

## 2. The difference between Sin Transgression and Iniquity

The Bible declares that all are guilty of sin, and the soul that sins must die - spiritual, physical, and eternal death. We are conceived in sin, born in sin, and practice sin daily. We commit sin, transgression and iniquity.

The bible speaks often of these three.

*The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."* - EXODUS.34:6-7 (RSV)

### Sin

Sin is generally referred to as "missing the mark".

*Among all these soldiers there were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed, each of whom could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.* - JUDGES 20:16 (NIV)

The Hebrew word for "miss" here is "sin". Generally, sin is viewed in terms of any "missing the mark". We aim to get it right. We try to do it to God's standard, but we fail. The "mark" is God's perfect standard.

*You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* - MATTHEW 5:48 (RSV)

While sin is the generic term under which all wrong-doing is grouped, generally sin covers the area of unintentional sin. This usually covers sins of omission rather than commission. It is missing the mark through error or mistake. These are one-time events. They are misdeeds. They may be committed through ignorance, and do not have to be wilful.

*...for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.* - ROMANS 14:23 (RSV)

*...since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...* - ROMANS 3:23 (RSV)

### Transgression

We transgress the law when we break the law. We transgress the law when we do 105kph in a 100kph zone. It may not be inherently evil, but we have broken the law nonetheless. A Biblical "transgression" is when we break God's law. Like the road rules, when we break them, we generally do it knowingly.

Transgression is doing what God has said *not* to do. Generally, we transgress when we deliberately and wilfully choose not to do what God has required.

Whereas sin implies missing the mark, even when we try to do it right, transgression implies a positive breach, a rebellion. We often sin unknowingly. When we transgress, we know we are doing it and we know better.

As an example, God commanded the Israelites not to seek guidance through mediums. If they then chose to do this, they transgressed God's law.

*Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead.*

- DEUTERONOMY 18:10-11 (NIV)

Interestingly, the Israelites transgressed the law of God, because they had God's law. Gentiles could only "sin" as they did not have the law of God. Romans 4:5 points out that where this is no law, there is no transgression.

### **Iniquity**

Iniquity in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word 'avon' which simply means perverseness or that something is bent, twisted, distorted or perverted. While sin and transgression both describe something we do, iniquity is a way of being. It is a behaviour pattern. With iniquity, we may do wrong, even when we want to do right. Iniquity is a force that compels our will to sin. Iniquity is the twisted nature that lasts long after the transgression has been committed. This iniquity can be passed down through future generations, unless the iniquity itself is removed. Iniquity affects the will and personality in such a way that each generation has an inbred tendency to act in the same way as their ancestors did. (This definition from "Victory in the Battle" By John Kowalczyk)

As these definitions imply, sins and transgressions are committed but iniquity is carried, and often, if not usually, is the reason why the others are committed. Correspondingly, if the iniquity is removed, then the major reason why sins and transgressions are committed is removed, too. This alone explains why Christians continue to struggle with committing the same sins and transgressions for years and years—because the iniquity is still pending and is an open and viable force compelling the person to sin and transgress. So sin is the act. Iniquity is the consequence. (from <http://www.lmci.org/articles.cfm?Article=14>)

Why should we think it strange that transgressions might have consequences? In the physical world, our actions have consequences. If I were to accidentally burn down your house, or run over your cat, no amount of repentance will bring them back. I can say "I am sorry" until I die, and they will not be brought back. Your forgiveness will not change this. Similarly, every sin before God can be forgiven, but the physical consequences (for example, pregnancy) will still have to be outworked. If I steal and ask God's forgiveness, I can expect him to wipe the slate clean, and forget the sin. This does not mean that the stolen property immediately reverts back to the owner. Why should it be any different in the "Spirit" world?

For Christians today, this bias will be handed down to our children, even after we become Christians! While forgiveness of sin is automatic at salvation, freedom from iniquity is not. It must be pointed out that the bias or warping in our nature is not sin. It is, though, when we succumb to it. Then, it is sin.

A logical question to ask is, what sins cause iniquities? If we think of iniquities as a bruising to our spirits, we may not be far from the mark. If we knowingly and deliberately commit sin, it defiles or bruises our spirit, causing our children to be born with the bruising. It may be a relatively small sin such as jealousy, pride, laziness, envy or gluttony, but committed many times. It may be one grievous sin such as adultery, witchcraft, murder, but committed once. Many small hits to our spirit bruise us just as effectively as one large hit. The inherited bruising will cause the children to have a weakness in the same area.

