

What is Sin? #1

(Go To Meeting)
Michael Heiss—August 2, 2024

Tonight we're going to be discussing the topic of sin. It's a big one, and as I was reviewing all my notes and papers, I figured that one evening isn't going to do it. So, tonight we're going to have part one, which is going to consist largely of the background. We're going to set it up so that we can really go into examples next time.

What is this thing we call *sin*? I first got involved in studying that when God began to call me out of Judaism to the Worldwide Church of God, and I was introduced to a good definition of it, which we can find in 1-John 3:4. We will read exactly what it says, and John had a pretty good take on it.

1-John 3:4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing Lawlessness, for sin is Lawlessness."

Now that is a very good definition, because it really encompasses all that is sin. If you look way down below, with an asterisk there... [in *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*] ...we have the *King James Version*, which reads, "whoever commits sin transgresses, because sin is the transgression of the Law."

Now that's not a bad definition; it's true, but it doesn't go far enough. It is incomplete because it reduces sin to something we do. It's true that we do it, but there's more to it than that; *it's a whole thought process!* And this is what the *King James* Bible doesn't show.

I can remember when I first got my first *King James*. I was, there I was in the world of Judaism. God was calling me out of what did I know. I was introduced to the Plain Truth and Ambassador College, and I soon realized I need a New Testament. Yeah, I've got to get one. But:

- Which one?
- How do I know?

Well, the masters of the 'powers that be' said, 'You've got to get a good Oxford-wide margin *King James Version*.' I said, 'Yes, sir! Yes, sir! That's what I'll do.'

That's what led me to the *King James*. In fact, to show you how much did I know, in high school in my sophomore year, the instructor was talking about the Beatitudes.

Try doing that in an English class today, it won't fly, but back then it did. He asked the

question: 'Who has never heard of the Beatitudes?' I sheepishly raised my hand. He looked at me and said, 'Oh, well, I can understand why you haven't heard of them.'

So anyway, that was my introduction to it. Now, in order to really understand sin, we have to get the concept, and it's best expressed by James.

James 1:13: "Do not let anyone who is tempted say, 'I am being tempted by God,' because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust" (vs 13-14).

Now we're going to see that one of the three Hebrew words that comprise sin is described right here. *It starts with the mind, with the thinking.* James goes on to say:

Verse 15: "And after lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death."

Well, Paul made that very clear in: Romans 6:23. "For the wages of sin is death..."

So we find out that *it's a process!* You think, and we're going to see how one of the words talks about *the thinking*!

The next word talks about: at some point you determine, 'Yes, I'm going to do this. I'm going to go this way.' *You've determined it!*

There's a third word that really does mean sin, *the doing* of the act.

Those three, and you have to have all three, because if you don't have all three, we're not completely sinning. *Every time we come up with sin, all three of those words are involved!* That's the whole process. I'm asking myself:

- Why do I have so much sin?
- Where is it coming from?

Ultimately, I understood that it came from the adversary. But let's look what Paul teaches us:

Romans 8:6: "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace, because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*" (vs 6-7).

Well, that's where we are. Sin is lawlessness; it is wrong thinking!

- **IF** the carnal mind *cannot obey*
- **IF** it cannot be *subject to God's Law*
- **THEN** obviously *sin is going to reign*

That's exactly what we have, we have sin!

As I said, sin is much more. Sin is like a *philosophy, it's a mindset.* So, in Rom. 8:6-7 God tells us *we must:*

- identify sin
- defeat it
- master it

Let's look at what God's told Cain (Gen. 4). One of the major examples we're going to see is going to be the story of Cain and why God rejected his offering. It's a very interesting story, but you have to think in Hebrew in order to understand it. All my life, even though I was raised in a Jewish home, we spoke English. English was my language, I thought in terms of English. But to understand that, we have to learn to think in terms of Hebrew, because the revelation is there. Look what God says:

Genesis 4:7: "If you do well, shall you not be accepted? But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. Its desire is for you..."—meaning:

- it wants to take you over
- it wants to envelop you
- it wants to totally dominate your thinking

That's what sin does, and it's deadly!

