



Chapter Eight: Sin and Evil, Part One

“If you disobey one statute, says James (2:10), you have violated the whole law. Why? Because sin is of the heart. If you have the kind of heart that would disobey one word of God, you have the kind of heart that would disobey any other word of God. Either you are wholly devoted to serve God or you aren't. And God wants only wholehearted servants.”

Definition of Sin

Sin is lawlessness — 1Jn 3:4; a violation of God's law — not exactly the same as selfishness.

Sin is irrational — e.g., Satan: Rom 1:32

Sin attaches itself to the heart — Mt 12:34-35 “We sin because we have a sinful character: that is, we are not sinners because we sin, but we sin because we are sinners.”

Some sins worse than others?

All sins equally bring condemnation — Gal 3:10; Jas 2:10-11

Still, Scripture distinguishes between greater & lesser sins — Ezk 8:6 (idolatry); Lev 4:2, 13, 22; 5: 17 (“high-handed” vs. “unintentional” sins)

The unpardonable sin — Mt 12:31-32; Hb 6:4-6: 10:26-27; 1Jn 5:16-17 — Grudem: “a malicious, willful rejection and slander against the HS's work attesting to Christ, and attributing that work to Satan.”

The Bad News about Sin & Death

Sin & the Situational

Our sin leads to the punishments of God's judgment.

Sin leads to *physical death* — the return of our bodies to the dust (though personality continues to exist).

Sin & the Normative

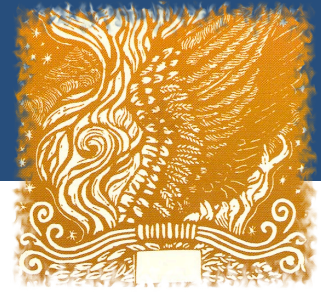
When we sin, the law, God's norm, declares us guilty.

Sin leads to *judicial death* — our condemnation as violators of God's norm.

Sin & the Existential

Our sin renders us unfit for fellowship with God.

Sin leads to *spiritual death* — the pollution that infects us, motivating us toward more sin.



The Origin of Sin

God as “Publisher” but not “Author” of sin

— Eph 1:11

Satan as First Sinner — 2Pt 2:4; Jude 6; Isa 14:12-15; Ezk 28

The Test in the Garden (Gen 2 & 3) — When your lone authority is the bare word of God, you find out if God alone will be Lord of your heart and life.

Sin Overturns the Chain of Authority

The Results of the Fall

The Curse on the Serpent — Gen 3:15; Rom 16:20

On Women & Men — Childbearing & Labor ... with hope of eventual restoration: Rom 2; Rev 22:14

Indications of Adam’s & Eve’s Faith — Adam names her “Eve” (= “Life”); Eve names her firstborn “Cain” (= “Gotten”); Cain & Abel offer sacrifices: the family line of Seth begins “to call upon the name of the Lord” (Gen 4:26)

The History of the Fall

Sin is not a normal part of human nature!

If sin came **through an historical act** and is **not a normal part** of who we are, we can have hope we can hope it can be fixed through **an historical act**. Without an historical Adam, we do not have an historical Jesus.

The Mysteries of the Fall

Adam & Eve started out “good” not just “morally neutral”

“Natural evil” (e.g., disease, disasters, death) came from “moral evil” ...

But how could a good God include **“moral evil”** as part of his good & sovereign plan (Eph 1:11)!

Some considerations:

Good & evil are meaningless without God

God uses evil to accomplish wonderfully good things.

Gen 45:5-8

Acts 2:23

Acts 4:25-28

Rom 8:28-30

God promises **no tears in heaven or in glory** (Rev 7:14; 21:4); everyone will eventually recognize **God’s goodness & justice** (Rev 15:3-4; 16:5-7; 19:1-2)

We can live in the “now” under this rule.

- **Rom 9:19-21** — We have no right to charge God with injustice (& see 9:22-26!)
- **Job 38-42** — Even “righteous Job” is rebuked when he accuses God of wrong
- **Gen 18:25** (see **Rom 3:5-6**) — God is the Lord; and the Judge of all the earth must do right.