The Bible, in the Old Testament, often refers to iniquity as both the sin which causes it, as well as the bias created and handed down. "Workers of iniquity" (referred to approximately 20 times in the OT) are people who practice sins that cause a bias to be handed down through the generations. They are probably also people who sin out of the inward bias.

So, sin is unintentional wrong. Transgression is intentional wrong. Iniquity is the bias that is handed down. It is a lifestyle. Often, if not usually, iniquity is the reason why sins and, more likely, transgressions, are committed.

### 3. Things to look for in our lives:

- (a) The main one to look for is repeated recurrent patterns of sinful behaviour in past generations. These are the "biases" we spoke of earlier. For instance, sinful patterns such as incest, illegitimacy, homosexuality, other sexual sins such as sexual immorality, lust, addiction to pornography, and others such as anger, gluttony, jealousy, alcoholism, gossiping, unforgiveness, pride, theft, bulimia, anorexia, drugs (prescription or otherwise), an apparent ability in occult areas. And this is to name only a few. It must be said, too, that not all "drivers" are caused by generational causes. Many will come from experiences in our own past. One writer though, stated that 95% of his counseling has required dealing with generational iniquity.

Whether we like it or not, children live with the fallout from their parents' sins.

- (b) Occult involvement is one iniquity that will always have some ongoing effect through the generations. It is a violation of the first commandment (Exodus 20:3), which comes with a warning in verse five against those who break this commandment.

*...you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me...*  
- EXODUS 20:5 (RSV)

*If a person turns to mediums and wizards, playing the harlot after them, I will set my face against that person, and will cut him off from among his people.*  
- LEVITICUS 20:6 (RSV)

This “cutting off” may outwork in a number of ways: early death, financial failure, illness, accidents, or simply an inability to see or understand the truth of the gospel. This blindness can make it very difficult to share the gospel with these people. They will have a total blank spot when it comes to seeing the truth. They may smile sweetly, and say they understand the gospel, and even go to church. But something is missing!

- (c) Freemasonry is a huge area, and one that cannot be properly covered here. Put simply, Freemasons take oaths as they progress through each level. When an oath is taken which is not in line with scripture, that person speaks an ungodly vow, which is in effect, a curse.

*Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.*  
- MATTHEW 5:33-37 (RSV)

In Freemasonry the negative results of their promises are spelt out in their oaths. As they are ungodly vows, the negative results are brought upon themselves and their children and following generations.

- (d) People with “labels”. Many people have labels on them. “Abuse Me”, “Bully Me”, “I’m Available”, “Loser”. We of course do not physically see these labels, but they are fairly easily “seen” when we know what to look for.
- (e) We can generate our own iniquities by choosing to act in a manner that is grievously sinful before God. Without Godly intervention, this will affect our children.
- (f) Although this is slightly outside the scope of this article, it must be noted that the sins of the parents can also cause generational curses – God’s judgment on the sins of parents – and can be dealt with along the same lines as detailed later.
- (i) Physical ailments that are a pattern. Sickesses that come down through the generations might be an indicator of generational iniquity. It should be pointed out, though, that not all generational sickness equates to iniquity. And it seems that when it does, we are to be as specific as possible in prayer. Generalised prayers usually do not work.
- (ii) Lifestyle patterns that appear cursed. Many times the actual problem area may not directly indicate the actual area of sin. Some of these indicators might be patterns of rejection, divorce, miscarriages, early deaths, closed wombs, only male (or female) children born, drugs or alcohol, poverty, accident prone, etc. All we can say here is to seek God for an answer as to the cause.
- (iii) Unnatural fears / phobias, compulsive behaviours. (Unnatural fears / phobias: One list on the internet listed 629 phobias. Examples of compulsive behaviors: hoarding, spending, saving, eating, not eating, washing, over-abundance of certain clothes or objects, arson, vandalism, tidiness, perfectionism, etc)

Sometimes, iniquity is committed in seeming ignorance. For instance, playing with a Ouija board may be seen as a fun past time, but God clearly states (Deuteronomy 18:10-12) that divination is an abomination to him. Our mental attitude to that sin has nothing to do with the fact that there are consequences for our actions. Playing with the occult, no-matter how innocently, is grossly evil, it is premeditated, and it is wickedness before God. We are seeking answers from sources other than God (that is, Satan and his demons, or the dead), and as such is wilful defiance and rebellion against God. As stated earlier, it is a violation of the first commandment. (Exodus 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me.")

