injured or that has an infection or a skin disease.

Leviticus 22: 17-22

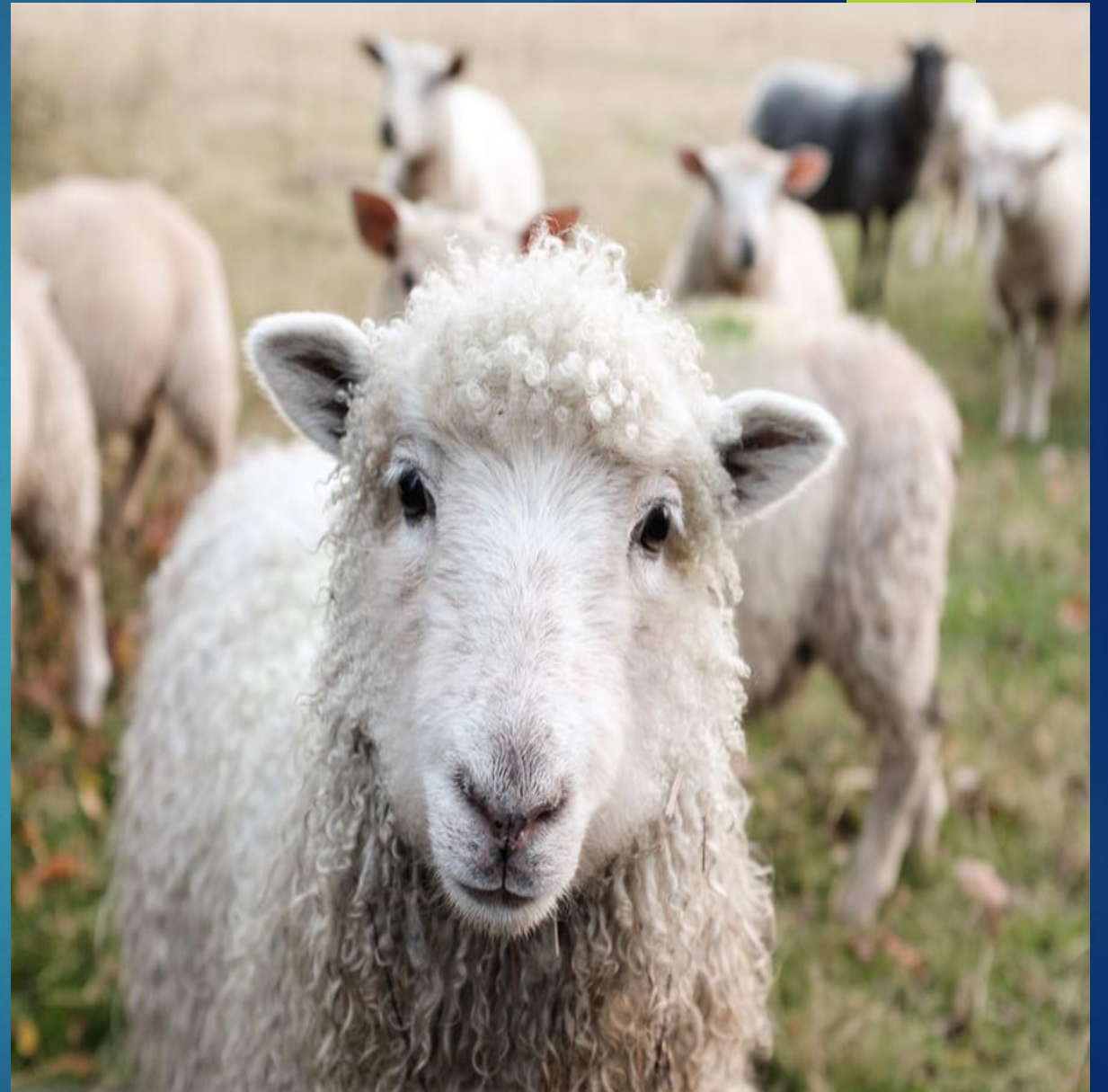


⁸ When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice lame or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the Lord Almighty.

⁹ "*Now plead with God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?*"—says the Lord Almighty.



12 “But you profane it by saying, ‘The Lord’s table is defiled,’ and, ‘Its food is contemptible.’ 13 And you say, ‘*What a burden!*’ and *you sniff at it contemptuously,*” says the Lord Almighty. “*When you bring injured, lame or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices,* should I accept them from your hands?” says the Lord.



14 “*Cursed is* the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,” says the Lord Almighty, “and *my name is to be feared among the nations.*”



¹⁰ “Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you,” says the Lord Almighty, “and *I will accept no offering from your hands.*”



¹¹ My name *will be great among the nations*, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place *incense and pure offerings will be brought to me*, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.



¹⁴ By his one sacrifice he has *forever set free* from sin the people he brings to God.

¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also speaks of this by telling us that the Lord said,

¹⁶ “When the time comes, I will make an agreement with them.

I will write my laws on their minds and hearts.

Hebrews 10:14-16



Dear friends, God is good. So I beg you to offer *your bodies* to him as a *living sacrifice*, pure and pleasing. That's the most sensible way to serve God. ² Don't be like the people of this world, but let God change the way you think. Then you will know how to do everything that is good and pleasing to him.

Rom. 12:1-2

