

“Sin is” in the Bible

Genesis 18:20 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their [sin is](#) very grievous;

And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

(Gen 19:5 KJV)

Psalms 32:1 Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, whose [sin is](#) covered.

Psalms 51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my [sin is](#) ever before me.

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but [sin is](#) a reproach to any people.

Hosea 13:12 The iniquity of Ephraim *is* bound up; his [sin is](#) hid.

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth [sin is](#) the servant of sin.**

Romans 5:13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but [sin is](#) not imputed when there is no law.

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

(James 4:17 KJV)

Romans 6:23 For the wages of [sin is](#) death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of [sin is](#) the law.

1 John 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for [sin is](#) the transgression of the law.

1 John 3:8 He that committeth [sin is](#) of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Ellen G. White

1. SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7 (EGW), p. 951.3 (Ellen G. White) (98%)

4 (Romans 3:20; see EGW comment on Galatians 3:24-26; Ephesians 2:14-16). **Only Definition of Sin**—“Sin is the transgression of the law.” This is the **only definition** of sin. Without the law there can be no transgression. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The standard of righteousness is exceeding broad, prohibiting every evil thing (Manuscript 27, 1899).

2. The Signs of the Times June 20, 1895 paragraph 5 (Ellen G. White) (92%)

A terrible doom awaits the sinner, and therefore it is necessary that we know what sin is, in order that we may escape from its power. John says, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.” Here we have the **true definition** of sin; it is “the transgression of the law.” How often the sinner is urged to leave his sins, and come to Jesus; but has the messenger who would lead him to Christ clearly pointed out the way? Has he clearly pointed out the fact that “sin is the transgression of the law,” and that he must repent, and forsake the breaking of God's commandments? Christ will come to consume the false prophet, to sweep away the hosts of apostasy, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of God; and it is of the highest importance to each one of us that we know the conditions by which we shall escape the sinner's doom. It is of the greatest moment that we understand the nature of our fall and the consequences of transgression. Man's conscience has become hardened by sin, and his understanding darkened by transgression, and his judgment has become confused as to what is sin. He has become benumbed by the influence of iniquity, and it is essential that his conscience be aroused to understand that sin is the transgression of God's holy law. He who does not obey the commandments of God is a sinner in the sight of God.

3. The Review and Herald July 15, 1890 paragraph 2 (Ellen G. White) (89%)

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” This is the **only definition** of sin given in the Holy Scriptures, and we should seek to understand what sin is, lest any of us be found in opposition to the God of heaven. We are required to be in a position of obedience to all of God's commandments. Our salvation cost our Lord too much for us to be found going on in uncertainty when eternal interests are involved, therefore we should open our minds and search the Scriptures, so that we may know for ourselves how we can stand under the banner of Prince Immanuel. God requires at this moment just what he required of Adam in paradise before he fell—perfect obedience to his law. The requirement that God makes in grace is just the requirement he made in paradise. We want to understand the claims of God upon us that we may reach the hearts of men, and teach them what God's word requires of them in order that they may have eternal life. We must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Our Saviour has told us that in these last days there would be false doctrines and false teachers who would lead the people to accept fables and customs and practices of men, instead of the commandments of God, and that our world would be flooded with heresies. Are we bringing in heresies to turn souls from the truth of God's word? We want the truth of God's word on every point, and we need to practice it. Those who follow the course of error and live in

transgression of the law of God, will not follow that course alone; there will be others who will imitate their example.

4. The Review and Herald June 26, 1900 paragraph 8 (Ellen G. White) (87%)

John gives us **the definition** of sin. “Whosoever committeth sin,” he says, “transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” And this was after the crucifixion of Christ, when, we are told, the law was abolished. When type met antitype in the death of Christ, the sacrificial offerings ceased. The ceremonial law was done away. But by the crucifixion the law of ten commandments was established. The gospel has not abrogated the law, nor detracted one tittle from its claims. It still demands holiness in every part. It is the echo of God's own voice, giving to every soul the invitation, Come up higher. Be holy, holier still. This just and holy law is the standard by which all will be judged in the last day. We need to ask ourselves the question, Are we making void the law of God, or are we standing in vindication of it? We should carefully examine our thoughts and words.

