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Sin And HaShem’s People

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In this [study](study.html) I would like to look at sin and its relationship with [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people.

So, I have a question for you:

**Are** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)**’s people allowed to sin? If they do sin, is there a punishment for their sin?**

I would like to explore the issue of sin in greater detail. Strong’s defines the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for sin as:

2403 **chatta’ah**, khat-taw-aw’; or chatta’th, khat-tawth’; from 2398; an offense (sometimes habitual sinfulness), and its penalty, occasion, [sacrifice](korbanot.html), or explanation; also (concr.) an offender:-punishment (of sin), purifying (-fication of sin), sin (-ner, [offering](korbanot.html)).

--------------- Dictionary Trace -----------------

2398 chata’, khaw-taw’; a prim. root; prop. to miss; hence ([fig](bethphag.html). and gen.) to sin; by infer. to forfeit, lack, expiate, repent, (causat.) lead astray, condemn:-bear the blame, cleanse, commit [sin], by fault, harm he hath done, loss, miss, (make) offend (-er), offer for sin, purge, [purify](purity.html) (self), make reconciliation, (cause, make) sin (-ful, -ness), trespass.

**The** [**first**](one.html) **use of sin (chatta’ah) is found in:**

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:3-7*** *In the course of* [*time*](time.html) *Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an* [*offering*](korbanot.html) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock*

*[[1]](#footnote-1).* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *looked with favor on Abel and his* [*offering*](korbanot.html)*, But on Cain and his* [*offering*](korbanot.html) *he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his* [*face*](body.html) *was downcast. Then* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your* [*face*](body.html) *downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it* [*desires*](needs.html) *to have you, but you must master it.”*

So, shortly after [Adam](adam.html) and Eve are expelled from the [Garden of Eden](eden.html), Cain is warned that he will sin if he does not do what is right. This, in my mind, presumes that he knows what is right. Since we are 2500 years [before Sinai](stages.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) must have communicated His [laws](law.html) to man even though that communication is not recorded in the TaNaK.

[Israel](gen-jew.html)’s [first](one.html) king, Saul, defined sin for us in:

***I Shmuel (Samuel) 15:1-3*** *Shmuel (Samuel) said to Saul, “I am the* [*one*](one.html)[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *sent to anoint you king over his people* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*; so listen now to the message from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *Almighty says: ‘I will punish the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *for what they did to* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *when they waylaid them as they came up* [*from Egypt*](thebirth.html)*. Now go,* [*attack*](attacks.html) *the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.’”. . .*

***I Shmuel (Samuel) 15:24-25*** *Then Saul said to Shmuel (Samuel), “I have sinned. I violated* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s* [*command*](cmds613.html) *and your instructions. I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them. Now I beg you,* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.”*

In this quote we have Saul acknowledging his sin of not obeying what Samuel verbalized, from [HaShem](hashem.html). In this case, his sin was disobeying [HaShem](hashem.html)’s oral word. Daniel also defined sin for us in:

***Daniel 9:8-11*** *O Lord, we and our kings, our princes and our* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; We have not obeyed* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *our God or kept the* [*laws*](law.html) *he gave us through his servants the prophets. All* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *has transgressed your* [*law*](law.html) *and turned away, refusing to obey you. “Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the* [*Law*](law.html) *of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you.*

Daniel is acknowledging, here, that He, and all [Israel](gen-jew.html), have failed to obey [HaShem](hashem.html)’s written word given at [Sinai](stages.html). James also defined sin for us in:

[***Yaaqov***](jacob.html) ***(James) 2:8-10*** *If you really keep the royal* [*law*](law.html) *found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the* [*law*](law.html) *as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole* [*law*](law.html) *and yet stumbles at just* [*one*](one.html) *point is guilty of breaking all of it.*

James is acknowledging that the [law](law.html) is more than the [letter](letters.html). He calls “favoritism” sin. So, we sin if we do not also keep the spirit of the [law](law.html). The word he uses for “[law](law.html)” is “nomos” which is the ordinary way of referring to the [law](law.html) of Moses. To further belabor the point: John defined sin as:

***I Yochanan (John) 3:4*** *Everyone who sins breaks the* [*law*](law.html)*; in fact, sin is the transgression of the* [*law*](law.html)*.*

Again, the word he uses for “[law](law.html)” is “nomos” which is the ordinary way of referring to the [law](law.html) of Moses.