Believing that experimenting with the occult is acceptable, is similar to believing that one can, with impunity, stand in front of an on-coming truck on a highway. Your beliefs are irrelevant. The consequences will be the same whether you believe it or not. It is an iniquity.

So...

We must be saved from our sins, and set free from the iniquities of our parents

#### 4. Biblical Characteristics of Iniquity

- (a) It was recognised in the OT, in that there was a separate sacrifice for iniquity, and for sin (or "transgression").

*And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.*

- LEVITICUS 16:20-22 (KJV)

Notice that it is the transgressions, the deliberate acts of disobedience which cause the iniquity, that are being spoken of here. Iniquity is the bent in our nature, caused by transgressions – which are sins.

- (b) It is a grievous and deliberate sin against God.

*Is not your wickedness great? There is no end to your iniquities.* - JOB 22:5 (RSV)

*Did not Achan the son of Zerah break faith in the matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? And he did not perish alone for his iniquity.*

- JOSHUA 22:20 (RSV)

*Woe to him who builds a town with blood, and founds a city on iniquity!*

- HABAKKUK 2:12 (RSV)

*I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.*

- ROMANS 6:19 (RSV)

*You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me... Idolatry is an iniquity.*

- EXODUS 20:3-5 (RSV)

- (c) It was recognised as affecting the generations. God promises in many places to visit iniquity down to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation, (and perhaps beyond), and to visit the iniquity of illegitimacy down to the 10<sup>th</sup> generation.

...you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me...**  
- EXODUS 20:5 (RSV)

The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.**"  
- EXODUS 34:6-7 (RSV)

The LORD is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, **forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of fathers upon children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation.**  
- NUMBERS 14:18 (RSV)

You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me...**  
- DEUTERONOMY 5:8-9 (RSV)

Blessed is the man to whom the LORD **imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.** That is, blessed is he who has not been affected by their parents iniquities.  
- PSALMS 32:2 (RSV)

Do not remember against us the **iniquities of our forefathers; let thy compassion come speedily to meet us, for we are brought very low.**  
- PSALMS 79:8 (RSV)

No bastard shall enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the **tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD.**  
- DEUTERONOMY 23:2 (RSV)

Some sins listed in the OT were too appalling to allow the perpetrator to live. God did grade sin. While any and all sin takes one away from the presence of God, he makes it quite clear that he viewed some sins as being particularly abhorrent. Some sins only required a small sacrifice or offering, while others required a large sacrifice. Some sins even required the death penalty. It would seem that, had these people lived, the effects of their iniquity down through their generations would have been cataclysmic to the Israelites. Had each generation been allowed to inherit the normal effects of the iniquity, and reinforce the iniquity by revelling in the sin themselves, the compounding effect would have seen the nation rapidly degenerate to an extremely wicked and ungodly level. This is probably what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah.

Remembering that illegitimacy has an ongoing effect for 10 generations (last reference above), perhaps the iniquities that required the death penalty might have had an ongoing effect longer than 10 generations, if the people who committed them had been allowed to live.

(d) It affects our nature. That is, it creates the drivers in our lives:

**For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty.**  
- JOB 15:5 (RSV)

**Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**  
- PSALMS 51:9-10 (RSV)

**Keep steady my steps according to thy promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.**  
- PSALMS 119:133 (RSV)

**The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him, and he is caught in the toils of his sin. He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is lost.**  
- PROVERBS 5:22-23 (RSV)

*You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

- MATTHEW 5:27-28 (RSV)

The driver, Jesus says, is lust, an iniquity. One aspect of the person's nature is lust (among perhaps other things).

*You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell of fire.*

- MATTHEW 5:21-22 (RSV)

The driver is anger, the result of an iniquity. The person's nature has anger.

- (e) It is a biblical law of sowing and reaping. It is a law that was originally meant for good, that we inherit generational blessing. But this can also apply to the generational cursing.

