

THE SIN NATURE OF MAN

There is no subject so important in Scripture as that of sin. Sin predates man. It originated with Satan when as Lucifer the anointed cherub of God, being lifted up with pride, he tried to usurp God's throne in Heaven (CP Isa 14:12-19; Eze 28:11-19). Sin entered the world through the first man, Adam, and with sin came death, both spiritual and physical, when he and Eve ate of the fruit of the tree from which God had forbidden them to eat in the Garden of Eden after Satan prevailed upon Eve through the serpent to disobey God (CP Gen 2:15-17 with 3:1-19). Spiritual death means separation from God. (See also author's study *Satan* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

Since then sin became universal. Every human being is born with the sin nature of Adam; the propensity to sin is born in them (CP Psa 51:5; Isa 6:5; 53:6; 64:6; Jer 17:9; Ro 3:10-18, 23; 5:12; 7:13-25). Scriptures clearly and unmistakably teach that sin is present in every human being from the moment of conception. This applies to everyone who ever lived, including Jesus' mother Mary – she was not born without the *Stain of Original Sin*, as many in the contemporary church claim – but not Jesus Himself. He was the only one ever born without any form of sin whatsoever inherent in His nature (CP Isa 53:10; Mt 3:13-16; Jn 8:46; 2Cor 5:21; He 4:15; 7:26; 1Jn 3:5, 8). See also author's comments in Mt 3:13-15, Lu 1:46-47, Ro 3:9, 5:12-14, 7:7-23, 2Cor 5:21 (A) and (B), 7:10, 13:5, He 4:14-16, 7:25 and 1Jn 3:6-9 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein, in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**, and his study *The Doctrine of Repentance* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 3)**.

The ramifications of sin in the hearts of men are varied and intricate. It is only as the evil nature of sin is revealed to them in Scripture that they can rightly extol the Saviour who came to deliver them from its curse and condemnation. That is why if men do not have Scriptural views of sin's nature, they will not have Scriptural views of the efficacious remedy for sin. Man's estimation of sin varies considerably. What is sin to some is not sin to others, but to accept God's verdict on sin according to Scripture is to accept His provision for salvation from sin by His one and only Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (CP Mt 1:18-25; Lu 1:26-35; Jn 3:16-18; Ro 1:16-32; 3:23-26; 5:1-2; 6:2-21; 1Cor 15:1-3, 21-22; 2Cor 5:17-19; Eph 1:3-14; 2:1-8; 1Pe 1:18-25). See also author's comments on Jn 3:14-15, Ro 1:16-17, 1:18, 1:19-21, 1:24-28, 1:29-31, 3:24-26 (A) and (B), 5:1, 5:15, 6:1, 6:3-5, 6:6-11, 6:12-14, 6:15, 6:16, 6:21-23, 8:3-4, 1Cor 15:1-11, Eph 1:3-6, 1:11-14, 2:5, 2:8-10, 1Pe 1:17, 1:18-21, 1:23-25 and all related cross reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein, in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**.

When Adam sinned he overstepped the limits set by Divine command and this view of sin is consistently maintained throughout Scripture. The very principle of sin is rejection of and disobedience to God's Word, and denial of His Will (CP Gen 2:7-9, 16-17; 3:1-6, 9-17; Ro 1:18-23). Sin can be summarized as follows: it is an *Act* – The violation of or want of obedience to God's Word. It is a *State* – the absence of righteousness. It is a *Nature* – enmity against God.

Hence the necessity of the New Birth – being born again if one desires to be saved and enter into the Kingdom of God (CP Jn 3:3-5). See also author's comments on Jn 3:3 and 3:5 in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**, and his study *What Being Born Again means* in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**.

Christians must recognize the nature of sin as Scriptures declare it to be. It is a lie which started in the Garden of Eden with Satan – who Jesus described as *a liar, and the father of it* (CP Jn 8:44) – questioning Eve on the veracity of God's word ... *Hath God said?* (CP Gen 3:1). Sin is seducing, deceiving, misleading (CP Isa 28:15; Jer 17-9). Sin is yielding to temptation – being drawn away by one's own lust, and enticed (CP Jas 1:14-16). This was the sin David committed with Bathsheba, and then had her husband killed in battle to cover it up, before marrying her (CP 2Sam 11:1-27). Regardless of who they are, sinners show contempt for God and His Word (CP 2Sam 12:9-10; Jn 14:15, 21, 23-24; 1Jn 2:3-6). David was a man after God's own heart (CP Ac 13:22), yet in 2Sam 12:9-10 God rebuked David for holding Him and His Word in contempt by sinning. This also applies to New Testament Christians who yield to temptation. They too are showing contempt for God and His Word (CP 1Cor 10:1-13). As stated previously in this study Christians can, and must, say no to sin. They are empowered by the Spirit of Grace to do so (CP Ro 8:1-14, 1Cor 10:13). See also author's comments on Ro 8:1-2, 8:3-4, 8:11, 8:12-16, 1Cor 10:1-5, 10:13, 10:14-22, Jas 1:13-15, 1Jn 2:3-6 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**.