5. General Conference Daily Bulletin March 2, 1897 paragraph 32 (Ellen G. White) (85%)

“The **only definition** of sin given in God's Word, is transgression of the law. It is not excusable, and has no defense or justification. It will be the final and eternal condemnation of the originator of sin, and all the angels who united with him in the heavenly courts, who joined the confederacy of evil, identifying themselves with the great apostate. When the question comes, ‘Why have ye done thus?’ every tongue will be silent; the rebellious world will stand speechless before God. Of Satan, God has said, ‘Thou wast perfect in all thy ways from the day that thou wast created, until iniquity was found in thee.’

6. The Review and Herald March 4, 1875 paragraph 13 (Ellen G. White) (85%)

The apostle gives us the **true definition** of sin. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” The largest class of Christ's professed ambassadors are blind guides. They lead the people away from the path of safety by representing the requirements and prohibitions of the ancient law of Jehovah as arbitrary and severe. They give the sinner license to overstep the limits of God's law. In this they are like the great adversary of souls, opening before them a life of freedom in violation of God's commandments. With this lawless freedom the basis of moral responsibility is gone.

8. Ms 153, 1904 (August 14, 1904) par. 1 (81%)

1 John 3:1-4. This is the **only definition** of sin in the Scriptures, the transgression of the law.

9. The Great Controversy 1888, p. 492.2 (Ellen G. White) (80%)

It is impossible to so explain the origin of sin as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin, to fully make manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all his dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in nowise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found,

or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our **only definition** of sin is that given in the Word of God; it is “the transgression of the law;” it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.

12. Faith and Works, p. 117.2 (Ellen G. White) (76%)

A terrible doom awaits the sinner, and therefore it is necessary that we know what sin is, in order that we may escape from its power. John says, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Here we have the **true definition** of sin; it is “the transgression of the law.” How often the sinner is urged to leave his sins, and come to Jesus; but has the messenger who would lead him to Christ clearly pointed out the way? Has he clearly pointed out the fact that “sin is the transgression of the law,” and that he must repent and forsake the breaking of God's commandments? ...

14. The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, p. 316.2 (Ellen G. White) (74%)

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin, or to give a reason for its existence. It is an intruder, for whose existence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could it be excused, could a cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our **only definition** of sin is that given in the word of God; it is “the transgression of the law.”

15. Confrontation, p. 75.2 (Ellen G. White) (73%)

The apostle gives us the **true definition** of sin. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” The largest class of Christ's professed ambassadors are blind guides. They lead the people away from the path of safety by representing the requirements and prohibitions of the ancient law of Jehovah as arbitrary and severe. They give the sinner license to overstep the limits of God's law. In this they are like the great adversary of souls, opening before them a life of freedom in violation of God's commandments. With this lawless freedom the basis of moral responsibility is gone.

17. The Watchman August 14, 1906 paragraph 5 (Ellen G. White) (70%)

John gives **the definition** of sin. “Whosoever committeth sin,” he says, “transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” And this was after the crucifixion of Christ, when, we are told, the law was abolished. When type met antitype in the death of Christ, the sacrificial offerings ceased. The ceremonial law was done away. But by the crucifixion the law of ten commandments was established. The gospel has not abrogated the law, nor detracted one tittle from its claims. It still demands holiness in every part. It is the echo of God's own voice, giving to every soul the invitation, Come up higher. Be holy, holier still. This just and holy law is the standard by which all will be judged in the last day. We need to ask ourselves the question, Are we making void the law of God, or are we standing in vindication of it? We should carefully examine our thoughts and words.

18. Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ in The Wilderness, p. 76.3 (Ellen G. White) (69%)

The apostle gives us the **true definition** of sin. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” The largest class of Christ's professed ambassadors are blind guides. They lead the people away from the path of safety by representing the requirements and prohibitions of the ancient law of Jehovah as

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19. Manuscript Releases, vol. 9 [Nos. 664-770], p. 249.1 (Ellen G. White) (68%)

Christ, Not the Law, Saves us—But now we want to present to you the words of Christ, how He taught His disciples to preach repentance and remission of sin. And we read that Paul went from house to house teaching the people. He says, “I have not failed to preach to them ‘repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ’” (see Acts 20:21). Now this is the work we are to do, and we want to have this testimony borne everywhere. You need not talk about getting along without any law, and yet know what sin is. The **only definition** of sin given in the Bible is: “Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). But you must repent toward God. And why? Because you have broken His law. And then you must have faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We see there is nothing in [the] law to save us, but Christ has become man's substitute and surety. He has worked out man's redemption. Then what must man do? He must repent, because he has broken God's holy law. It is just as necessary that we should keep that law as it was for Adam and Eve to keep that law in Eden....

20. Manuscript Releases, vol. 9 [Nos. 664-770], p. 296.3 (Ellen G. White) (67%)

The apostle John, in his first Epistle, gives **the definition** of sin. He declares: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).

21. Manuscript Releases, vol. 14 [Nos. 1081-1135], p. 194.1 (Ellen G. White) (66%)

The love of God ever tends to the fear of God—fear to offend Him. Those who are truly converted will not venture heedlessly upon the borders of any evil, lest they grieve the Spirit of God and are left to their own way, to be filled with their own doings. The Word of God is the Guidebook; turn not from its pages to depend upon the human agent. That Book contains the warnings, the admonitions, from God, the rebuke of every evil, the **clear definition** of sin as the transgression of the law which is God's great standard of virtue and holiness.

22. The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 780.2 (Ellen G. White) (65%)

What is to bring the sinner to the knowledge of his sins unless he knows what sin is? The **only definition** of sin in the Word of God is given us in 1 John 3:4: “Sin is the transgression of the law.” The sinner must be made to feel that he is a transgressor. Christ dying upon the cross of Calvary is drawing his attention. Why did Christ die? Because it was the only means for man to be saved. He became our substitute and surety. He took upon Himself our sins that He might impute His own righteousness to all who believe in Him. The love of Jesus Christ displayed for man in the sufferings He endured on the cross of Calvary is a mystery even to the angelic host of heaven. Amazing love of the Father to give His Son to die to ransom the sinner! Oh, what love, what inexpressible love!

23. The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 893.3 (Ellen G. White) (64%)

The apostle John, in his first epistle, gives **the definition** of sin, He declares: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).

24. The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 128.3 (Ellen G. White) (63%)

Now, I want to say to you before closing, that we have a wonderful friend in Jesus, who came to save His people from the transgression of the law. What is sin? The **only definition** of sin is that it is the transgression of the law. Then here is Jesus Christ, who comes right in and imparts His righteousness to us; we cannot overcome in our own strength, but by faith in Him. If you will believe on Jesus Christ, you will have Him today. You must believe that He is your Saviour now, and that He imputes to you His righteousness because He has died, and because He has been obedient unto every requirement of that transgressed law of God. If you do this, you will have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Adam and Eve lost Eden because they transgressed that law, but you will lose heaven if you transgress it.

25. The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters, p. 167.5 (Ellen G. White) (63%)

The **only definition** of sin given in God's Word is transgression of the law. It is not excusable, and has no defence or justification. It will be the final and eternal condemnation of the originator of sin and all the angels who united with him in the heavenly courts, who joined the confederacy of evil, identifying themselves with the great apostate. When the question comes, “Why have ye done thus?” every tongue will be silent; the rebellious world will stand speechless before God. Of Satan God had said, “Thou was perfect in all thy ways from the day that thou wast created, until iniquity was found in thee.”

26. Ms 10, 1894 (February 11, 1894) par. 4 (60%)

It is the privilege of every sinner to ask his teacher what sin really is. **Give me a definition** of sin. We have one in 1 John 3. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” Now this is the **only definition** of sin in the whole Bible. We are going to read it to you right out of the Book, so that you need not have the idea that it is not in the Bible, that it is another Bible that we preach to you. We will just read it out of the good Book, and we will begin at the beginning of the chapter. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” That is our privilege.