*And if in spite of this you will not hearken to me, but walk contrary to me, then I will walk contrary to you in fury, and chastise you myself sevenfold for your sins. You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and cast your dead bodies upon the dead bodies of your idols; and my soul will abhor you. And I will lay your cities waste, and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing odours. And I will devastate the land, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be astonished at it.....*

*"But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery which they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity; then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land."*

- LEVITICUS 26:27-42 (RSV)

*For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.*

- GALATIANS 6:8 (RSV)

We are perfectly willing to accept the blessings from our parents and their parents. And not only the spiritual ones either! All good things around us are primarily due to our parents - our money, our lifestyle, the ease and quality of life. These we enjoy unmerited. Can we say that it is fair to enjoy these blessings, yet unfair if we reap from their sins? It is not an accident that the so called "Western" countries are the wealthy ones. These are the countries that have based their national identity on the Christian God. Now look at the countries classified as "Third World". Have you ever wondered why they struggle so much, just to keep their heads above water? They struggle even to feed the people. How many of these have had as their foundation, Christian principles and the Christian God? Look also at what is happening to those Western countries that are intent on deleting all reference to God from their way of life. There seems to be a slow withdrawal of God's blessing. The things that are valued - security, prosperity, abundance in everything, increasing GNP, low national debt, high agricultural productivity - some of these are slipping away as all reference to God is actively removed from schools, work-places, politics, and lives.

5. People and incidents in the Bible affected by iniquity

- (a) Some OT people who showed inherited sinful ways:

- (i) King David was the fourth generation from Rahab the prostitute. (Matthew 1:5-6 Salmon and Rahab produced Boaz. Boaz was the father of Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David.) If there was a sexual sin associated with Rahab, and there probably was, her being a harlot, then it was very likely handed down, reinforced, and handed on to David. Without a doubt

David had a problem with women. His affair with Bathsheba was clear evidence of this. Solomon was the result, and his problem with women is well known. (Read also 2 Samuel 2:2, & 5:13)

*Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!... Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.*  
-PSALMS 51:2F (RSV)

David recognises in Psalm 51 that he is motivated by iniquity, and that he was actually conceived in iniquity. He asks God, not only to cleanse him of his sin, but to put a new and right spirit within him. That is, to change his motivation in this area.

David was also the tenth generation from Judah, one of the sons of Jacob. In Genesis 38, Judah propositioned his daughter-in-law, thinking her to be a prostitute, and she became pregnant as a result. This iniquity, even though it is ten generations old, may have had an influence on King David.

Most do not realise that David had at least nine wives and ten concubines. David first married Michal the daughter of Saul (1 Samuel 18:27), Ahinoam of Jezreel (1 Samuel 25:43), then Abigail (1 Samuel 25:39), Maachah, Haggith, Abital, Egalah, Bathshua (1 Chronicles 3:2-5), and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:27). David also had at least ten concubines (2 Samuel 15:16).

We also see this iniquity of lust being passed on to the next generation. Amnon, the son of David, raped his sister, Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-15). And Absalom raped King David's concubines "in the sight of all Israel" (2 Samuel 16:22). And, of course, then there was Solomon.

- (ii) Solomon inherited David's problem with women. "*He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.*" (1 Kings 11:3 RSV)
- (iii) Noah's youngest son Ham, in Gen 9:20f "saw his father's nakedness". Whatever it was that happened, it was clearly of a sexual nature. While many believe that Noah simply cursed Ham's descendants through Ham's youngest son Canaan, when looked at from the viewpoint of it being an iniquity, Noah may have been simply stating, what was to him, the obvious: the iniquity would be felt by Ham's son Canaan, and his descendants. Canaan would be a slave to Ham's brothers.

*...he [Noah] said, "Cursed be Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers." He also said, 'Blessed by the LORD my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.' God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.*  
- GENESIS 9:25-27 (RSV)

*The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.* - GENESIS 10:6 (RSV)

- (iv) It is interesting that Abraham was devious about who his wife was, not once, but twice! Once in Genesis 12:14 in Egypt. The second time it was to king Abimelech in Genesis 20:2f. Now look at Genesis 26:8f. It is very interesting to note that Isaac used the same ploy with his wife, and to the same king! Abraham and Isaac's deviousness and dishonesty, it seemed, was also handed down to Jacob.

Jacob was a "mommy's boy" who did not like hard work. He was not his father's favourite. He was also wily and devious. In fact his name meant "supplanter". He cheated his brother of his father's blessing, with the full support of his mother. Jacob's children were devious. (They were born before Jacob had his encounter with God) They sold Joseph into slavery and lied to their father, implying he had died. (To get some idea of the gravity of this, imagine selling your brother / sister as a slave, then lying to your parents and the authorities on what had happened to them. How big an act of treachery does this feel?) Joseph also was no saint, in that he flaunted his imagined superiority in the face of his brothers. Joseph appears like a carbon copy of his father's younger life, in that he was not out looking after the sheep, but swanning around doing little of the hard work. How like his father!