Scriptures teach throughout that people sin because they have no fear of God (CP Psa 36:1-4). This was quoted by Paul in Ro 3:18. It teaches that all people in their natural state are sinners and it is because they have no fear of God (CP Ro 3:18 with Pr 3:7-8; 8:13; 9:10; 16:6). Without a proper fear of the Lord even God's people will soon revert to their old sinful ways (CP Ac 5:1-11). As a result of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira here many sinners were won to the Lord and the Church grew (CP V11-14). Fear of the Lord is being in reverential awe of His greatness and glory and dread of the results of violating His Holy Word. This is an essential element of the Christian faith, the need for which is clear and unmistakably taught right throughout Scripture (CP De 6:1-2; Psa 85:8-9; Pr 2:1-7; Lu 1:50; Ac 9:31). Fear of the Lord promotes righteousness and long life. (See also author's comments on Ac 5:1-10 and 9:31 in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**, and his studies *The Lordship of Jesus* in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**, and *The Fear of the Lord* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 3)**).

Although man is born to sin, he is not born a slave to sin – an habitual sinner. He becomes that by yielding himself to his sin nature (CP Ro 6:16; 7:14-23). In Ro 7 Paul is not portraying the normal Christian life, as so many in the contemporary Church have been taught; that man cannot resist the urge to sin or overcome his sin nature. In Ro 7 Paul is recounting his pre-

conversion experiences under the Old Testament law – not his post-conversion experiences under New Testament Grace. Christians can, and must say no to sin. In Christ, Christians are endowed with the power of God through the Holy Spirit of Grace to resist the urge to sin that tries to usurp the authority of God, who they now serve. No force at all can make them sin if they are resolute in their intent not to (CP Ro 6:17-18, 22; 2Cor 10:3-5; Eph 6:10-18; Col 3:1-11; Jas 4:6-10, 1Pe 5:6-9; 1Jn 3:6-9; 5:4-5, 18). See also author's comments on Ro 6:16, 6:17-20, 6:21-23, 7:4, 7:7-23, 8:1-2, 2Cor 10:3-5 (A) and (B), Ga 5:16, 5:17, 5:19-21, 5:22-23, Eph 6:11-12, Col 3:1-3, Jas 4:5, 4:7-10 and 1Pe 5:8-9, and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**.

It should be noted here that the Scriptures subject of this study are not exhaustive but merely representative of the numerous teachings throughout the Bible warning Christians against sinning and failing God's Grace, and forfeiting their place in His Eternal Kingdom. Christians are reminded that if it were not possible to resist temptation and stop sinning, the injunctions to do so would not be in Scripture (CP He 12:12-15). If Christians do not want to fail God's Grace and forfeit their place in His Eternal Kingdom, they must walk in the way He has prescribed they

should in strict accordance with His Holy Word (CP Mt 7:13-14, 21-27). Christians must only ever see themselves as strangers and pilgrims in the earth – in the world, but not of it (CP Jn 17:1-26; 1Pe 2:11-12). See also author's comments on Mt 7:13-14, 7:21, He 12:12-15 and 1Pe 2:11 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**.

To summarize this study in closing here, the sin nature with which Christians are born cannot be made good. It must be crucified with Christ and overcome through Holy Spirit power and Grace. Christians achieve this by denying themselves daily, removing every hindrance of sin, and resisting all sinful temptations (CP Mt 5:29; 16:24; 18:9; Mk 2:23; Ro 6:6; 8:12-13; 13:14; Ga 2:20; 5:24-25; 1Pe 2:11). Under the empowering of the Holy Spirit, Christians themselves overcome their sinful nature. But not all do, as Paul's letters to the Corinthian Christians plainly teach (CP 1Cor 10:21-22; 2Cor 6:14-18; 13:5). Not all Christians make the required effort to overcome their sin natures and so delude themselves thinking they are saved (see also author's comments on Mt 5:29, 10:37-38, 10:39, Ro 13:14, 2Cor 6:14, 13:5, Ga 2:18-21, 5:24-26, 1Pe 2:11 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**).