But God says: "...but you must rule over it!" (v 7). You must master it! Well, that's a lot easier said than done!

In order to overcome it, we have to look at what God says to the Prophet Zechariah.

Zechariah 4:6: "Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, 'This is the Word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, saying, "Not by might, nor by power... [meaning not by human might, not by human strength] ...but by My Spirit," says the LORD of hosts.'"

Without God's Spirit, we can't fight sin. We're losers, we can't do it! It is interesting to see *how* we defeat sin. We're given admonitions, one in the book of Proverbs and one in 2-Corinthians.

Proverbs 4:23: "Above all guard the door of your mind..."

Now this is a very interesting Scripture here, because this translation is exactly what it means, but it's not what it says. You know the old saying, 'Well, I know what it means, but what does it say?'

This, indeed, is what it means, but it's not what it says. If you have your *Faithful Version*, look at the center margin toward the top, and you come to v 23 and it says, The alternate reading is, *guard your heart.*' Now that's not just an alternate reading, *that is the reading!* But in English we separate the mind, the head, from the heart. Hebrew does not know such a thing. One of the best illustrations of seeing in English the separation of the head from the heart was best illustrated by the words of a song sung by one of my favorite songstresses that I ever listened to: Olivia Newton-John from Australia. She had the softest voice. She arrived here in the U.S. in the early 1970s, burst out with her song, *Have You Never Been Mellow.*

But the one I'm referring to is *I Honestly Love You*, beautifully sung, beautiful melody. But she's talking about an illicit desire to love someone, because in the song she says, and she knows it's wrong in the song:

There you are with yours, here I am with mine.

So it isn't going to work. And she says:

You must realize this is coming from my heart and not my head.

So, she well illustrated that we think with our head, but our emotions are with the heart. But you see, that's English; that's not how God thinks. God put it in Hebrew, *heart*, because everything is *the heart*:

- *the seat of rational thinking*
- *the seat of decision making*

Have we not read the words, 'Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart?' *How many times do we read:*

- he said within his heart
- he said to his heart
- his heart was right with God
- his heart was not right with God

Always the heart!

We're going to look at this more deeply a little later on. But I only want to point out one aspect in Psa. 51 where David is lamenting what he did with Bathsheba, and he's crying out to God for forgiveness. Wait until we see the words for *sin* in this Psalm.

Psalm 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart..." Doesn't say *mind*? Because:

- the heart is *the mind*
- the heart is *the whole person*

all wrapped up in heart—‘lev’ in the Hebrew. We think with our heart, the ‘lev.’

We are like goalies in a hockey game or a soccer game; we’re guarding a net. So, we’re supposed to ***guard the door of our mind!*** *We’re guarding our net!*

Here comes the adversary, and is he ever firing hockey pucks at us! Some of them seem to be coming at us 100mph. Well, not that fast, but still, pretty fast.

- they’re coming high/they’re coming low
- they’re coming this way/they’re coming that way

We have to identify them and block them! That’s not easy. But that’s what God said when He said, “Guard the door of your mind....”

We translated this ‘mind’ because we’re English-speaking people, so we can grasp it more easily. ***Guard the door of our mind!*** Now, the fallback Scripture to that is:

2-Corinthians 10:4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are not carnal, but mighty through God to the overthrowing of strongholds, casting down vain imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought...*” (vs 4-5). *That’s guarding the door of our mind!*

But that’s a tall order. How do you cast down all those imaginations? Remember Zerubbabel and the Prophet Zechariah? ***By My Spirit!*** There’s our key! ***God’s Spirit helps us to identify the sin,*** whatever it may be.

- a wrong thought
- a wrong concept
- whatever it may be

THEN we have to suppress it! That’s the goal! That’s what he tells us we have to do!

The next thing we need to look at are some of these words. There are three words that actually define sin.

1. ‘avon’—a long elongated vowel

And wherever you find it, it’s under *iniquity*. You read *iniquity*, that is ‘avon.’

2. ‘pesha’—translated *transgression*

When you read in the Bible and you find the word *transgression*, it’s almost always ‘pesha.’ There are one or two exceptions, but they’re very special.

3. ‘chata,’ which is translated as *sin*.