(b) Particularly important, iniquity is also found in the NT:

(i) Simon the Sorcerer

*But there was a man named Simon who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the nation of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great*

*They all gave heed to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is that power of God which is called Great." And they gave heed to him, because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.*

*Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit;*

*for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.*

*Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me also this power, that any one on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."*

*But Peter said to him, "Your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."*

*And Simon answered, 'Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me.'*

- ACTS 8:9-24 (RSV)

Acts 8:9-24 makes it clear that Simon the sorcerer:

- (a) was a Christian,
- (b) was baptised, and
- (c) still had iniquity problems.

(ii) *So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' And all the people answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!'*

- MATTHEW 27:24 (RSV)

This appears to have been an iniquity that affects more than four generations. Many Jews today have apparently gained a significant measure of freedom from praying through this iniquity.

(iii) *And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him.'*

- JOHN 9:2 (RSV)

Many will interpret this verse in the context of an old fashioned people who had no idea that diseases are caused by viruses and bacteria. Remember, though, that if the concept of "Iniquity" is correct, then the verse demonstrates a greater understanding than we currently have. And incidentally, this verse opens up the whole area of "iniquity" to inherited sickness also.



- (iv) The disciple Judas Iscariot was spoken of prophetically in Psalm 109.

*Appoint a wicked man against him; let an accuser bring him to trial. When he is tried, let him come forth guilty; let his prayer be counted as sin! May his days be few; may another seize his goods! May his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow! May his children wander about and beg; may they be driven out of the ruins they inhabit! May the creditor seize all that he has; may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil! Let there be none to extend kindness to him, nor any to pity his fatherless children! May his posterity be cut off; may his name be blotted out in the second generation! May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out! Let them be before the LORD continually; and may his memory be cut off from the earth! For he did not remember to show kindness, but pursued the poor and needy and the brokenhearted to their death*

- PSALMS 109:6-16 (RSV)

The sin of his parent was that they did not show kindness to the poor. They “pursued the poor and needy to their death”. The outworking came in Judas, who was more concerned about money than Jesus.

- (v) *...but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death.*

- JAMES 1:14-15 (RSV)

This desire may be the person’s nature, or a “driver”. That is, an iniquity.

- (vi) *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

-1JOHN 1:9 (RSV)

This verse has traditionally been seen as a commendation for continually seeking after forgiveness for our sins. “Keep short accounts...” we are told. “Recognise your shortcomings.” The problem here is that if we must continue repentance for forgiveness, then if we die before repenting, then we cannot be saved. While this obvious hole is seen and recognised, because the verse says to do it, we are encouraged to continue repenting. This, people argue, is to keep us humble, and in recognition of what God has done through Jesus Christ.

The Greek word for “unrighteousness” (adikia), the last word in this verse, occurs 13 times in the New Testament. Five of those times it is translated as “iniquity”. If the word “iniquity” is put in place of “unrighteousness”, then the verse reads: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all iniquity*

With what we know of iniquity, the verse now begins to make sense. We are to confess our sins with a view to getting free of the consequences of iniquity.

- (vii) *And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.*

- HEBREWS 7:9-10

The writer of Hebrews says that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek while in the loins of his great grandfather Abraham. It must also follow that the actions of Abraham (and Isaac and Jacob) were just as much the actions of Levi, whatever those actions were. So when Abraham sinned, Levi effectively sinned also. And the effects of that sin will be felt just as much by Levi as by Abraham.

- (viii) *Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*

- JOHN 5:14

Jesus makes it clear that one outworking of sin is sickness. While this is not a bias to sin, as is common in a “generational iniquity”, it is an effect of sin. In this case it is a legitimate curse – a God-ordained curse of sickness as a result of some grievous sin. Most likely something would have been handed down to his children had not Jesus intervened.

6. Iniquity and the Cross

So, in our attempts to get free from these biases or drivers, why doesn't prayer work? Generally the problem is that we are not praying correctly. Anything we ask that is not God's will, he will simply ignore. It is similar to asking God to make us win Lotto when we are out of work, when scripturally, we should be asking for a job (2 Thessalonians 3:10 *...if any will not work neither let him eat*). To pray for Aunt Maude's death so we can inherit her money, is clearly unscriptural also, and God will ignore it.

*You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*

- JAMES 4:3 (RSV)

*And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.*

- 1 JOHN 5:14-15 (RSV)

The bottom line is that many believe that iniquities were dealt with automatically when we were saved. What, then, is automatically conferred at salvation, and what is not? It is easier initially, to look at what is *not* automatic at salvation.