So, sin is defined as being disobedient to [HaShem](hashem.html), whether He delivered His [command](cmds613.html) in person (as He did with Cain), verbally through His prophets (as He did with Saul), or His written word as delivered on Mt. [Sinai](stages.html). [HaShem](hashem.html) also made it clear that we sin when we do not keep the “spirit” of the [law](law.html). [Mashiach](mashiach.html) also illustrated this point in:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:21-22*** *“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the* [*fire*](fire.html) *of hell.*

And again He said:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:27-28*** *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his* [*heart*](body.html)*.*

We have already seen that sin is not *just* the transgression of the written [law](law.html) of Moses (Torah). I would like to look at a few more scriptures that emphasize that point.

The TaNaK, the old testament, also emphasizes that [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) are responsible for their sin, even before the [law](law.html) of Moses was given:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 15:12-16*** *As the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *was setting,* [*Abram*](avraham.html) *fell into a deep* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. Then He said to him, “*[*Know*](daat.html) *for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated* [*four*](four.html) *hundred years. But I will punish the* [*nation*](nations.html) *they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. You, however, will go to your* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the* [*fourth*](four.html)[*generation*](toldot.html) *your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”*

From this we learn that [HaShem](hashem.html)’s standards apply to [Israel](gen-jew.html) and to [Gentiles](gen-jew.html), and that sin existed before the written Torah was given.

[Mashiach](mashiach.html) also indicates that sin does not just involve transgressions against [HaShem](hashem.html):

***Matityahu (Matthew) 6:14-15*** *For if you* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *you. But if you do not* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *men their sins, your Father will not* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *your sins.*

[HaShem](hashem.html) does not [forgive](forgive.html) us if we do not [forgive](forgive.html) our brother. So, when we transgress the Torah, we must hasten to repent and to beg our brother for [forgiveness](forgive.html) before we beg [HaShem](hashem.html) for [forgiveness](forgive.html).

[Joseph](joseph.html) lived [two](two.html) [generations](toldot.html) [before Sinai](stages.html). He talks of sin in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 39:6-9*** *So he left in* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*’s care everything he had; with* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the* [*food*](food.html) *he* [*ate*](eating.html)*. Now* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *was well-built and handsome, And after a while his master’s wife took notice of* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he refused. “With me in charge,” he told her, “my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No* [*one*](one.html) *is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *thing and sin against God?”*

Here [Joseph](joseph.html) calls adultery sin [two](two.html) [generations](toldot.html) before the giving of the Torah!

Sin applies to all who disobey [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [commands](cmds613.html). [HaShem](hashem.html) does not show partiality to the great:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 10:13-17*** *So Moses stretched out his* [*staff*](staff.html) *over Egypt, and* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *made an* [*east*](east.html) *wind blow across the land all that day and all that night. By morning the wind had brought the locusts; They invaded all Egypt and settled down in every area of the country in great* [*numbers*](nchart.html)*. Never before had there been such a* [*plague*](plagues.html) *of locusts, nor will there ever be again. They covered all the ground until it was black. They devoured all that was left after the hail--everything growing in the fields and the fruit on the trees. Nothing green remained on tree or plant in all the land of Egypt. Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God and against you. Now* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *my sin once more and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God to take this deadly* [*plague*](plagues.html) *away from me.”*

So, Pharaoh [knew](daat.html) what sin (chatta’ah) was months before the Torah was given. It is also clear that [HaShem](hashem.html) punished his sin.

**Some folks have said that we no longer need to obey** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)**’s written** [**law**](law.html)**, the** [**law**](law.html) **of Moses (Torah**). Their argument is based on:

[***Galatians***](galatian.html) ***3:21-25*** *Is the* [*law*](law.html)*, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a* [*law*](law.html) *had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the* [*law*](law.html)*. But the Scripture declares that the whole* [*world*](worlds.html) *is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, might be given to those who believe. Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the* [*law*](law.html)*, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the* [*law*](law.html) *was put in charge to lead us to* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the* [*law*](law.html)*.*

and:

[***Galatians***](galatian.html) ***5:18*** *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under* [*law*](law.html)*.*

There are several other passages that are used to “prove” that we do not need to obey the [law](law.html). I would like to focus on the above [two](two.html) passages to illustrate the relationship we have to the [law](law.html) since we have already seen what sin is.