So when you read, ‘we’ve sinned a sin’ or ‘your sin is great,’ it is almost always ‘chata.’

‘Avon’ starts it off. Remember James talks about when you’re drawn away in your lust? ‘Avon is the thinking stage.

- ***IF*** you don’t stop the thinking
- ***IF*** you don’t stop the wrong thought

What happens? *It eventually turns into ‘pesha.’*

You start to think, ‘Yeah, I think I’m going to go do that,’ and then you wind up doing it, which is chata.

That is the pattern, and there are no exceptions; it’s just that way! No *ifs, ands, or buts*.

Now let’s go take a look at where we find these words. We’re going to look at four Scriptures. We could look at many more, but four will give us the point.

Exo. 34—in many respects this is the most inspiring Scripture when you realize how it describes God!

Exodus 34:6: “And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.’”

What a great God we have! Aren’t we all glad we have such a God? But look what He goes on to say.

Verse 7: “Keeping mercy to the thousandth generation, ***forgiving iniquity...***”—‘avon,’ *forgiving our thinking!*

“***...and transgression...***” (v 7)—‘pesha,’ *the act, the determination that we’re going to do something!*

“***...and sin...***” (v 7)—‘chata,’ which is the guttural when you say it.

So we need to look at it as lawlessness. And under the heading of lawlessness comes those three words. When we think of sin, we need to think of lawlessness because in Hebrew, the word for sin is no better or worse than the other two words. They all come by patterns, always: ‘avon, pesha, chata.’

Jer. 33:8—we’re going to find the same words and God’s talking about the children of Israel in the future when they’re resurrected—the second resurrection—and they’re brought back.

Jeremiah 33:8: “And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity... [‘avon’] ...by which they have sinned against Me... [‘chata’] ...and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned... [‘chata’] ...and by which they have

transgressed... ['pesha'] ...against Me." Again, 'avon, pesha, chata' always, no exceptions!

Well now, let's take a look at the mother-lode. At least I like to call it the 'mother lode.'

Psa. 51—here's David very, very repentant. He knows what he did with Bathsheba. He knows it was wrong, and here he is crying out.

Psalm 51:1: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions... ['pesha'] ...Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity... ['avon'] ...and cleanse me from my sin... ['chata'] ...for I acknowledge my transgressions... ['pesha'] ...and my sin... ['chata'] ...is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned... ['chata'] ...and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity... [avon] ...and in sin... ['chata'] ...did my mother conceive me" (vs 1-5). *Always those three words!*

Verse 5—we have to realize at times the Bible is not to be taken literally. Sometimes it's in more poetic form. David is just describing the condition of sin that humans are in. He's not saying that he was born in iniquity. No! He's not saying that in sin that his mother did something terrible when she gave birth to him. He's creating an atmosphere!

Verse 9: "Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities." *That's the pattern!*

That's the whole concept of sin: *thinking from beginning to end. IF* we don't understand that, we are indeed in trouble! We have to understand that.

Now let's take a contrived example. We're talking about an individual who's walking down the street; actually, he's a druggie, he's looking for drug money. As he's walking down the street, it's night, not midnight, but it's nighttime, the sun's gone down, houses are occupied; he sees the lights. Then one house is dark, no lights.

- maybe nobody's home
- maybe I can get some drug money
- maybe
- thinking

What is that? 'Avon' He's thinking wrong thoughts. So he goes off the street and he goes toward the house. He still hasn't done it, yet. He hasn't committed sin as such. *But his thinking is on the wrong path!*

He sees a window, looks like it's unlocked. It looks like it's not closed. Yeah, I'll bet there's drug money in there. Nobody's home. I'm going to go in—'pesha,' which also has a concept of rebellion.

- 'avon' does not indicate rebellion, it's just *wrong thinking!*

But

- 'pesha' you make a determination that you're going to commit an act that is in violation of God's instructions, in violation of His Law. So what do you do?

You go up to the place and you break in, either through a door, through a window, it doesn't really matter. That is 'chata.' So there we have it!

- 'avon'
- 'pesha'
- 'chata'

No exceptions! In all our thinking!