Is healing an automatic part of salvation? After all, Isaiah 53:5 says, *"...and with his stripes we are healed."* Because for many people, these things do not fit into their theology, they will interpret this verse as us being healed spiritually. But if physical healing is possible, then it must be a part of the work of the cross. And logic says that it is obviously not automatic at salvation.

Both Paul and Peter healed people (Acts 5:15, 19:11-12, 28:8). If healing was automatic in the atonement, there would be no need for hospitals; just convert 'em! And perhaps, then, we would not die, for we would be continually healed! The fact that there are gifts of healing also indicates a need for healing separate to salvation. James 5:14 makes it clear that if any are sick, they are to call for the elders. These are Christians that he is talking to. So if healing is in the atonement, it is not automatic. It has to be found or sought separate to salvation.

Creation, also, was not automatically set free from its bondage to decay, as Romans states.

So, clearly, some things are not automatic at salvation. For healing, say, it can be sought separate to salvation.

What then, comes automatically with salvation? Peter's sermon in Acts:

*And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

- ACTS 2:38 (RSV)

*Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,...*

- ACTS 3:19 (RSV)

Forgiveness of sins is clearly automatic at salvation. Nothing is mentioned about anything else.

What aspect of the cross dealt with forgiveness of sins? Indeed, can we even divide the Cross into "aspects"?

*Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

- HEBREWS 9:22 (RSV)

*...for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

- MATTHEW 26:28 (RSV)

To deal with sins seems "only" to have required Jesus to shed his blood. This he did on the cross when the spear was thrust in his side.

Why then, did Jesus have to go through the agony of torture prior to and on the cross? After all, he shed his blood on the cross. Was that not enough? Clearly, Jesus not only shed his blood, but suffered enormously prior to his death. What else was dealt with in this suffering?

*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all*  
- ISAIAH 53:5-6 (RSV)

*For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*  
- ROMANS 8:19-23 (RSV)  
*...his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is accursed by God; you shall not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance.*  
- DEUTERONOMY 21:23 (RSV)

Jesus took our  
transgressions  
iniquities  
sicknesses  
curses  
also for our:  
new bodies  
creation to be  
aled.

It seems that Jesus not only shed his blood for our transgressions (sins), but had to endure the suffering to deal with curses, iniquities, healing, creation, and new bodies. While many of us dream of the new body, clearly new bodies are not an automatic part salvation.

The only thing that appears automatic is forgiveness of sin (transgressions). It seems that the on-going effect of grievous sins (iniquities) down through the generations is one of those areas that must be dealt with separately to salvation.

7. Dealing with iniquity

How do we deal with Iniquity?

Just as there is no clear way set out in scripture to "get saved", evangelise or baptise people, so too there is not a set way to pray about iniquity. Some verses that address freedom from iniquity are:

(a) Confession of iniquity – their own and their fathers.

*And those of you that are left shall pine away in your enemies' lands because of their iniquity; and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall pine away like them. "But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery which they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity; then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land."*  
- LEVITICUS 26:39-42 (RSV)

*We acknowledge our wickedness, O LORD, and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against thee.*  
- JEREMIAH 14:20 (RSV)

*Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth upon their heads. And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.*  
- NEHEMIAH 9:1 (RSV)

*I acknowledged my sin to thee, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; then thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.*  
- PSALMS 32:5 (RSV)

*I confess my iniquity, I am sorry for my sin.*  
- PSALMS 38:18 (RSV)

(b) Daniel prays for forgiveness for the iniquities of his fathers.

*In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by birth a Mede, who became king over the realm of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years which, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

*Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, 'O Lord, the great and terrible God, who keepest covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from thy commandments and ordinances; we have not listened to thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. To thee, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us confusion of face, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those that are near and those that are far away, in all the lands to which thou hast driven them, because of the treachery which they have committed against thee. To us, O Lord, belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness; because we have rebelled against him, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.*

*All Israel has transgressed thy law and turned aside, refusing to obey thy voice. And the curse and oath which are written in the law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.*

*He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done the like of what has been done against Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us, yet we have not entreated the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and giving heed to thy truth.*

*Therefore the LORD has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice.*

*And now, O Lord our God, who didst bring thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast made thee a name, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all thy righteous acts, let thy anger and thy wrath turn away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy hill; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people have become a byword among all who are round about us.*

*Now therefore, O our God, hearken to the prayer of thy servant and to his supplications, and for thy own sake, O Lord, cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate.*

*O my God, incline thy ear and hear; open thy eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of thy great mercy.*

*O LORD, hear; O LORD, forgive; O LORD, give heed and act; delay not, for thy own sake, O my God, because thy city and thy people are called by thy name.*

- DANIEL 9:1-19 (RSV)

To be free of the effects of iniquities, it appears that we must own our ancestor's sin, confess the sin, and ask forgiveness for the sin. We must also do the same for our own involvement in these areas.