27. Ms 20, 1894 (March 18, 1894) par. 23 (59%)

Every soul that believes in Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, what then? Then the love flows from the heart of God to his heart. What does that heart do then? It turns to serve God and keep His commandments lest they will be found as Adam and Eve were after their transgression. We cannot afford that. We cannot afford to sin. Sin is an expensive business. The wages of sin is death. And what is sin? “Sin is the transgression of the law.” That is the **only definition** of sin in the Bible. We do not want to be found sinners.

28. Ms 67, 1898 (June 9, 1898) par. 5 (59%)

It is of the highest importance that every human being to whom God has given reasoning powers understands his relation to God. It is for his present and eternal good to inquire at every step, Is this the way of the Lord? Since the fall of Adam, it has been the fashion of the world to sin, and it is for our interest to **know the definition** of sin. This is given us in (1 John 3): “Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.” The information is plainly given that sin is the transgression of the law. We need to call most earnestly upon every human being to compare his character with the law of God, the standard of character for all who would enter His kingdom and become citizens of the heavenly country. The work of redemption is not studied in our schools interestedly and carefully. Students have no real conception of what the plan of salvation means.

29. Ms 80, 1886 (September 21, 1886) par. 21 (57%)

But now we want to present to you the words of Christ, how He taught His disciples to preach repentance and remission of sin. And we read that Paul went from house to house teaching the people. He says, I have not failed to preach to them repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Now this is the work we are to do, and we want to have this testimony borne everywhere. You need not talk about getting along without any law, and yet know what sin is. The **only definition** of sin given in the Bible is, Sin is the transgression of the law. But you must repent toward God. And why? Because you have broken His law. And then you must have faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We see there is nothing in law to save us, but Christ has become man’s substitute and surety. He has worked out man’s redemption. Then what must man do? He must repent, because he has broken God’s holy law. It is just as necessary that we should keep that law now as it was for Adam and Eve to keep that law in Eden.

30. Ms 53, 1890 (December 27, 1890) par. 51 (56%)

What is to bring the sinner to the knowledge of his sins unless he knows what sin is? The **only definition** of sin in the Word of God is given us in (1 John 3:4): “Sin is the transgression of the law.” The sinner must be made to feel that he is a transgressor. Christ dying upon the cross of Calvary is drawing his attention. Why did Christ die? Because it was the only means for man to be saved. He became our substitute and surety. He took upon Himself our sins that He might impute His own righteousness to all who believe in Him. The love of Jesus Christ displayed for man in the sufferings He endured on the cross of Calvary is a mystery even to the angelic host of heaven. Amazing love of the Father to give His Son to die to ransom the sinner! Oh, what love, what inexpressible love!

31. Lt 33, 1893 (September 26, 1893) par. 12 (56%)

And yet ministers will advocate that we have no law, and misinterpret the precious Scriptures, wresting them to their own destruction. Christ’s death on Calvary’s cross which exalts the law and makes it honorable, testifying to its immutability, is through the lies of Satan presented to the people that Christ’s death on the Cross abolished the law. O, what fallacy, that Christ died to immortalize sin. The **only definition** of sin is “transgression of the law.” Therefore, if the law is

dead, Satan has had his way, hell has triumphed, and sin, the transgression of the law, has become universal. O, what an awakening there will be ere long, when the transgressor shall meet the great Law Giver over His broken law. What bewitching delusions Satan can manufacture and palm off on the world as truth to be obeyed in order to be saved.

32. Ms 27, 1899 (March 19, 1899) par. 1 (56%)

The Lord has taken infinite pains to teach men by giving them His law. This law is to govern the world. It demands perfect obedience from rich and poor, high and low. Its divine requirement is that we love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. Its principles are binding upon the angels and upon all human intelligences. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” This is the **only definition** of sin. Without the law there can be no transgression. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The standard of righteousness is exceeding broad, prohibiting every evil thing.

