

DOWNLOAD "What Is Sin?"
(or Right-Click links to "Save As")

the Scriptural Sin series
What Is Sin?

by haRold Smith
a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

*"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, **sin is crouching at the door**. Its desire is against you, but you must rule over it."*
Genesis 4:7

*"In those days Israel had no king; all the people did **whatever seemed right in their own eyes**."*
Judges 17.6

*"This is eternal life, **that they know You the only true Elohim, and Yeshua haMashiach whom You have sent**."* John 17:3

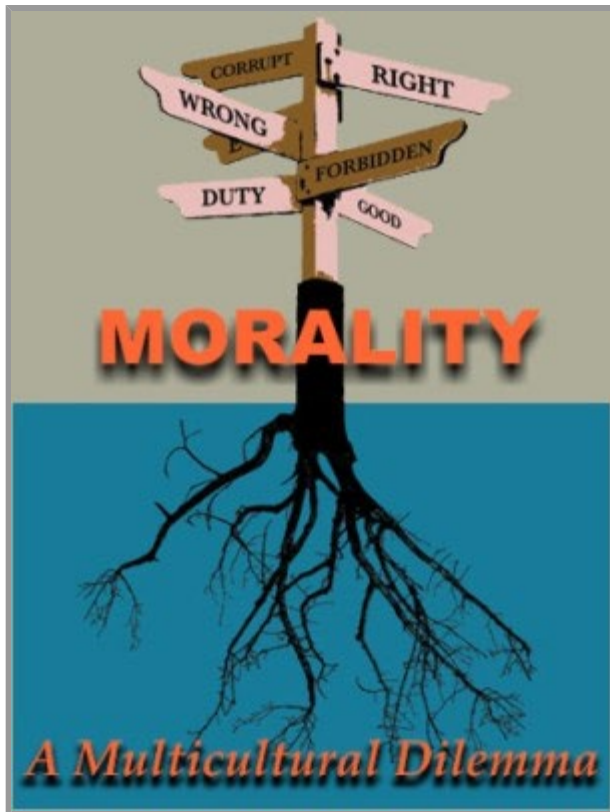


What was Cain's sin? What was Adam's sin? In both of these biblical accounts, their downfall was in behaving contrarily to what they knew was the Nature of YaHoVeH they had been living with. In contrast, Abraham **was lauded** (**click on highlighted words to view content**) for obeying YaHoVeH's Words and keeping His commandments **430 years** prior to Sinai because he behaved in accordance to the Nature of Spirit he had come to know. So, if being accepted into YaHoVeH's Kingdom is, by nature, dependent on adherence to YaHoVeH's covenant - then ignoring the clear expectations of the Lord of the Kingdom is sin. It is not possible to claim that the rules have changed if the Lord of the Kingdom **hasn't changed** and the constitution of the Kingdom **hasn't changed**. Sin is what is defined within the community of YaHoVeH's Kingdom. So, since the Christian community has declared obedience to **the Ten Words of YaHoVeH** to be of no consequence, it can not be part of the same community as the one established by YaHoVeH at Sinai. They have **redefined** what the word "sin" means to accommodate their culture. The issue is not a change in morality. The issue is about what kingdom am I a part of. **Keeping Shabbat** is a requirement of one - it is not a requirement of the other.

