

## The Nature of Sin

### Introduction:

In Psalm 51:1-3 (and also in Isaiah 59:12), there are three words which are used most often in the Word of God to refer to sin. They are:

Transgression  
Iniquity  
Sin

### I. "Sin" Defined

Romans 3:23.

The word "sin" mean to "miss the mark," to "deviate from the standard of moral rectitude." It is a term associated with 'marksmanship' — see: Judges 20:16.

With God, everything that is not absolutely perfect is sin. In the Old Testament, the Law was God's perfect standard, and the New Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ (Who fulfilled the Law) is God's perfect standard.

God's demands are very exact — James 2:10; I Peter 1:16. One sin makes a man a sinner. A man may live an extremely 'good' life, but he will fall short of God's holy demands.

The term "sin" relates to the holy Character of God.

### II. "Transgression" Defined

I John 3:4

The word "transgression" means "to go beyond," "to exceed the limits." It means a violation or breach of the law. It is failure to conform to the will of God.

See: Numbers 14:41; Joshua 7:11, 15; I Samuel 15:24; Isaiah 24:5; Daniel 9:11; Hosea 6:7; 8:1; Matthew 15:3.

The term relates to the holy Law of God.

### III. "Iniquity" Defined

Isaiah 59:2-7, 12

The word "iniquity" means "lawlessness," "wickedness," "crookedness," "perverseness." It is a distortion of what is right.

See: II Samuel 19:19; II Chronicles 19:7; Psalm 53:1; 66:18; 106:6; Matthew 7:23; Acts 8:23; James 3:6.

The term relates to the God's Creation — including man — which has been perverted by sin.

### IV. Other Biblical Terms Meaning "Sin"

A number of other terms are used in the Word of God to convey the range and intensity of sin — I Timothy 1:9.

- A. Unrighteousness — Romans 6:13; I Corinthians 6:9; II Peter 2:13; I John 5:17
- B. Trespasses — Matthew 6:14-15; II Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13
- C. Offenses — Romans 4:25; 5:15-18

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- D. Faults — Galatians 6:1
  - E. Wickedness — II Chronicles 6:37
  - F. Ungodliness — Romans 1:18; 5:6; II Peter 2:5; 3:7; Jude 4, 15
  - G. Rebellion — I Samuel 15:23; Isaiah 1:2; Job 34:37  
Rebellion is an affront to God.
  - H. Unlawfulness — II Peter 2:8
  - I. Treachery — Hosea 6:7  
This means the “betrayal of a trust,” “unfaithfulness,” to act deceitfully.
  - J. Indebtedness — Matthew 6:12
  - K. Disobedience — Jeremiah 3:25; Romans 2:8; 10:21; Ephesians 2:2; Colossians 3:6; I Peter 2:7-8
  - L. Unbelief — John 16:9; Hebrews 3:18-19; 4:6; Acts 14:2; 19:9
- V. Conclusion

We thus arrive at the following statements concerning sin:

- SIN IS insubordination to God, rebellion against God, insisting upon living our lives as we want to, willful disobedience.
- SIN IS refusing to allow God to have His way in our lives — Luke 19:14
- SIN IS a wrong relationship with God. It is primarily an offense against the Living God, the Creator and Sovereign of heaven and earth.
- SIN IS every abuse or perversion of God-given powers; every indulgence in the lusts of the flesh; every encroachment upon the rights, interests, or feelings of others.
- SIN IS essentially a departure from God.
- SIN IS unlikeness to God, the lack of conformity to the holy standards of God.
- SIN IS selfishness; the positive preference of self to God, the exaltation of self above God.
- SIN IS —
  - A State — unlikeness to God — I Samuel 16:7; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7:15-17
  - A Principle — opposition to God.
  - An Act — transgression of God’s Law.