

SIN

In the Bible, **sin** is fundamentally understood as **missing God's standard of righteousness** and **rebellious against God's will**.

Core biblical meanings

- **Missing the mark:** The most common Hebrew word for sin is *ḥaṭṭā'th*, which literally means “to miss” or “to fall short,” like missing a target (cf. Judges 20:16 as an illustration of the word usage idea).
- **Transgression / rebellion:** Another common idea is deliberate crossing of a boundary God has set (Psalm 51:1–4; 1 John 3:4).
- **Lawlessness:** The New Testament defines sin as breaking God's law or acting outside His will:
“Sin is lawlessness.” — 1 John 3:4

Key biblical descriptions

- **Missing God's glory/standard:**
“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” — Romans 3:23
- **Doing what is not right, or failing to do what is right:**
James 4:17 describes sin as knowing the right thing to do and not doing it.
- **Disobedience rooted in the heart:**
Sin is not only actions but also thoughts, desires, and intentions (Matthew 5:21–28).

Summary

Biblically, sin is:

- **Missing God's perfect standard**
- **Breaking or ignoring God's commands**
- **A condition of the human heart that leads to actions, thoughts, and attitudes contrary to God**

SALVATION

In the Bible, **salvation** refers to **God's deliverance of people from sin, its consequences, and ultimate separation from God**, and the restoration of a right relationship with Him.

Core biblical meaning

The main words behind “salvation” are:

- Hebrew: *yeshuah* — meaning “deliverance” or “help”
- Greek: *sōtēria* — meaning “rescue,” “preservation,” or “healing”

What salvation means in Scripture

1. Rescue from sin and its penalty

Salvation is God saving people from the guilt and judgment of sin:

- “He will save his people from their sins.” — Matthew 1:21

- “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.” — Romans 6:23

2. Restoration to relationship with God

It is not only escape from punishment, but reconciliation with God:

- “We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son.” — Romans 5:10

3. Deliverance from spiritual death to eternal life

Salvation includes the promise of eternal life with God:

- “Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” — John 3:16

4. Present and ongoing transformation

In the Bible, salvation is also described as something that affects a person’s life now:

- freedom from the power of sin (Romans 6:6–7)
- being made new in character (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Summary

Biblically, salvation is:

- **God’s rescue from sin and death**
- **Forgiveness and justification before God**
- **Restoration of relationship with Him**
- **The gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ**

SEPARATION

In the Bible, “**separation**” is not a single technical definition, but a **recurring concept** that describes the state of being **set apart, divided, or distanced**—either between people and God, or for a specific purpose.

1. Separation caused by sin (separation from God)

The most important biblical meaning is the **break in relationship between humanity and God caused by sin**:

- “Your iniquities have separated you from your God.” — Isaiah 59:2

Here, separation means:

- loss of fellowship with God
- spiritual alienation
- moral and relational distance caused by sin

2. Separation as “death” or spiritual estrangement

In the New Testament, separation from God is often tied to spiritual death:

- “You were dead in your transgressions and sins.” — Ephesians 2:1

This does not mean non-existence, but a **ruptured relationship with God**, the source of life.

3. Separation as “being set apart” for God (positive meaning)

Not all separation is negative. The Bible also uses it to mean **holiness or consecration**:

- “Be holy, because I am holy.” — Leviticus 20:26
- “Come out from them and be separate.” — 2 Corinthians 6:17

Here, separation means:

- belonging to God
- living differently from sinful practices
- being dedicated for a sacred purpose

4. Final separation (judgment imagery)

The Bible also uses separation in the sense of final judgment:

- sheep and goats separated (Matthew 25:31–33)
This represents the **division between those who belong to God and those who reject Him.**

Summary

Biblically, “separation” can mean:

- **Separation from God due to sin (alienation)**
- **Separation as spiritual death or broken relationship**
- **Separation as being set apart for God (holiness)**
- **Final separation in judgment between righteous and unrighteous**

SOVEREIGNTY

In the Bible, **sovereignty** refers to **God’s supreme authority, absolute rule, and unrestricted power over all creation.** It means that God is **ultimate King**—not limited, not dependent, and not answerable to any higher authority.

Core biblical idea

God’s sovereignty includes:

- **Ownership of all things**
- **Authority over all events**
- **Power to accomplish His will without being hindered**

Key biblical foundations

1. God rules over everything

- “The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.” — Psalm 103:19

This shows God’s reign is **universal and complete.**

2. God does whatever He wills

- “He does according to his will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand.” — Daniel 4:35

This emphasizes that **no one can stop or override God’s decisions.**

3. God has authority over nations and history

- “He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings.” — Daniel 2:21

Human governments operate under God’s higher rule.

4. God’s plans cannot be thwarted

- “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” — Job 42:2

God’s purposes always succeed.