Hebrew is a language of remembering. The Hebrew verb used in **Genesis 9:15** for the word translated as the English **remember** is **zakar**. Its definition in Hebrew, "**mark or to remember**", is much more than a mere mental assent. It involves action - to remember is to act on behalf of someone or something. **Zakar** is used in the **Ten Words** (with emphasis on verse one) in regard to the Sabbath: "Remember the Sabbath day". This Word is not telling us to "think about" or "recall" the Sabbath; it is telling us to DO something - and that something is to choose to enter into YaHoVeH's **REST**. We encountered **zakar** in the article, **the First Hebrew**, where we found it to also be used to describe Adam's purpose for being. The word translated "sin" in the verse from Genesis 4 above is **hatta'ath**. Lexicons typically offer "sin, sin-offering, expiation" as the meaning. But, in the Hebrew perspective the bible was written from, **hatta'ath** is understood as behavior which lies in **opposition** to the accepted cultural norms of YaHoVeH's Kingdom. The root word **hatta'ath** is derived from **hata'** and means "to miss the **mark**" - forgetfulness. Not remembering. In the midst of their individual situations, Adam and Cain forgot YaHoVeH's Words - Abraham did not. It was the exercise of Abraham's **faith** that was counted to him as righteousness - not a mere acknowledgement of existence. From this perspective, **hatta'ath** means a violation of a communal relationship standard - behavior that goes against the agreed upon order of things. For example, if the agreed upon order describes marriage as a union of a man and a woman, then homosexual "marriage" is not only not "marriage" - it is sin within YaHoVeH's Kingdom. But, it is sin only because it violates a communal standard of the Kingdom - not because it is some eternal evil. YaHoVeH's standard determines what is acceptable and what isn't within the culture of YaHoVeH's Kingdom. To attempt to apply those standards to those who have not committed themselves to YaHoVeH's covenant is futile because they belong to another culture, another kingdom where the standard is different. The current cultural debate within America about homosexual marriage is precisely that - a cultural debate! It is an argument over what is acceptable in the culture of America and since the cultural meanings of the terms can change when the culture changes - so can the acceptable standards of behavior. For instance, today no one considers attending **Christian Church** in casual dress as sin, but 100 years ago - it would have been. From a cultural perspective, things change. Homosexuality has become an acceptable **behavioral choice** in

American culture based upon the legal ground of equal rights that it is being argued from. *But this is not true in the culture of YaHoVeH's Kingdom!* (**Romans 1:20-28**).

"...she will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Yeshua, because He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:21



John 11:50-51 says Yeshua died for *the Kingdom of Israel*, the family of YaHoVeH - not for "the world". You will not find the popular phrase, "*He came to save mankind from their sins*" anywhere in scripture. Even in the Greek language (in this verse from Matthew 1), the word translated as "sin" is **hamartia** and means - are you ready for this? - "to be without a share in, **to miss the mark**". The first thing to recognize about YaHoVeH's *cultural* instructions is that **He** sets the cultural norms for *His Kingdom*. If we are going to participate in His Kingdom, then His standards are the acceptable ones, regardless of what other cultures (and competing kingdoms) accept or deny. Sin is a *cultural* standard - not a moral equivalency. In fact, the words "morals", "morality" or "immorality" **do not appear anywhere in the original words of scripture**. Where these words do appear in English translations is because they were artificially inserted, overwriting the original language to support the theological bias of the translators (i.e., **Deuteronomy 24:1** where the original Hebrew word should be translated "**nakedness or uncleanness**" as it relates to *Torah* and **Ephesians 5:3** where the original Greek word is shown to mean "**uncleanness**" - again relating to *Torah*). The definition of **morals** is: "*the principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior as it is affected by the observation of these principles*". Every society in the world has its own set of

moral principles unique to that society (consider the Netherlands where prostitution, drug use, and euthanasia have been legalized). The Words of YaHoVeH contained in the Book are not guidelines on what the world considers to be "proper morals" - they are not "right and wrong, good and bad" **rules**. The Words of YaHoVeH are directed to the family of YaHoVeH, those who are in a covenant relationship with Him - not to the world. These Words are given as **instructions** (not rules) on how to remain in His Family **of Light** - how to keep from being separated from **His Presence**. Not accepting His instructions means not being accepted into the culture of His Kingdom - as was told to Cain in Genesis. Therefore, to become subject to "sin" is when someone becomes **a subject of the Kingdom of YaHoVeH**. How others define "sin" makes little difference because they live in another kingdom. This is why **legislating** morality is inherently bankrupt in cultures where there is no absolute standard. In the end, it is simply a semantic argument. If there is no absolute, then the meanings of the terms can be redefined to suit the populace as their behavior changes. While we may think we know what is meant by "sin" today, it's not so clear that we understand what "sin" meant to the authors of our bible. And that's a problem. Words mean things and, if we don't know what **they** meant by the word, then we could hold ourselves accountable for ideas about sin that were never part of the biblical message. Wherever we have allowed a culture other than the Kingdom of YaHoVeH to define what "sin" means to the life of a subject of the Kingdom of YaHoVeH - we do not understand, or follow, the standard of the King of **Righteousness**. This is why (to the chagrin of many and in spite of vocal insistence otherwise) the country of America and the religion of Christianity are **not** part of YaHoVeH's Kingdom. Regardless of how they began, by **redefining** the words they have become kingdoms unto themselves (**John 18:36**). It is incumbent on all those who claim to embrace the Kingdom of YaHoVeH to obey the King according to **His** standard. If the Word of the King is the **law** of the Kingdom, then redefining the terms is impossible. Now it simply becomes a matter of understanding **what** those terms actually mean in order to live in accordance with them.