There's one other example of words that I didn't mention. Psalm 32:5. I overlooked that one. David is talking here:

Psalm 32:5: "I acknowledged my sin to You... ['chata'] ...and my iniquity I have not hidden.... ['avon'] ... I said, 'I will confess my transgression to the LORD'... ['pesha'] ...and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah."

Now that is a very interesting way of putting things. In English, it may not grab you, but in Hebrew it just jumps right off the page. It says, "...You forgave the iniquity of my sin...."

What do you mean *the iniquity of my sin?*
You forgave my carnal mind. The thought patterns!

- Remember 'avon' wrong thinking?
- Remember James when *you are drawn away of your own lust.*

That's the beginning! *IF* that were written in Hebrew instead of Greek, it would be 'avon' because that's what it is, *the wrong thinking!*

So, David is saying, 'You [God] forgave my wrong thinking, my attitude; *You forgave all that I am! That is profound!* David realized that! *What a gracious God we have;* because 'You forgave my wrong thinking that led to 'chata.' That's what David is saying! 'The iniquity of my sin; that is my whole wrong system, my whole wrong belief.'

- *You forgave it*
- *You wiped it clean*

Even though it led to sin, You forgave it! It's an amazing verse.

Well, now let us go into a most fascinating example: Cain and Abel!

Genesis 4:3: "It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering, but He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering.... [there's a good reason why] ...And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell" (vs 3-5).

If you've ever seen some of the ads for the Schriner's Hospital, they have kids singing certain songs and they try to get you to contribute. Well, one of the tunes goes like this:

If you're happy and you know it, your face will surely show it.

Well, Cain's face certainly showed something, but it didn't show happiness.

Verse 6: "And the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen?'"

You know, why so 'glum-chum'? Well, God knew what was wrong and He's explaining it here. This is the most profound part of it:

Verse 7: "IF you do well, shall you not be accepted? But he didn't do well; that's why he wasn't accepted!"

What was it that he didn't do well? God lets the 'cat out of the bag' here.

"...But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door.... [yeah, sin] ...Its desire *is* for you, but you must rule over it!" (v 7).

That's the same thing as we find in:

Romans 6:12—*Paul says:* "Therefore, do not let sin rule... [reign] ...in your mortal body... [your mind] ...by obeying it in the lusts thereof."

Genesis 4:8: "And Cain talked with his brother Abel. And it came to pass that when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him."

- What is the problem here?
- How do we understand why God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's?

We got to go back to a couple of chapters to find that:

Genesis 2:8: "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The Tree of

Life also was in the middle of the garden, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil" (vs 8-9). God said, 'Don't eat of it!'

Verse 15: "And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it.... [take care of it, a gardener] ...And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may freely eat of every tree in the garden, but you shall not eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die'" (vs 15-17).

So, Adam knows, *don't eat of that tree*. Well, afterwards Eve is created and we know what happened.

Genesis 3:1: "Now, the serpent was more cunning than any creature of the field, which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman... [he's a smooth operator; he is slick] ... 'Is it true... [Really? Did God actually say] ... that God has said, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden"?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may freely eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the middle of the garden, God has *indeed* said, "You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die"'" (vs 1-3).

Now this is an interesting thing here in v 3. We don't have anything in' Scripture that says God said don't touch it.' Maybe He did. Just because we don't find it so stated doesn't mean God didn't command her that way, or Adam didn't. It's interesting.

The rabbis take it to mean that they didn't tell her, but she embellished it. You know, in rabbinic thinking, 'build a fence around Torah.' So, all the do's and don'ts on the Sabbath, if you don't do this, don't do that, you can't break the Sabbath.

It's like the cute sign I once saw. It was at a *posh* hotel. The velvet, the carpet, beautiful. And there's a dining hall; of course, you know what happens if you take fruit out of the dining hall, you might spill it.

So the people who ran the dining hall had a sign over the dining hall which said:

To avoid the carrying of fruit out of the dining hall, there will be no fruit served in the dining hall.

Well, that'll do it. So therefore, the rabbis point out that *Eve was the first one to build a fence around Torah!* Because *IF you can't touch the tree, then you can't eat of it*. Who knows? *Look what happened:*

Verse 4[transcriber's correction]: "And the serpent said to the woman, 'In dying, you shall not surely

die!.... [no, no] ...For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be like God, deciding good and evil” (vs 4-5).