What sovereignty means in plain terms

Biblically, God’s sovereignty means:

- He is **in complete control of creation**
- Nothing happens outside His awareness or permission
- He can **direct history, nature, and human affairs**
- His will is **ultimate and unstoppable**

Important balance in Scripture

The Bible also holds together:

- **God’s sovereignty** (God rules all things)
- **Human responsibility** (people make real moral choices)

Both are presented without contradiction in passages like Philippians 2:12–13.

Summary

Biblical sovereignty means:

- **God is the supreme ruler over all reality**
- **Nothing exists or happens outside His authority**
- **His will is ultimate, purposeful, and unchallenged**

SERVICE

In the Bible, **service** refers to **devoted action done for God and for others**, often marked by humility, obedience, and love. It includes both **worship directed to God** and **practical care for people** in His name.

1. Service as worship and obedience to God

At its core, biblical service means **living in obedience to God and honoring Him with one’s life:**

- “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.” — Matthew 4:10

- “Serve the Lord with gladness.” — Psalm 100:2

Here, service is not just activity—it is a **life oriented toward God’s will**.

2. Service as loving action toward others

The Bible strongly connects service to **helping and loving people**:

- “Serve one another humbly in love.” — Galatians 5:13
- “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” — Mark 10:45

Jesus presents service as **self-giving care**, especially toward the needy.

3. Service as humility and sacrifice

Biblical service often involves **putting others before oneself**:

- “Whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.” — Mark 10:44
- “Do nothing out of selfish ambition... but in humility value others above yourselves.” — Philippians 2:3–4

This reflects a mindset of **humble willingness, not pride or status-seeking**.

4. Service as spiritual gifting and ministry

The New Testament also describes service as using God-given gifts to build up others:

- “There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.” — 1 Corinthians 12:5

Service can include teaching, helping, encouraging, leadership, and practical support.

Summary

Biblically, **service means**:

- **Worshipful obedience to God**
- **Humble love and care for others**
- **Selfless action modeled after Jesus**
- **Using one’s life and gifts to honor God and benefit people**

CONDEMNATION

In the Bible, **condemnation** refers to **God’s judgment declaring someone guilty because of sin, along with the resulting sentence or punishment**—most often understood as separation from God and under His righteous judgment.

1. Condemnation as being declared guilty before God

The basic idea is a **legal verdict of guilt**:

- “Who then is the one who condemns? No one.” — Romans 8:34 (context shows condemnation as a judicial verdict)
- “The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation.” — Romans 5:16

Here, condemnation means:

- being found guilty of sin
- standing under divine judgment

2. Condemnation as the result of sin without Christ

The Bible teaches that humanity apart from Christ is already under condemnation:

- “Whoever does not believe stands condemned already.” — John 3:18
- “The wages of sin is death.” — Romans 6:23 (implying judgment)

This includes:

- spiritual death
- separation from God
- ultimate accountability before Him

3. Condemnation contrasted with salvation in Christ

A major biblical theme is that **faith in Jesus removes condemnation**:

- “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” — Romans 8:1

This means:

- guilt is forgiven
- judgment is removed
- the believer is declared righteous before God

4. Condemnation and final judgment

The Bible also uses condemnation in the context of final judgment:

- “They will be punished with everlasting destruction...” — 2 Thessalonians 1:9

This refers to the **ultimate separation from God for those who reject Him**.

Summary

Biblically, condemnation means:

- **A verdict of guilt before God**
- **Being under judgment because of sin**
- **Separation from God’s life and favor**
- **The opposite of salvation and justification**
- **Something removed through faith in Christ**

JUSTIFICATION

In the Bible, **justification** refers to **God's act of declaring a person righteous in His sight**, not because they are sinless on their own, but because they are made right with God through His grace—ultimately through faith in Jesus Christ.

1. Core meaning: a legal declaration of righteousness

The word comes from the idea of a **courtroom verdict**: God, as Judge, declares someone “righteous.”

- “Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God.” — Romans 5:1
- “It is God who justifies.” — Romans 8:33

So justification means:

- not “made perfect immediately,” but
- **declared righteous before God**

2. Not earned, but given by grace

The Bible strongly emphasizes that justification is not based on human works:

- “For by grace you have been saved through faith... not a result of works.” — Ephesians 2:8–9
- “All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” — Romans 3:24

It is:

- a **gift from God**
- received by **faith**, not earned by moral performance

3. Based on Jesus' sacrifice

Justification is possible because Jesus takes the penalty for sin:

- “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.” — Romans 4:25
- “The righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” — 1 Peter 3:18

Meaning:

- Christ's righteousness is credited to believers
- their guilt is removed

4. Results of justification

According to the Bible, justification brings:

- **peace with God** (Romans 5:1)
- **no condemnation** (Romans 8:1)
- **reconciliation with God** (Romans 5:10)

- **standing as righteous before Him**

5. Key idea summary

Biblically, justification means:

- **God declaring a sinner righteous**
- **based on faith in Jesus Christ**
- **by grace, not works**
- **removing guilt and condemnation before God**

SANCTIFICATION

In the Bible, **sanctification** refers to **the process of being made holy—set apart for God—and being progressively transformed to reflect His character.**

It comes from the idea of being “**sanctified**” = **made holy / set apart for sacred use.**

1. Core meaning: set apart for God

At its foundation, sanctification means **belonging to God and being dedicated to Him:**

- “God chose you to be holy.” — Ephesians 1:4
- “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” — John 17:17

So it includes:

- being **set apart from sin**
- being **set apart for God’s purpose**

2. A lifelong process of transformation

The Bible also presents sanctification as **ongoing spiritual growth:**

- “This is the will of God, your sanctification.” — 1 Thessalonians 4:3
- “We are being transformed into his image.” — 2 Corinthians 3:18

This means:

- becoming more like Christ over time
- growing in holiness, character, and obedience
- the work of the Holy Spirit in believers

3. Made possible by Christ and the Holy Spirit

Sanctification is rooted in what Jesus has done and is applied by the Spirit:

- “Jesus suffered... to sanctify the people through his own blood.” — Hebrews 13:12
- “You were sanctified... in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” — 1 Corinthians 6:11

So it involves:

- **initial cleansing through Christ**
- **ongoing change by the Holy Spirit**

4. Different aspects (important biblical distinction)

The Bible often shows sanctification in two ways:

- **Positional sanctification:**
You are *already set apart* as God's child (1 Corinthians 6:11)
- **Progressive sanctification:**
You are *still being made holy in daily life* (Philippians 1:6)

Summary

Biblically, sanctification means:

- **Being set apart for God**
- **Being made holy through Christ**
- **A lifelong process of spiritual growth**
- **Becoming more like Jesus through the Holy Spirit**

DISPENSATION

In the Bible, **dispensation** refers to **God's ordered way of administering His will, revelation, and responsibility to people within a particular arrangement or period of His redemptive plan.**

1. Core biblical meaning: stewardship or administration

The key idea comes from the Greek word *oikonomia*, meaning **household management or stewardship:**

- "If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you." — Ephesians 3:2 (KJV wording)

So a dispensation involves:

- God **entrusting responsibility**
- humans acting as **stewards under His direction**
- a specific way God **administers His purposes**

2. Biblical usage (not originally a strict system)

In Scripture, "dispensation" usually does **not mean a rigid timeline of historical ages**, but rather:

- a **divine assignment or stewardship**
- a **particular way God manages His plan or reveals truth**

Example:

- Paul describes his "dispensation of the gospel" (Colossians 1:25), meaning his **responsibility to preach Christ to the Gentiles**

3. Later theological development

In some Christian traditions (especially **dispensational theology**), the term is expanded to describe **distinct eras in history** where God relates to humanity in different ways, such as:

- Innocence (Eden)
- Law (Moses)
- Grace (Church age)
- Kingdom (future reign of Christ)

In this system, each dispensation includes:

- a unique revelation from God
- specific human responsibility
- accountability for obedience

4. Key idea summary

Biblically, dispensation means:

- **God's management or stewardship of His plan**
- **a responsibility or trust given by God**
- **the way God administers His revelation and purposes in history or ministry**

GLORIFICATION

In the Bible, **glorification** refers to **the final stage of salvation in which believers are fully transformed into the likeness of Christ and share in His glory in the presence of God**. It is the **ultimate completion of God's saving work**.

1. Core meaning: final transformation into Christ's likeness

Glorification is when God completes what He began:

- "Those he justified, he also glorified." — Romans 8:30

This means:

- full spiritual and moral perfection
- complete conformity to Jesus' image
- freedom from sin forever

2. Receiving a resurrected, imperishable body

The Bible teaches that glorification includes the resurrection of the body:

- "The dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed." — 1 Corinthians 15:52
- "He will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body." — Philippians 3:21

So glorification involves:

- a **resurrected body**
- no decay, pain, or death
- a new, eternal physical-spiritual state

3. Complete removal of sin and suffering

In glorification, all effects of sin are removed:

- no sin nature
- no temptation
- no suffering or death
- perfect holiness
- “He will wipe every tear from their eyes.” — Revelation 21:4

4. Living forever in God’s presence

Glorification also means **eternal fellowship with God**:

- “We will be with the Lord forever.” — 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- “They will see his face.” — Revelation 22:4

This is the ultimate fulfillment of salvation:

- perfect relationship with God
- unhindered access to His presence

5. Connection to salvation process

The Bible presents salvation in stages:

- **Justification** → declared righteous
- **Sanctification** → being made holy
- **Glorification** → fully made like Christ forever

Summary

Biblically, glorification means:

- **the final transformation of believers**
- **resurrection into a perfect, immortal body**
- **complete freedom from sin**
- **eternal life in God’s presence**
- **full sharing in the glory of Christ**