In the [Galatians](galatian.html) 3 passage, we see that that we are prisoners of sin and that we are held prisoners by the [law](law.html). This illustrates the relationship between the [two](two.html). Further, we see that the issue is “life”, or [justification](justification.html). So, being under the supervision of the [law](law.html) will not bring life, only faith will bring life. It is also plain that we require the [law](law.html) to lead us to [Mashiach](mashiach.html). This assumes that you are following the [law](law.html) before you receive [Mashiach](mashiach.html) by faith.

To examine [Galatians](galatian.html) 5, we will need to put this passage in context:

[***Galatians***](galatian.html) ***5:13-23*** *You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your* [*freedom*](freedom.html) *to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve* [*one*](one.html) *another in love. The entire* [*law*](law.html) *is summed up in a single* [*command*](cmds613.html)*: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the* [*desires*](needs.html) *of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature* [*desires*](needs.html) *what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under* [*law*](law.html)*. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality,* [*impurity*](purity.html) *and debauchery;* [*Idolatry*](idolatry.html) *and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions And envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not* [*inherit*](inherit.html) *the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, Gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no* [*law*](law.html)*.*

[First](one.html) I would like to point out that [law](law.html) and sin are both prominent in this passage. Since we already [know](daat.html) that disobeying the [law](law.html) is sin; it is obvious that the “acts of the sinful nature” are acts which are contrary to the [law](law.html). I doubt that many of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people would see these acts as something that they should do. So, whatever “under the [law](law.html)” means, it obviously does not mean that we are free to commit the “acts of the sinful nature”. Most commentators agree that the entire book of [Galatians](galatian.html) is concerned with [justification](justification.html) by faith and not by the works of the [law](law.html). This simply means that the [law](law.html) can not [save](salvation.html) us, only the right faith can [save](salvation.html) us.

The same man who wrote [Galatians](galatian.html) also wrote Romans (Paul). If we look at Romans, Paul will give us more [insight](insights.html) into “under the [law](law.html)”:

***Romans 2:12-15*** *All who sin apart from the* [*law*](law.html) *will also perish apart from the* [*law*](law.html)*, and all who sin under the* [*law*](law.html) *will be judged by the* [*law*](law.html)*. For it is not those who* [*hear*](mashal.html) *the* [*law*](law.html) *who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the* [*law*](law.html) *who will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)*, who do not have the* [*law*](law.html)*, do by nature things required by the* [*law*](law.html)*, they are a* [*law*](law.html) *for themselves, even though they do not have the* [*law*](law.html)*, Since they show that the requirements of the* [*law*](law.html) *are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)*

Paul also confirms what we learned previously, that we [know](daat.html) what [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [law](law.html) is whether we have the written, and oral, Torah or not. Paul also shows that [HaShem](hashem.html) will hold us accountable for sin, which is disobeying [HaShem](hashem.html). We can see clearly that the issue is sin, not the [law](law.html) of Moses. The [law](law.html) of Moses is but [one](one.html) definition of sin. Sin also defines who will perish. All who sin, without faith, will perish. Paul also shows that only those who obey the [law](law.html) will be declared righteous. This seems to assume that we obey because of our faith.

Paul, in Romans chapter [six](six.html), goes on to further refine “under the [law](law.html)”:

***Romans 6:11-18*** *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal* [*body*](body.html) *so that you obey its evil* [*desires*](needs.html)*. Do not offer the parts of your* [*body*](body.html) *to sin, as instruments of* [*wickedness*](wicked.html)*, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your* [*body*](body.html) *to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under* [*law*](law.html)*, but under* [*grace*](grace.html)*. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under* [*law*](law.html) *but under* [*grace*](grace.html)*? By no means! Don’t you* [*know*](daat.html) *that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the* [*one*](one.html) *whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of* [*teaching*](teacher.html) *to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.*

Here, Paul indicates that being “under the [law](law.html)” implies that sin is your master. This use of the phrase, “under the [law](law.html)”, seems to show that obeying the [law](law.html) is different than being “under the [law](law.html)”. Sin, which is disobedience to the [law](law.html), is not to be our master. Sin should not be a part of the life of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people. Paul [commands](cmds613.html) us not to sin. To put it another way, Paul is commanding us to obey the [law](law.html)!