Here we go, here comes the sin, because remember the key is that ***sin caused the whole thing! It was sin that caused God not to accept Cain's sacrifice!*** But it begins here!

Verse 6: “And when the woman saw that the tree ***was*** good for food... [yeah, that looks nice, pretty; like the song, lemon flower, very pretty] ...and that it was pleasing to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make ***one*** wise...”

Oh, yeah, I want to be wise, ‘***avon***’ wrong thinking. *First big mistake.*

- What did God say?
- What did God say throughout?
- **Obey My voice!**

Well, *Eve was listening to another voice! She wasn't listening to God's voice!*

And when she saw the tree was “...to be desired to make ***one*** wise... [she thought, yes, I want that—‘***pesha***’ is now taking over] ...**she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate**” (v 6)—‘***chata***’!

God knew it all. But look what He says to Adam and Eve after He said, ‘cursed the ground and all that.

Verse 21: “And for Adam and his wife the LORD God made coats of skins and clothed them”—**to hide the shame, to cover the sin!**

Now that taught them, or should have taught them, that you need to acknowledge God by sacrificing an animal. Now there's nothing wrong with bringing fruit and bringing grain because later on God was going to have Israel bring the firstfruits. But that's not here.

This sacrifice that Cain and Abel brought was supposed to be a sin offering. It took the shedding of blood and the killing of an animal to cover the shame of the sin. That should have been ***a clue to Cain!*** Remember, God said, ‘***IF you're not doing well, sin lies at the door***, which means ‘***chata***’ you did something wrong! What was it?

- you didn't offer **Me** an animal
- you didn't think you needed to address Me
- you didn't think you needed to be humble
- you didn't think you need to acknowledge Me as the One Who covers your sin

That was the problem! That was the reason that God didn't accept the grain, the fruit, whatever it was, because it was improperly offered! Grain, fruit

does not cover sin. Only the blood of an animal can do that.

Look what he went on. He killed his brother. And then look what Cain says to the Lord in:

Genesis 4:13: “And Cain said to the LORD, ‘My **punishment** [‘***avon***’] is greater than I can bear.

Now it's interesting, the word for punishment, it's not the word for punishment. What is the Hebrew word? We've just been talking about one of them. ‘***avon***.’ So he says, ‘my ‘***avon***’ is greater than I can bear.

Well, what do you mean your sin is greater? *It's really punishment!* But you see, in Hebrew usage, it is ***the sin that leads to the punishment!*** Therefore, we all translate this as punishment, because ***the punishment is the result of sin***, which ultimately leads to death. So it's just interesting how it works.

“...Cain said to the LORD, ‘My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, You have driven me out...’” (vs 13-14). *I'm going to be a vagabond!*

Verse 15: “And the LORD said to him, ‘Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.’ And **the LORD set a mark upon Cain** so that anyone who found him should not kill him. And **Cain went out from the presence of the LORD** and lived in the land of Nod, to the east of Eden” (vs 15-16).

That is, he went out from, **away from God**, and he never returned. ***It's the way of Cain!*** That was the problem. ***There was no repentance! Cain never did!***

So now, let's look at a man named David. We all know the story of David and Bathsheba. We're going to find it here in Samuel, when the time came for kings to go to war. David is on his porch and he's looking out, and there's Bathsheba. Oh, she's beautiful. OK! OK! OK, that's good! That's fine! Leave it go, David! Leave it go!

But he doesn't. He looks and he thinks, ***WOW! I sure want her. Wrong thought! ‘avon’ ‘avon’***

So then he calls for her ‘***pesha***’ He decides to take her, which he does, and they get together, and there is ‘***chata***.’ ***From the lust to the thinking of doing it, to doing it!*** Again, we have ‘***avon***, ‘***pesha***, and ‘***chata***.’

Now I would like to spend the rest of the time that I have looking at the greatest one of them all, Satan the devil. There are other individuals we could look at.