Thanks to **Augustine** and Luther, however, the concept of sin often focuses primarily on the inward moral conscience. In Christian thought, sin is principally a personal affair that begins with cognitive mistakes. Descartes' **Cogito ego sum** has found its way into Christian theology with the notion that mental error is sin and is the genesis of outward behavior. But Scripture takes a different approach. Scriptural sin is what I **do**, not generally what I **think**. From a scriptural, Hebraic perspective, having a thought is not sin. It is only when we dwell on those thoughts that they become lust. You have to train your mind-muscle to rebuke those thoughts when they appear. Not out of fear that they will overtake you but, just as when we don't exercise any of our other muscles - over time,

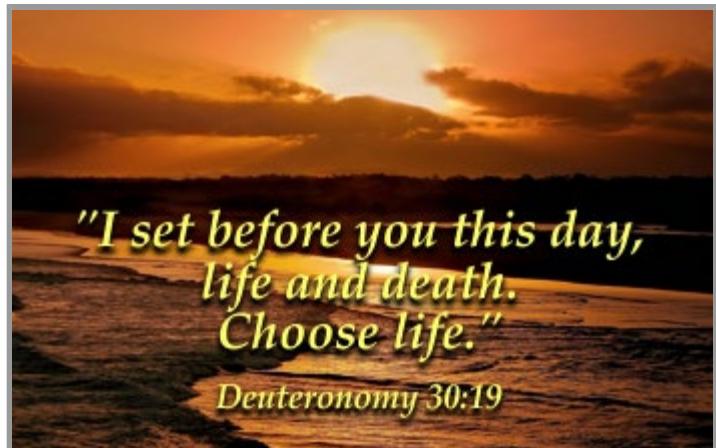
they atrophy. Luther's idea that we sin every day in *thought*, word and deed does not reflect the cultural grounding of Mosaic Israel (see why **I Am Not A Sinner**). If we realize that sin is not an inner moral struggle to believe the right things in order to have the right spiritual attitude, we can understand why the opposite of *hatta'ath* is not righteousness but rather **chesed** which is found in **the Nature of Spirit**. Hebrew sin is *doing* what I have been told *not* to do. Pharisaical "works righteousness" is another invention of Augustine that was subsequently promoted by Luther. Are you aware that the word, "Judaizer", is not found in scripture? Were there religious men who thought they could earn YaHoVeH's favor through their own efforts? Of course there were - just as we have them today in churches across the world. Every *true* follower of YaHoVeH, however, knows that human effort cannot be the basis of YaHoVeH's favor. Yeshua simply reminds His contemporaries what they already knew - YaHoVeH is an *Elohim* of grace *and* obedience. But, you don't get one without the other.

**"then will I declare to them: I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of *iniquity*."
Matthew 7:23**

Iniquity is another term that has been redefined from its original meaning to acquire a contemporary meaning of "moral sin". But, here is a subtlety that eludes us when just looking at the English translated words through a filter of religious tradition that has been handed down to us (**Mark 7:13**). The *Greek* word translated "iniquity" in this verse is **anomia** (taken from the root **anomos**) and means "the condition of without law, ignorant of and destitute of (the Mosaic) law - **Torah**". When we read from the standpoint of what this word actually means, Yeshua's words take on an entirely different perspective. What He is actually saying is *that He does not know those who do not abide by His Father's Words* and will **separate Himself** from them. Wow! That simply blows up all the rhetoric over whether the Commandments are relevant for us today or not. Words mean things. **Iniquity** is the condition of living *without Torah*.