Paul is a deep theological thinker. His words are HARD to understand. Peter tells us this in:

***II Tzefet (Peter) 3:15-17*** *Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his* [*letters*](letters.html)*,* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *in them of these matters. His* [*letters*](letters.html) *contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. Therefore, dear friends, since you already* [*know*](daat.html) *this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.*

Peter specifically mentions that Paul’s words are misunderstood by those men who sin (lawless). The error is to not obey the [law](law.html)!

Paul makes a big deal, in his writings, of the importance of the [law](law.html).

***Romans 3:29-31*** *Is God the God of* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *only? Is he not the God of* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *too? Yes, of* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *too, Since there is only* [*one*](one.html) *God, who will* [*justify*](justification.html) *the* [*circumcised*](circumcz.html) *by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. Do we, then, nullify the* [*law*](law.html) *by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we establish the* [*law*](law.html)*.*

Paul emphasizes the [law](law.html) because it is [one](one.html) of the fundamental definitions of sin. We are constantly encouraged to avoid sinning. This means that we are being encouraged to obey the [law](law.html). Consider:

***I Shmuel (Samuel) 14:34*** *Then he said, “Go out among the men and tell them, ‘Each of you bring me your cattle and sheep, and slaughter them here and* [*eat*](eating.html) *them. Do not sin against* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *by* [*eating*](eating.html) *meat with* [*blood*](body.html) *still in it.’” So everyone brought his ox that night and slaughtered it there.*

***II Divrei HaYamim (Chronicles) 19:10*** *In every case that comes before you from your fellow countrymen who live in the cities--whether bloodshed or other concerns of the* [*law*](law.html)*,* [*commands*](cmds613.html)*, decrees or ordinances--you are to warn them not to sin against* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; otherwise his wrath will come on you and your brothers. Do this, and you will not sin.*

[***Psalm***](psalms1.html) ***4:4*** *In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. <Selah>*

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 5:6*** *Do not let your* [*mouth*](body.html) *lead you into sin. And do not protest to the [*[*temple*](temple.html)*] messenger, “My vow was a mistake.” Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*?*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 3:18*** *When I say to a* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn him or* [*speak*](mashal.html) *out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to* [*save*](salvation.html) *his life, that* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his* [*blood*](body.html)*.*

***Romans 6:12*** *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal* [*body*](body.html) *so that you obey its evil* [*desires*](needs.html)*.*

***Romans 6:13*** *Do not offer the parts of your* [*body*](body.html) *to sin, as instruments of* [*wickedness*](wicked.html)*, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your* [*body*](body.html) *to him as instruments of righteousness.*

[***Ephesians***](ephesians.html) ***4:26-27*** *“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *go down while you are still angry, And do not give the* [*devil*](demons.html) *a foothold.*

[HaShem](hashem.html) also said that there would be punishment for those who sin:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:34*** *Now go, lead the people to the* [*place*](place.html) *I* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *of, and my* [*angel*](angels.html) *will go before you. However, when the* [*time*](time.html) *comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin.”*

[***Psalm***](psalms1.html) ***89:30-33*** *If his sons forsake my* [*law*](law.html) *and do not follow my statutes, If they violate my decrees and fail to keep my* [*commands*](cmds613.html)*, I will punish their sin with the* [*rod*](staff.html)*, their iniquity with flogging; But I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness.*

***Hoshea (Hosea) 10:9-10*** *“Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*, and there you have remained. Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? When I please, I will punish them;* [*nations*](nations.html) *will be* [*gathered*](gather.html) *against them to put them in bonds for their double sin.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:33-34***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. Now go, lead the people to the* [*place*](place.html) *I* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *of, and my* [*angel*](angels.html) *will go before you. However, when the* [*time*](time.html) *comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin.”*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:40-42*** *“‘But if they will confess their sins and the sins of their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*--their treachery against me and their hostility toward me, Which made me hostile toward them so that I sent them into the land of their enemies--then when their uncircumcised hearts are humbled and they pay for their sin, I will remember my* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *and my* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *and my* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, and I will remember the land.*

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 5:7*** *And must confess the sin he has committed. He must make full restitution for his wrong, add* [*one*](one.html)[*fifth*](five.html) *to it and give it all to the person he has wronged.*

***Romans 6:23*** *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is* [*eternal life*](eternal.html) *in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *our Lord.*