- we could look at Jeroboam

- we could look at the prophet that God sent up to warn Jeroboam

But let's look at ***the evil one!*** Ezek. 28, and this is extremely telling here!

Ezekiel 28:12: “Son of man, lift up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘You seal up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden the Garden of God; every precious stone *was* your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the turquoise, and the emerald, and gold. The workmanship of your settings and of your sockets was prepared in you in the day that you were created. You *were* the anointed cherub...’” (vs 12-14).

WOW! He must have been some individual to see. He might have been, I don't know, maybe a step or a nod above Michael and Gabriel. Because Michael and Gabriel are not described in terms like this.

Verse 14: “You *were* the anointed cherub that covers, and I set you so; you were upon the Holy Mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. You *were* perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you” (vs 14-15).

Now here, it's almost a discrepancy. It's like a dichotomy. How do you compute this? “You *were* perfect in your ways...”

Well, how can perfection become imperfect? If you're perfect, *you're perfect*. Yet, somehow he was perfect until he wasn't. But to understand that, we need to think in terms of Hebrew, not English. The Hebrew word here for perfect is ‘tamiym’ (taw-meen)

Now let's look at what God said to Abraham in: Genesis 17:1: “And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I *am* the Almighty God! Walk before Me and be perfect.’”

I am God Almighty. Well, actually, He is Almighty God, but this doesn't really say He's God Almighty. The Hebrew is something else: *El Shaddai!*

Now ‘Shaddai’ has the root going back to a woman's breast. And you think, what's that got to do with this? *Oh, it does!* Because think of a newborn babe. It sucks on his mother's breast.

- What is God?
- What did Paul say?

- *His God was able to provide for your every need!*

So what this is really saying is: ‘I am God Who provides. I am the God Who is capable of providing everything for you.’

Therefore, He is Almighty, because He has to be Almighty in order to provide. But then He says:

“...Walk before Me and be perfect” (v 1).

- What's the word? ‘tamiym’ (taw-meen)
- How can a human be ‘tamiym’? *Because ‘tamiym’ doesn't mean in Hebrew what we think it means in English!*

‘tamiym’ really in its ultimate meaning is:

- wholehearted
- devoted
- fervent
- loyal
- dedicated

That's what ‘tamiym’ really means!

Remember in Luke 1 where Zechariah and Elizabeth are described, walking in the Law of the Lord blameless? Yeah, they were blameless! They were ‘tamiym’ if it were Hebrew.

When God says back in Ezekiel, ‘your heart was lifted, you were corrupted by reason of your brightness.’ Yeah, you were perfect *until you started thinking wrong!* Here we go, ‘**avon**’, ‘**pesha**’ and ‘**chata**.’

Verse 16: “By the multitude of your merchandise...and you have sinned....”

You violated the Law. Started with ‘**avon**.’ Do you want to see how ‘**avon**’ he was?

Isa. 14—this is almost enough to blow your mind when you understand it in the Hebrew. We've been here many times when we discuss this being, this glorious being that was thrown down.

Isaiah 14:11: “Your pride is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of your harps. The maggot is spread under you, and the worms cover you. How you are fallen from the heavens, O shining star... [yeah, he was the shining star] ...son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!” (vs 11-12).

This is moving back and forth from Lucifer as a shining star into a king on earth. Now here we have what I call the five ‘I's. Now watch these five ‘I's. *Each one is higher and worse than the previous one!*

Verse 13: “For you have said in your heart, “^[#1]I will ascend *into* the heavens, ^[#2]I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; ^[#3]I will also sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.^[#4]I will ascend above the heights of the clouds... [what chutzpah, what nerves] ... ^[#5]I will be like the Most High” (vs 13-14).

What this is really saying is, ‘as good as God is, I am that good.’ There is a preposition here which says ‘like’ or ‘as.’

- I will be as good as
- I will be as powerful as
- I will be as the Most High is

How could anybody think like that? *But he did!* Iniquity was found (Ezek. 28:15) Now this word for iniquity is not the typical ‘**avon**.’ It’s a word that is wrong thinking, but it has **wickedness and perverseness** involved in it.

- you can see his wickedness
- can see his perverseness

He’s saying, ‘I will be as good as. I can rule this universe just as well as God can. I’m just as good.’