Some may question the need to ask for forgiveness for sins that are supposedly already forgiven at our conversion. There might be another way to deal with this other than that above, but the OT verses ask that the people "confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers" (Leviticus 26:40

RSV). Also, the NT asks us to confess sins to God. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9 RSV) While there is probably valid grounds for not actually asking for forgiveness for the sins we have committed, it seems easiest to deal with the sins from a "forgiveness" aspect, and also deal with the consequences (iniquities) also.

Other notes on Iniquity:

8. Verses seeming to deny iniquity

- (a) *The word of the LORD came to me again: 'What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sins shall die'. Read the rest of this chapter to get the full impact.* - EZEKIEL 18:1F (RSV)

*In those days they shall no longer say: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own sin; each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.* - JEREMIAH 31:29-30 (RSV)

While Jeremiah 31:29 is merely a reference to this saying, Ezekiel 18 spells it out in detail. It seems that the Israelites had come to believe that the children would be responsible for and must bear God's punishment – death – for their parent's sin.

We need to have a clear understanding on the difference between God's righteous and final judgement on a person's sin, and the consequences of iniquity being handed down through the generations. Both appear to be punishment. But there is a distinct difference. Every man, woman or child, God quite plainly says, will receive their final reward or punishment before him for their own actions. (18:20 *"The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son"*). In other words, God has refuted the charge that the children receive God's ultimate punishment for their parent's actions.

To inherit a "bent arrow" that cannot hit the mark, no-matter how hard one tries, is different from bearing the responsibility, guilt and God's judgement of death for the parent's sin. Inheriting a bias towards an ungodly response, of itself, is not sin. Responding to that bias in an ungodly way, though, is sin. And for their own response only, each person will answer to God. Now, if the son or daughter commits sin, Ezekiel 18 tells us that they will bear their own guilt, and thus be punished – but for their sins only.

- (b) *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold all things have become new.* - 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (RSV)

This has been taught in many churches, without identifying exactly what has become new. We are tri-partite beings. That is, we are body, soul and spirit. So is Paul saying here that all things are new for our spirit, or our soul, or our body? Or all three? Note that this comes after 2 Corinthians 4:16 which says that *"the inward man is being renewed day by day"*. So clearly Paul is not referring to this "inward man" in 5:17.

Paul, in Ephesians also states:

*Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.* - EPHESIANS 4:22-24 (RSV)

And:

*Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...* - ROMANS 12:2 (RSV)

So our minds, our wills, and our emotions are in a state of being renewed. They are not "there" yet.

So when Paul says that "all things have become new" he is not referring to our body or our soul. He is referring to our spirit, which now has the Holy Spirit dwelling within (See Romans 8:10, 16). We are new creations in our spirit, as now the Holy Spirit has taken up residence. We are not new creations in our mind. This requires the process of sanctification.

(c) Another verse is often mentioned,

*...forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*  
- PHILIPPIANS 3:13 (RSV)

So, apparently, we are to forget what is past and press on... Paul, however, is not speaking here of his past where he succumbed to the depths of sin and depravity. He is talking here of his past where he succeeded. In the world he was counted a great man. In Christ, this counted for naught. So, ignoring the apparent successes of his past, he presses on towards his goal. It is incorrect to use this verse to tell someone bound in iniquity and failure, to "forget the past and press on..."

(d) *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*  
- 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13 (RSV)

This passage does not negate the effects of iniquity. Each individual will ultimately have to answer to God for every thought, word and action. No matter how hard the temptation is to endure, we are given a "way of escape" that allows us to choose. We, individually, choose either to sin, or not to sin.

(e) *So if the Son shall make you free, you will be free indeed.*  
- JOHN 8:36 (RSV)

This verse is easy to quote out of context, for two verses before, Jesus says that, "Everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin." Ask anyone in the Church whether Christians will or can "practice sin", and if they are honest, they will admit that they do. Logically then, the Son has not set them free!