***I Timothy 5:20*** *Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.*

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 3:12*** *Because* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.*

[***Bereans***](bereans.html) ***(***[***Hebrews***](bereans.html)***) 12:6*** *Because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.”*

[Mashiach](mashiach.html) used some very graphic language to describe how bad sin is:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:29-30*** *If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose* [*one*](one.html) *part of your* [*body*](body.html) *than for your whole* [*body*](body.html) *to be thrown into hell. And if your right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose* [*one*](one.html) *part of your* [*body*](body.html) *than for your whole* [*body*](body.html) *to go into hell.*

This graphic language illustrates that our failure to obey the Torah has severe, eternal, [consequences](conseq.html).

[HaShem](hashem.html) has said that His [laws](law.html) will endure forever. We can see this in:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 5:29*** *Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to* [*fear*](fear.html) *me and keep all my* [*commands*](cmds613.html) *always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!*

[***Psalm***](psalms1.html) ***119:111*** *Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my* [*heart*](body.html)*.*

[***Psalm***](psalms1.html) ***119:152*** *Long ago I learned from your statutes that you established them to last forever.*

Since the [law](law.html) will last forever, [HaShem](hashem.html) has made it possible for us to [live forever](eternal.html) in obedience to His [law](law.html). When [HaShem](hashem.html) renews His [covenant](covenant.html) with us, we will no longer sin:

***Yirimiyah (Jeremiah) 31:31-34*** *“The* [*time*](time.html) *is* [*coming*](coming.html)*,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, “when I will make a* [*new*](new.html)[*covenant*](covenant.html) *with the house of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *I made with their forefathers when I took them by the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *to lead them* [*out of Egypt*](thebirth.html)*, because they broke my* [*covenant*](covenant.html)*, though I was a husband to them,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “This is the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *I will make with the house of* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html) *after that* [*time*](time.html)*,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “I will put my* [*law*](law.html) *in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man* [*teach*](teacher.html) *his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘*[*Know*](daat.html)[*HaShem*](hashem.html)*,’ because they will all* [*know*](daat.html) *me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “For I will* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *their* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *and will remember their sins no more.”*

Those who sin and [teach](teacher.html) others to sin will be called least in the kingdom of [heaven](heaven.html):

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:17-19*** *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the* [*Law*](law.html) *or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth disappear, not the smallest* [*letter*](letters.html)*, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the* [*Law*](law.html) *until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks* [*one*](one.html) *of the least of these* [*commandments*](cmds613.html) *and* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, but whoever practices and* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *these* [*commands*](cmds613.html) *will be called great in the kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*.*

So, from [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s own [mouth](body.html) we [hear](mashal.html) that He does not want us to sin or [teach](teacher.html) others to sin.

**I have heard it said that the** [**Law**](law.html) **of Moses applies only to** [**Israel**](gen-jew.html)**.** The following passages are addressed to churches recognized as being “[Gentile](gen-jew.html)“ in makeup. Clearly they also sinned and were continuing to sin:

***Romans 5:8*** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners,* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *died for us.*

[***Galatians***](galatian.html) ***2:11-17*** *When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his* [*face*](body.html)*, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to* [*eat*](eating.html) *with the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)*. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *because he was afraid of those who belonged to the* [*circumcision*](circumcz.html) *group. The other* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*, I said to Peter in front of them all, “You are a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*, yet you live like a* [*Gentile*](gen-jew.html) *and not like a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*. How is it, then, that you force* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *to follow* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *customs? “We who are* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *by* [*birth*](birth.html) *and not ‘*[*Gentile*](gen-jew.html) *sinners’* [*Know*](daat.html) *that a man is not justified by observing the* [*law*](law.html)*, but by faith in* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. So we, too, have put our faith in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *that we may be justified by faith in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *and not by observing the* [*law*](law.html)*, because by observing the* [*law*](law.html) *no* [*one*](one.html) *will be justified. “If, while we seek to be justified in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *promotes sin? Absolutely not!*

***Romans 2:12*** *All who sin apart from the* [*law*](law.html) *will also perish apart from the* [*law*](law.html)*, and all who sin under the* [*law*](law.html) *will be judged by the* [*law*](law.html)*.*

From the above verses it is apparent that they also “[knew](daat.html)“ [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [law](law.html). See also Romans 1.