33. Ms 21, 1891 (February 27, 1891) par. 15 (53%)

The apostle John, in his first epistle, **gives the definition** of sin. He declares: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”

34. Ms 1, 1902 (January 6, 1902) par. 1 (53%)

The rebellion against God’s law was begun by Satan in heaven. By this rebellion sin was brought into existence. There is **only one definition** of sin. “Sin is the transgression of the law.”

35. Ms 229, 1902 (September 13, 1902) par. 4 (53%)

In the next verse is given **the definition** of sin: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

36. Ms 8, 1888 (October 20, 1888) par. 32 (49%)

Now, I want to say to you before closing that we have a wonderful friend in Jesus, who came to save His people from the transgression of the law. What is sin? The **only definition** of sin is that it is the transgression of the law. Then here is Jesus Christ, who comes right in and imparts His righteousness to us; we cannot overcome in our own strength, but by faith in Him. If you will believe on Jesus Christ, you will have Him today. You must believe that He is your Saviour now and that He imputes to you His righteousness because He has died and because He has been obedient unto every requirement of that transgressed law of God. If you do this, you will have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Adam and Eve lost Eden because they transgressed that law, but you will lose heaven if you transgress it.

37. Lt 34, 1894 (December 20, 1894) par. 42 (49%)

In this day, children are called upon to listen to discourses that make void the law of God, and parents and children practice the principle that where there is no law, there is no transgression. But the **only definition** of sin that is given in the Guide Book is that “sin is the transgression of the law.” Many with mental capabilities who profess to love God [but] who have been in doubt, accept the words from their teachers who declare that the law of God is done away and that we

have no law. These people practice the precepts of their teachers, and follow the example of their ministers.

38. Ms 3, 1897 (January 11, 1897) par. 42 (49%)

The **only definition** of sin given in God's Word is transgression of the law. It is not excusable, and has no defence or justification. It will be the final and eternal condemnation of the originator of sin and all the angels who united with him in the heavenly courts, who joined the confederacy of evil, identifying themselves with the great apostate. When the question comes, "Why have ye done thus?" every tongue will be silent; the rebellious world will stand speechless before God. Of Satan God had said, "Thou wast perfect in all thy ways from the day that thou wast created, until iniquity was found in thee."

39. Ms 59, 1899 (April 13, 1899) par. 12 (46%)

John has given us **the definition** of sin: "Whosoever committeth sin," he declares, "transgresseth also the law." And this was after the crucifixion of Christ, when, we are told, the law was abolished. When type met antitype in the death of Christ, sacrificial offerings ceased; the ceremonial law was done away. But by the crucifixion of Christ the law of ten commandments was established. Let us compare our lives and characters with this great moral standard, God's just and holy law; for it is the standard by which we shall be judged in the last great day. Looking into this great mirror we should carefully examine our thoughts and works.

40. Lt 4, 1893 (December 23, 1893) par. 15 (45%)

That book contains the warnings, the admonitions from God, the rebuke of every evil, the **clear definition** of sin as the transgression of the law which is God's great standard of virtue and holiness. The Word is full of warnings, of the most merciful invitations, and also of words in decided condemnation of evil. Not one who will study the Word of God and apply its teachings will miss the way. By the love of God, by the fear of God, by the reverence and honor we feel for the Author of truth and righteousness, we are instructed, admonished, and profited. All such revealings as come from the human agent, as in the case of Sister Phillips, turn the mind away from the words of inspiration to the words of inexperienced humanity.

41. Ms 27, 1899 (March 19, 1899) par. 23 (44%)

Complete obedience is the only condition that meets the requirement of the law. The question is asked, "Is God a man, that he should lie?" **God has given the definition** of sin. His law is the rule of government. God says, "Do this, and thou shalt live." But to the disobedient He says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in the things written in the book of the law to do them." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." God has given the promise that those who do this law will be rewarded, not only in the present life, but in the life to come. He declares just as decidedly that those who do not obey His requirements shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on them. By lips that never lie the obedient are blessed, and the disobedient are pronounced guilty.