Talk about **familiarity breeding contempt!** Oh, and how! Well, I wondered, how you could ever think that way. What went through their minds? Now one of the blessings I have being here in the Pasadena area is I have the opportunity of working with and communicating with two fellow elders, Byron Norrod and Durrell Brown. I really appreciate both of them. It’s like ‘iron sharpening iron.’ But one day in particular, I was talking with Durrell and he related to me an instance way back when many years ago, he was riding in a car, he was driving and the man’s alongside of him was not just a human. He was talking to a demon. It was there, and it was clear what he was. And Durrell got around to asking the question that I would have asked when he asked:

- How could you think that you could take over from God?
- What was your thinking?

And the demon replied. and when I heard his reply, I thought to myself, yes, I agree, what he said was true! Here was the reply, and he said it with a kind of a contorted voice and face. You can picture these demons. He said, ‘**We didn’t think He [GOD] was that good!**’

Didn’t think God was that good. That’s what happened! That’s what happens when you start out with ‘**avon**.’

Let’s go back to James and rehearse that again, because you really can’t do this enough.

James 1:13: “Do not let anyone who is tempted say, ‘I am being tempted by God,’ because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust” (vs 13-14).

There’s Lucifer, his own lust, his desire to rule as God was. At some point, he thought to himself:

I’m doing a good job. I’m just as good as He is. I can rule just as good, just as well.

It’s pictured right here in James.

Verse 15: “And after lust has conceived...”

After it has kind of taken you over (‘chata’) and you’re now determined you’re going to do something about it.

“...it gives birth to sin. and sin, when it is completely finished, **brings forth death**” (v 15).

Except God is going to banish him forever into outer darkness. But here he was. Here was this being that started out with ‘**avon**’ off to ‘**pesha**’ and then ‘**chata**’

What was the act of ‘**chata**’? *Gathering around with all his followers and swarming up to try to take over from God! Stupid! Just completely out of his mind!*

That’s what sin will do. That’s when sin takes over. You can’t think straight. And you know, those demons still can’t think straight. That’s just the way it is.

So here we have the example of the ultimate in sin. Our job is the opposite. Our job is to:

- guard the door of our mind
- pull down vain imaginations
- bring thoughts into captivity

Not like Lucifer! He let himself be taken over. We dare not do that. Our job is to be on Torah Road, *free from sin*. And the way we do that:

- deflect the sin
- call upon God
- ask for His Spirit to recognize that sin and
- with His help, we get rid of it; we blow it out!

When we don’t, and when we’re unable to do it, *God provides us with the power to do it*. But God says He wants us in His Kingdom. Jesus said in:

Matthew 6:33: “But *as for you, seek first the Kingdom of God...*”

Well, when we are devoid of sin, not that we're completely, we're going to falter, but as long as with our mind, we seek the Law of God, we seek the will of God, we are on Torah Road.

Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it; **for narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it**" (vs 13-14).

In this current day and age, we have to be on that road—not the 'yellow brick road,' that road, no, no, no—on Torah Road, ***the road of obedience to:***

- God
- His Law
- His Statutes
- His Commandments

That way, we're not sinning, and ***IF*** we stay on that road, **THEN that is the road that leads to the Kingdom of God.**

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-John 3:4
- 2) James 1:13-15
- 3) Romans 6:23
- 4) Romans 8:6-7
- 5) Genesis 4:7
- 6) Zechariah 4:6
- 7) Proverbs 4:23
- 8) Psalm 51:10
- 9) 2-Corinthians 10:4-5
- 10) Exodus 34:6-7
- 11) Jeremiah 33:8
- 12) Psalm 51:1-5, 9
- 13) Psalm 32:5
- 14) Genesis 4:3-7
- 15) Romans 6:12
- 16) Genesis 4:8
- 17) Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17
- 18) Genesis 3:1-6, 21
- 19) Genesis 4:13-16
- 20) Ezekiel 28:12-15
- 21) Genesis 17:1
- 22) Isaiah 14:11-14
- 23) James 1:13-15
- 24) Matthew 6:33
- 25) Matthew 7:13-14

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Luke 1

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