**I have heard it said that the** [**law**](law.html) **was “nailed to the cross”:**

***Colossians 2:13-17*** *When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. He forgave us all our sins, Having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Therefore do not let any (*[*Gentile*](gen-jew.html)*) man condemn you by what you* [*eat*](eating.html) *or drink, or with regard to a religious* [*festival*](festival.html)*, a* [*New*](new.html)[*Moon*](chodesh.html) *celebration or a* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the* [*body*](body.html) *of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*.*

Whatever “nailing it to the cross” means, the fact that we are not to be condemn for observing the [law](law.html) is indicative that the [law](law.html) has not been abolished. This whole passage is referring to the [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s work of [atonement](atonemen.html). Forgiving sins does not mean that there is no more sin, else [Mashiach](mashiach.html) would not have said:

***Yochanan (John) 8:10-11***[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no* [*one*](one.html) *condemned you?” “No* [*one*](one.html)*, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,”* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”*

**Some say that they have the righteousness of** [**Mashiach**](mashiach.html) **and have no sin or consequence**. They quote:

***II Corinthians 5:21*** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

However, if we were to look at that passage, in context, they would see that sin does matter and it does have a consequence. Note:

***II Corinthians 5:10*** *- 6:1 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, that each* [*one*](one.html) *may receive what is due him for the things done while in the* [*body*](body.html)*, whether good or bad. Since, then, we* [*know*](daat.html) *what it is to* [*fear*](fear.html) *the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the* [*heart*](body.html)*. If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*’s love compels us, because we are convinced that* [*one*](one.html) *died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no* [*one*](one.html) *from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, he is a* [*new*](new.html)[*creation*](bara.html)*; the old has gone, the* [*new*](new.html) *has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: That God was reconciling the* [*world*](worlds.html) *to himself in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As God’s fellow workers we urge you not to receive God’s* [*grace*](grace.html) *in vain.*

**I have heard it said that** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)**’s** [**law**](law.html) **can be divided into the “civil”, “ceremonial”, and “moral”.** Those who make this distinction say that [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people only have to obey the “moral” [law](law.html). This seems to contradict Matityahu (Matthew) 5:17-19. This also makes for some rather awkward theology. For example: what scriptures outline those [laws](law.html) which are “ceremonial”? Which scripture outlines those [laws](law.html) which are “civil”? The issues become even thornier when those same folks observe such “ceremonies” as baptism, communion, and tithing.

**I have heard it said that** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)**’s people only have to obey the “**[**laws**](law.html)**” given by James in:**

***II Luqas (Acts) 15:19-21*** *“It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from* [*food*](food.html) *polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from* [*blood*](body.html)*. For Moses has been preached in every* [*city*](city.html) *from the earliest times and is read in the* [*synagogues*](synagog.html) *on every* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*.”*

This seems hard to understand because they were not commanded to love [HaShem](hashem.html), to love their neighbor, or even abstain from murder! All of which produce sin if disobeyed. Verse 21 seems to imply that they will learn the [law](law.html) of Moses, in the [synagogue](synagog.html), on [Sabbath](sabbath.html). What is the point of learning the [law](law.html) if we do not obey it? Obedience is the whole point of learning.

**I have heard it said that we only have to obey those** [**laws**](law.html) **which are stated in the “**[**New**](new.html) **Testament”.** After I heard this, I asked this person to become a “[Berean](bereans.html)”:

***II Luqas (Acts) 17:10-11*** *As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html)[*synagogue*](synagog.html)*. Now the* [*Bereans*](bereans.html) *were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*

So, here’s the picture: Paul has just spent [three](three.html) years being [taught](teacher.html) by [Yeshua](yeshua.html). He shows up in Berea and begins to [teach](teacher.html) them what he has learned.

Paul says, “You only have to obey the [laws](law.html) found in the [New](new.html) Testament”.

The [Bereans](bereans.html) ask, “What is the [New](new.html) Testament?”

Paul replies, “It is a collection of writings, some of which I will compose in a few years”.

The [Bereans](bereans.html) would stop listening at this point because they would not be able to prove that what Paul was saying was true.

This same illustration could be applied to [eating](eating.html) any thing, keeping Sunday holy instead of the [Sabbath](sabbath.html), or any doing any other sinful thing. Obviously a [law](law.html) that lasts forever would not become void a mere [two](two.html) thousand years later. And certainly the [Bereans](bereans.html) would not be able to look in the TaNaK, the old testament, to verify that it was true.

