

Divine Solution to the Human Problem – Sin

Romans 5:12

Falling short: hamartia, hamartema, hamartano. This word in various forms occurs around 250 times and is the most common way in the New Testament to express the concept of sin. The central idea is to “miss the mark.” It can refer to general sin or wrongdoing ([John 8:21](#)) or specific acts of sin ([Matthew 12:31](#); [1 John 5:16](#)). The apostle Paul also used it to personify an ungodly power that can control people ([Romans 6:6](#)). It also refers to the wrongdoing ([Romans 3: 9](#); [7:13](#)).

- I. Hamartia (ἁμαρτία) entered the world by Adam ([Romans 5:12](#)). He disobeyed God and disregarded His instruction. Adam missed the mark and fell short. Ultimately, this mark (of perfection) is nothing short of the perfection of God’s character – the ultimate aim of God’s spiritual children ([Matthew 5:48](#)). As sinners, we “*fall short of the glory of God*” ([Romans 3:23](#)). God’s laws give us a knowledge of hamartia, or sin ([Romans 3:20](#)). We must not continue in such sin ([Romans 6:1-2](#)), but repent, be forgiven and have our sins blotted out ([Acts 2:38](#); [3:19](#)).
- II. Unrighteousness, iniquity: adikia ἀδικία adikos ἀδικός (and other forms of the same word). Adikia literally means “not right” and denotes injustice ([Luke 18:6](#)) or dishonesty. It is the comprehensive term for a wrong situation or wrongdoing between individuals. The human tongue is a “*world of iniquity*” ([James 3:6](#)). God rejects workers of iniquity ([Luke 13:27](#)) and commands us to depart from iniquity ([2 Timothy 2:19](#)). God is righteous ([Romans 9:14](#)) and expects us to be like Him. God will forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness if we are willing to confess our sins and ask Him for forgiveness ([1 John 2:19](#)).
- III. Trespass: paraptoma – παραπτώμα. This word occurs 23 times, coming from para, meaning “aside,” and pipto, meaning “to fall.” It refers to a false step, blunder, sideslip, lapse or deviation – the failure to maintain godly conduct by the resistance to temptation. Perhaps the

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most familiar use of the term is in Jesus' example prayer to His disciples, where we are encouraged to "*forgive men their trespasses*" ([Matthew 6:14-15](#)). Jesus was delivered to death for our trespasses ([Romans 4:25](#)). Through our acceptance of His sacrifice in our place, our trespasses, our offenses, are not imputed to us ([2 Corinthians 5:19](#)). When we were dead in our sins, we were brought back to life through God's grace and forgiven by Christ's sacrifice ([Ephesians 1:7; 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13](#)). Our Christian task is to help those overtaken in any trespass ([Galatians 6:1](#)). Through the fall (trespass) of Israel, God has brought salvation to the gentiles ([Romans 11:11](#)).

- IV. Iniquity, lawlessness: anomia – ἀνομία ἀνομός. This word occurs 15 times and literally means "no law." It is usually translated "iniquity" in the King James Version and "lawlessness" in the New King James, though in [1 John 3:4](#), which contains perhaps the best known definition of sin, it is translated "transgression" in the King James Version. Even outwardly religious professing Christians who may do many wonderful things fall under God's stern judgment if they continue to practice lawlessness ([Matthew 7:23](#)) or fail to uphold His laws. God will remove all such people from His coming world-ruling Kingdom ([Matthew 13:41](#)).

The Pharisees were prime examples of those who seemed to be righteous but in reality were full of anomia ([Matthew 23:28](#)). Such lawlessness is prophesied to be the dominant spirit of the time immediately before Jesus Christ's return ([Matthew 24:12](#)). God hates lawlessness ([Hebrews 1:9](#)) and commands us to repent of it. We are blessed when God forgives our lawless deeds ([Romans 4:7](#)) and He remembers our lawless deeds no more ([Hebrews 10:17](#)).

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- V. Transgression: parabasis – παράβασις. This word comes from para, meaning “across,” and basis, meaning “foot.” It holds the meaning of violating a specific law, crossing a specific line God has drawn. Unless a line exists to cross over, no transgression can be committed ([Romans 4:15](#)). The effect of the law is to render people “transgressors” when they violate, or cross over the boundary God has set. Both Adam ([Romans 5:14](#)) and Eve ([1 Timothy 2:14](#)) transgressed God’s instruction, through of the two, only Eve was deceived.

In [Galatians 3:19](#), we read that God added a law alongside another law “because of transgressions” – disobedience to existing law or instruction. Because of human nature’s hostility toward God ([Romans 8:7](#)), we naturally tend to cross the boundary lines set by God ([Romans 7:18](#)). That is why Christ, who “by means of death” is mediator of the New Covenant, is so important ([Hebrews 9:15](#)). His death redeems (purchases) us from transgressions of God’s laws under the covenant to Israel. The promise of the New Covenant through Christ brings forgiveness of our transgressions and allows the same laws to be written in our hearts ([Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)).

“For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.” ([Hebrews 9: 13-16](#))