"If anyone *sins*, doing any of the things that by YaHoVeH's commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then realizes his guilt, he shall bear his *iniquity*." Leviticus 5:17

In this verse from Leviticus, sin and iniquity carry two different meanings. As we have seen above, **hata'** (translated as the English "sin") means "to miss the mark", having to do with forgetfulness; whereas the Hebrew word **avon** (translated as the English "iniquity") deals with the *consequences* of that forgetfulness. Why is that important? It is important because, while we may be forgiven of our forgetfulness, that forgiveness does not extend to or repeal the consequence of our action as is illustrated in Yeshua's parable of **Luke 12:48**. We *still bear the iniquity*, the consequence of that action which is why we need to be obedient to the Nature of Spirit contained in YaHoVeH's Words - so as to be able to **escape those consequences**. The Hebrew word for "guilt" in this verse from Leviticus, **asham**, according to *Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon* has as its primary idea "to be sought in that of negligence, a failure of action". Whereas, Christian (Catholic) guilt is a pervasive adoption of the Greek **soma** which finds the attitude toward the body insufficient - which means that Greek thought focuses on the imagined, inner, spiritual *psyche* ("soul") in opposition to the body (*soma* - review the scriptural research exposing the myth of **the Immortal Soul**). This follows from the Greek idea that the intellect (the rationality) of Man is the most important factor in being human. What this means is that what we do "in the body" is inconsequential as long as our inner spiritual state is focused on the heavenly abode of the True, the Good and the Beautiful.



In Platonic dualism, the body (*soma*) is *essentially* corrupt and flawed. Sin attached to the body is an integral part of what it means to be a physical being. Guilt is the inevitable result of having a body since having a body is the equivalent of being flawed. The real issue in this dynamic battle against sin is *the body* and its passions - getting rid of the physical prison results in the spiritual perfection God intended. In Christian thought, guilt is the result of a *physical condition*. This is why Lutheran theology postulates that men are **born** sinners (in contrast to the **Genesis account** which says that everything YaHoVeH created was "good"). They are corrupt and due punishment simply because their physical embodiment carries with it the flawed character of the material world. *The Hebrew scriptural perspective, on the other hand, does not view the physical world as essentially flawed*, although there is no doubt the physical world is in need of restoration. Therefore, from the Hebraic perspective that scripture is written from, sin is a matter of *physical action*, and, by the way, so is **righteousness**. Guilt is not intrinsic to being human. Guilt comes by actions. Guilt is determined by failure to live up to Kingdom expectations. Guilt, like sin, is a function of *the kingdom I choose to abide in*.

We often hear the words, "God loves the sinner but hates the sin." But now I am not so sure this is correct. If I

choose to lie down in dark places, then - *I am my sin!* It's not some alien force attached to me. It's not an infectious disease that demands a cure. It is me! In the same way **I become Yeshua** in this world by choosing to embrace the Life He exemplified - I also *become* that person in bed with the dark places where I have chosen to abide. Who am I if I am not who I am now, the consequence of all my acts? But, YaHoVeH hasn't deserted me in those dark places - He hasn't left me. He loves me - in spite of the sin that I have become (**Psalm 139:8**). It's difficult to come to terms with the Hebrew idea that YaHoVeH really does weigh our deeds. We want forgiveness to remove all those past mistakes, but it seems as though there is a difference between guilt and consequence. Removing guilt allows me to walk in newness of life. It does not repair the results of the past. Consequences still get passed on as a result of those behavioral actions. That doesn't mean YaHoVeH isn't actively **adjusting the outcomes**. It only means that the chains of events I began because of my choices and the past choices of my ancestors are still there and must be dealt with. **Chadash** means *renewed*, not replaced. *Chadash* implies obligation to restore. There is something for me to do besides claim that I am no longer guilty. I have to make amends for what I have done. Then I will be free. (**Psalm 51:10**).

What Is Sin? - a discussion

"Everyone who practices sin is violating Torah - indeed, **sin is violation of Torah** ." 1John 3:4

the Scriptural Sin Series
Part One, What Is Sin?
Part Two, The Sin of the World
Part Three, Involving Incest
Part Four, I Am Not A Sinner



???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

[CLICK HERE TO RETURN TO HOME PAGE](#)

[Download the Scriptural Salvation ebook.pdf](#)