[HaShem](hashem.html)’s people are promised His Spirit as a “down payment” to those who obey him:

***II Luqas (Acts) 5:30-32*** *The God of our* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *raised* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *from the dead--whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and* [*forgiveness*](forgive.html) *of sins to* [*Israel*](gen-jew.html)*. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”*

[One](one.html) of the most sobering scriptures is found in:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 7:21-23*** *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your* [*name*](name.html)*, and in your* [*name*](name.html) *drive out* [*demons*](demons.html) *and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never* [*knew*](daat.html) *you. Away from me, you who violate the* [*law*](law.html)*!’*

Here [HaShem](hashem.html) says that “many” who believe that they are doing [HaShem](hashem.html)’s will, will be sent away because they sin by violating [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [law](law.html). Sin has a consequence.

[One](one.html) of the last scriptures to be written was penned by John:

***I Yochanan (John) 3:4*** *Everyone who sins breaks the* [*law*](law.html)*; in fact, sin is lawlessness.*

So, at the end of the Apostolic era, sin was still defined as disobedience of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [commands](cmds613.html). John did not qualify his statement with “civil”, “ceremonial”, or “moral”. He did not qualify this statement with “[New](new.html) Testament” only. In fact, he followed the same line that [HaShem](hashem.html) had in the beginning. He did not say that this applied just to “[Jews](gen-jew.html)“ or just to “[Gentiles](gen-jew.html)“.

From this [study](study.html), we can see that we do not obtain the righteousness that leads to [salvation](salvation.html) by observing the Torah. Never the less, we are required to obey the Torah. It is the keeping of Torah that sanctifies us. We become a holy, a separate people because of our obedience to the Torah, the [law](law.html).

**The Bottom Line:**

[HaShem](hashem.html)’s people ought not to sin. If they sin, they will be punished. [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people ought to obey [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [law](law.html) so that they do not sin. Disobeying [HaShem](hashem.html) is sin.

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 4:5-9*** *See, I have* [*taught*](teacher.html) *you decrees and* [*laws*](law.html) *as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the* [*nations*](nations.html)*, who will* [*hear*](mashal.html) *about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great* [*nation*](nations.html) *is a wise and understanding people.” What other* [*nation*](nations.html) *is so great as to have their gods near them the* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *our God is near us whenever we* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to him? And what other* [*nation*](nations.html) *is so great as to have such righteous decrees and* [*laws*](law.html) *as this* [*body*](body.html) *of* [*laws*](law.html) *I am setting before you today? Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your* [*eyes*](body.html) *have seen or let them slip from your* [*heart*](body.html) *as long as you live.* [*Teach*](teacher.html) *them to your children and to their children after them.*

GLOSSARY:

**TaNaK**: A collection of writings commonly [known](daat.html) as the “Old Testament”. This word is an acronym for: Torah Neviim and Ketuvim, the [Law](law.html) the Prophets and the Writings.

**Torah**: The [first](one.html) [five](five.html) books of the Bible: Bereshit (Genesis), Shemot ([Exodus](exodus.html)), Vayikra (Leviticus), Devarim (Deuteronomy), and Bamidbar ([Numbers](nchart.html)). The word also means instruction or [law](law.html).

[**Sabbath**](sabbath.html): The [seventh](seven.html) [day of HaShem](hashem.html)’s week. From [sun](hachama.html) down Friday to sundown Saturday.

**Sin**: Disobeying [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [laws](law.html), whether written or oral.

[**Yeshua**](yeshua.html): The [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [name](name.html).

\* \* \*

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1. The midrash Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer (ch.21) relates: Kayin enjoyed working the ground and Hevel enjoyed shepherding sheep. This one gave the fruits of his labor to the other one to eat, and the other one gave the fruits of his labor to the first one to eat. When the night of Pesach arrived, Adam said to his sons, “On this night Israel is destined to offer Pesach offerings. You, too, should offer offerings before your Creator.” Kayin brought the leftovers of his meal--flax seed, while Hevel brought the best of his flocks--lambs which had never been shorn. Kayin’s gift was despised by HaShem and Kayin’s gift was found to be desirable, as is written (verse 4), “HaShem turned to Hevel and to his offering.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)