

# 119

## MINISTRIES

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### Are All Sins Equal?

When one examines Scripture, we may be confronted with the reality that sin is everywhere and can have some pretty dire consequences. When we look at the Brit Hadasha, or New Testament, we see that all sin appears to be equal.

For instance, we see in James 2 that if we break one law, when we sin, we are guilty of breaking the entire law of God, or Torah. Paul tells us that the wages of sin is death; there is no differentiation made between the types of sin. Both of these passages seem to indicate that all sins are equal in the sight of our Creator, but is that really true?

Before we can discuss the equality of different sins, we must first define what sin is. Sin is defined in Scripture as transgressing, or breaking, the Torah (Instruction or Law) of God.

#### **1 John 3:4**

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.

#### **James 2:9**

But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the **law** as lawbreakers.

#### **Romans 7:7, 12 (LEB)**

What then shall we say? Is the law sin? May it never be! But I would not have known sin except through the law, for I would not have known covetousness if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” 12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

So, we have seen that Scripture defines sin as transgressing God’s law. Now, let’s determine whether all transgressions of God’s law—whether all types of sin—are equal.

We want to emphasize one point first. Whether a person is breaking or following the law of God does not determine their eternity, their salvation. Salvation comes only by grace through faith in Messiah.

Again, obedience or disobedience to the law of God does not determine one’s salvation status; we are NOT saved by works, but rather ARE SAVED by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, His Hebrew name

being Yeshua. It's worth pointing out that that just because someone is in the faith, on the path of salvation, does not mean that they won't sin. We all still sin, it doesn't mean we won't receive salvation.

### **1 John 2:1-2**

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua] the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Now the question is, are all sins of equal weight before YHWH?

As mentioned before, we see in James that if a person breaks one law of the Torah, they are guilty of breaking all of it.

### **James 2:10 (NRSV)**

For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

We also have Paul telling us, in Romans 6:23, that the wages of sin is death.

### **Romans 6:23**

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] our Lord.

Some may say these verses prove that all sin is the same in the eyes of the Father. Yeshua, however, seems to disagree in a passage many are very familiar with.

### **Matthew 22:36-40**

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

The greatest, or most important, commandment is to love God. The second most important commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. Already this shows that some commandments are greater than others.

But some may still argue that we're discussing sin and not commandments. Remember, however, that sin is the breaking of the commandments; it would stand to reason then, that breaking a greater commandment is a greater sin. This should be enough to convince someone that not all sins are created equal. However, as we like to say here at 119, let's continue to test everything.

Death is the prescribed punishment for breaking some of the laws given by God. Here are a few examples:

### **Exodus 31:14 – Breaking the Sabbath by doing your regular work**

You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

### **Leviticus 20:10 – Adultery**

“If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

#### **Exodus 21:12-14 – Premeditated Murder**

“Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

These are just a few of them. In case you’re wondering why we don’t necessarily stone everyone today, or for a more in depth look at the topic of capital punishment in the Bible, please see our teachings [Should We Stone Our Children?](#) and [Why We Don’t Stone Sabbath Breakers](#).

Yet there are other sins outlined in the Torah that don’t warrant the death penalty. For example:

#### **Exodus 21:18-19 – Men Fighting without resulting in death**

“When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

#### **Number 5:5-7 – An overall way to handle general sins**

And the LORD [YHWH] spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel, When a man or woman commits any of the sins that people commit by breaking faith with the LORD [YHWH], and that person realizes his guilt, he shall confess his sin that he has committed. And he shall make full restitution for his wrong, adding a fifth to it and giving it to him to whom he did the wrong.

It should be clear now that Scripture does show us that YHWH does not see all sin as the same. He made different punishments for different sins. Not all sins are deemed worthy of capital punishment.

In the beginning of this teaching we mentioned Paul’s statement to the Romans.

#### **Romans 6:23**

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] our Lord.

We feel it is prudent to mention here that there is a difference between the physical death dictated by some laws and the death mentioned by Paul in Romans 6.

The wages of sin is death, but what Paul is referring to here is a spiritual death, or eternal death. How do we know this? Context and the verses mentioned prior. We already know that not all sins lead to a physical death (the penalty for thieving or not tithing is not stated to be a physical death).

If a physical death is not required, then we have two choices.

- 1.) Scripture contradicts itself and is no longer truth.

Or

- 2.) There are two different types of death.

We do **not** believe Scripture contradicts itself; we believe there is a second death outside of the first physical death.

**Revelation 2:11**

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the **second death**.

**Matthew 10:28**

And do not fear those who **kill** the body but cannot **kill** the soul. Rather fear him who **can** destroy both soul and body in hell.

We see there is another death besides the physical (killing the body). The soul can also be destroyed; this would be an eternal, or spiritual, death.

Let's briefly look at the immediate context of the Romans 6:23.

**Romans 6:20-23**

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. **For the wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] our Lord.

We see that when we are slaves to sin, our end result is death. Being free from sin and being slaves to the Creator, leads to sanctification and the receiving of eternal life. Eternal death or eternal life. Those are our options.

For more on the book of Romans, please see our [Pauline Paradox](#) series. For more on our understanding about eternal life and death, see our series titled [Life After Death](#).

So, again, the death Paul refers to in Romans 6:23 is an eternal death, also referred to as the second death that comes after judgment for those not written in the Book of Life. This is completely separate from the first death we experience here on earth, which is only a physical death. We are not to fear the physical death as Yeshua said in Matthew 10:28. The Creator would rather we lose our physical life than lose our eternal life.

**1 Corinthians 5:5**

you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

When YHWH prescribed capital punishment to be used for disobeying specific parts of His Torah, He was commanding the physical death of the individual. It's important to remember that not all sins require a physical death.

As final evidence that not all sins are equal to the Father, we know that there is one unforgivable sin.

**Mark 3:28-29**

“Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they

utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”

This Scripture shows us that not all sins are equal as there is a sin that will not be forgiven, while all of the rest will be. For more on these verses, please see our teaching titled [The Unpardonable Sin](#).

That brings us to the verse we started with, James 2:10. It's where he says that breaking one law is equal to breaking the whole of the Torah. We have seen how YHWH Himself prescribes differences, then how are we to understand what James is saying? James' point is that all of the Torah, that is all of YHWH's commandments and instructions are authoritative. Breaking any of God's commandments is a sin. We don't get to decide that only the 10 Commandments are over us, but the dietary laws are not. Breaking any of them is sin, and that is the point he is making. For more on this, please see our video [The Law of Moses: All or Nothing? \(James 2:10\)](#).

So, to answer the question we started with, “Are all sins equal to God?” we can say both yes and no. From a physical perspective here on earth, no they are not. Different sins have different severities in their consequences for our physical lives on earth. However, as it relates to the penalty required for all sins from a spiritual and eternal perspective, yes, they are the same.

We hope that this teaching has blessed you.

Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom

*For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)*

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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