#### 9. Some other verses that speak of iniquity

*I confess my iniquity, I am sorry for my sin.*  
- PSALMS 38:18 (RSV)

*The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none that does good.*  
- PSALMS 53:1 (RSV)

*Thou didst forgive the iniquity of thy people; thou didst pardon all their sin.*  
- PSALMS 85:2 (RSV)

*But the LORD has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge. He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the LORD our God will wipe them out.*  
- PSALMS 94:22-23 (RSV)

*...who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases...*  
- PSALMS 103:3 (RSV)

*Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.*  
- PSALMS 106:6 (RSV)

*May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out!*  
- PSALMS 109:14 (RSV)

*Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.*  
- ISAIAH 1:4 (RSV)

*For behold, the LORD is coming forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed upon her, and will no more cover her slain.*

- ISAIAH 26:21 (RSV)

*For the fool speaks folly, and his mind plots iniquity: to practice ungodliness, to utter error concerning the LORD, to leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied, and to deprive the thirsty of drink.*

- ISAIAH 32:6 (RSV)

*Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you so that he does not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue mutters wickedness. No one enters suit justly, no one goes to law honestly; they rely on empty pleas, they speak lies, they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. They hatch adders' eggs, they weave the spider's web; he who eats their eggs dies, and from one which is crushed a viper is hatched. Their webs will not serve as clothing; men will not cover themselves with what they make. Their works are works of iniquity, and deeds of violence are in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, desolation and destruction are in their highways*

- ISAIAH 59:1-7 (RSV)

*Behold, it is written before me: 'I will not keep silent, but I will repay, yea, I will repay into their bosom their iniquities and their fathers' iniquities together, says the LORD; because they burned incense upon the mountains and reviled me upon the hills, I will measure into their bosom payment for their former doings.*

- ISAIAH 65:6-7 (RSV)

*They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.*

- JEREMIAH 11:10 (RSV)

*And if you say in your heart, 'Why have these things come upon me?' it is for the greatness of your iniquity that your skirts are lifted up, and you suffer violence.*

- JEREMIAH 13:22 (RSV)

*And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt so treacherously with me that I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they all fell by the sword*

- EZEKIEL 39:23 (RSV)

*'Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.'*

- DANIEL 9:24 (RSV)

*But he will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from; depart from me, all you workers of iniquity!'*

- LUKE 13:27 (RSV)

*I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.*

- ROMANS 6:19 (RSV)

#### 10. Greek and Hebrew

Listed below are both the Hebrew and also the Greek definition (or one of the definitions since there are many) of the word sin, to compare the meanings.

**Sin:** Chata' (transliterated OT Hebrew meaning/word) meaning, to sin, miss, miss the way, go wrong, incur guilt, forfeit, purify from uncleanness.

##### a. (Qal)

1. to miss
2. to sin, miss the goal or path of right and duty
3. to incur guilt, incur penalty by sin, forfeit

**b. (Piel)**

1. to bear loss
2. to make a sin-offering
3. to purify from sin
4. to purify from uncleanness

**c. (Hiphil)**

1. to miss the mark
2. to induce to sin, cause to sin
3. to bring into guilt or condemnation or punishment

**d. (Hithpael)**

1. to miss oneself, lose oneself, wander from the way
2. to purify oneself from uncleanness

**Sin: Hamartano (Transliterated NT Greek meaning/word)**

1. to be without a share in, to miss the mark, to err,
2. be mistaken to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honour,
3. to do or go wrong
4. to wander from the law of God,
5. violate God's law, sin

When you read the definitions listed from both the Hebrew and Greek Lexicons you can see that both definitions are very similar in meaning. In fact, if you could write a simple definition for the word sin, IMO, it could be "too miss the mark".

**Iniquity: Avon (Transliterated OT Hebrew word/meaning)**

to bend, twist, distort

1. (Niphal) to be bent, be bowed down, be twisted, be perverted
2. (Piel) to twist, distort
3. (Hiphil) to do perversely

to commit iniquity, do wrong, pervert

1. (Qal) to do wrong, commit iniquity
2. (Hiphil) to commit iniquity

**Iniquity: (paranomia, ponia, anomia, adikema, adikia Transliterated NT Greek words/meaning)**

1. breach of law, transgression, wickedness
2. depravity, iniquity, wickedness
3. malice
4. evil purposes and desires
5. the condition of without law because ignorant of it
6. because of violating it
7. contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness
8. a misdeed, evil doing, iniquity
9. injustice, of a judge
10. unrighteousness of heart and life
11. a deed violating law and justice, act of unrighteousness