

SHORT STUDY OF SIN IN BROAD THEME & WORD FOCUS

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The Meta-Narrative Thematic Scope of Sin

Missing the Mark is Sin.

Sin is represented by various biblical expressions in both Testaments of the Bible. The word itself derives from original terms (Hebrew, **hata'**; Greek, **hamartano**), that portray the image of missing a mark or target (cf. Judg. 20:16; Rom. 3:23).

These words imply several things. There is a target or **standard** of spiritual and moral excellence at which one must aim. As fallible human beings, we frequently **miss the standard**, either purposely or through ignorance (cf. Heb. 9:7, ASVfn). In either case, we sin, and sin **condemns** even if it is **only one sin** (Jas. 1:15; note the definite article [ASV]).

Rebellion is Sin.

A rebellious temperament is the root of many a sin. The prophet Samuel declared, “Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim” (1 Sam. 15:23).

Jeremiah once described the disposition of wayward Israel as follows: “They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who **refused to hear** my words” (Jer. 11:10).

One cannot but be reminded of the hardened Jews whom Stephen encountered, and who, rather than reverently consider his teaching, “stopped their ears,” then murdered God’s messenger (Acts 7:57-59).

Neglect is Sin.

Sin is more than simply doing wrong. It also embraces the idea of **purposefully neglecting** one’s duty to the Creator. James expressed it in this fashion: “He who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin” (Jas. 4:17).

One scholar has observed that those here in view “cannot take refuge in the plea that they have done nothing positively wrong; as Scripture makes abundantly clear, sins of **omission** are as real and serious as sins of **commission**” (Moo 1985, 158).

Many are known to whine, “I know I should, but I’m just weak.” The rationalization of weakness will not produce forgiveness. There must be an appropriate seeking of pardon and a serious attempt to change one’s conduct.

Presumption is Sin.

David once petitioned the Lord: “Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be upright, and I shall be clear from great transgression” (Psa. 19:13). Several things may be said regarding this sobering text.

First, the presumptuous sin appears to be in contrast to the hidden faults mentioned just previously. The former are sins committed in ignorance. Who could possibly keep up with the slips he makes unawares? These are sins nonetheless and require forgiveness.

Second, presumptuous sins are of a different sort. The original Hebrew term is undergirded by such ideas as the haughty attitude of one who is insolent and who scorns the sovereignty and authority of God (cf. Brown, Driver, and Briggs 1981, 267).

A New Testament word that illustrates this arrogant disposition is **ethelothreskeia**, a compound term from **ethelo** (“will”) and **threskeia** (“worship”), hence is rendered “will-worship” (Col. 2:23). It is a **self-initiated** action reflected in a mode of worship that either is “forbidden or unbidden” (Vine 1991, 881).

J. H. Thayer depicted it as “worship which one devises and prescribes for himself, contrary to the nature of the faith which ought to be directed by Christ” (1958, 168).

Violating the Conscience is Sin.

Paul admonishes that when a Christian engages a certain action, he must “be fully assured in his own mind” (Rom. 14:5) that what he is doing does not violate his own conscience.

The conscience is a sensitive instrument and is a person's most valuable endowment in nudging him in the proper direction as he grows in knowledge. The conscience is not the final arbiter of right and wrong (Prov. 14:12). It must be educated. Yet, in its proper place, it is a prized gift from God, and the Christian must guard against it becoming hardened (cf. Eph. 4:19; 1 Tim. 4:2).

This is why, at the conclusion of the chapter, Paul cautions that any practice that violates of one's conscience is sin, even in religiously or ethically neutral matters. One must be able (in the case of eating meat) to eat or drink "of faith," i.e., with a clear conscience (Rom. 14:23).

Here is an important point. A clear conscience does not make a wrong act right, but a violated conscience can make a right act (in its basic nature) **wrong** for that individual. – Edit @Truth

SELFISHNESS IS THE ROOT OF SIN. Selfishness is living in and for ourselves. It manifests itself in various aspects.

1. **Sin in thought.** Self becomes the largest figure in a man's conception of the universe. The shadow of self lies across everything else. The merits of self are magnified in pride. Vanity craves the admiration of others for one's self.

2. **Sin in feeling.** Self-love fills a selfish man's heart. He has no grief at another's trouble and no pleasure in another's joy.

3. Sin in action. Self-will becomes the predominating energy and self-seeking the prevailing motive. – Internet Site

CHRIST REQUIRES THE ERADICATION OF SELFISHNESS:

1. Sinless in thought. This is essential to repentance. Humility and confession of sin are necessary before we can even enter the kingdom of heaven.

2. Sinless in feeling. We are only Christian in so far as we follow Christ. All pretensions of saintly devotion count just for nothing, or for worse than nothing, for hypocrisy, so long as the self sits enthroned in our hearts.

3. Sinless in action. Faith pre-supposes self-abnegation; it is the surrender of ourselves to another. It takes two forms -

(1) submission of our souls to the will of God in reliance upon his grace in Christ as our Savior; and

(2) obedience of our lives to the will of God in loyal service to Christ as our Master.

The Etymology Construction Word Focus of Sin

Transgression – Greek *Parabaino*: “To go aside (*para*), hence to go beyond, is chiefly used metaphorically of transgressing the tradition of the elders.” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary*)
Hebrew *Pesha*: *A Breach of Trust* – Individual-to-Individual/ Nation-to-Nation/ Man-to-God. *In the Book of Amos the Jewish Leadership is condemned for a basic breach of trust due to its inhumane treatment of the Israelite poor.*

Iniquity – Greek *Anomia*: “[Lawlessness] is used in a way which indicates the meaning as being *wickedness*. The usual rendering in the New Testament is ‘iniquity,’ which means *unrighteousness*.” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary*)

Hebrew *Avah*: Crooked Or A Road Not Straight
This word is utilized in both Job & Jeremiah to describe a wrong way taken and/or crooked behaviors. In Isaiah Chapter 59 it described the corruption of the *crooked* Jewish Leadership.

Sin – Greek *Hamartia*: “A missing of the mark. It is the most comprehensive term for moral obliquity. It is used of sin as (a) a principle or source of action, or an inward element producing acts... (b) a governing principle or power as in Romans 6: 6, ‘(the body) of sin’... (c) a generic term (distinct from specific terms) as in Romans 8: 3, ‘God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh’... (d) a sinful deed, an act of sin.” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*)