

Sin is lawlessness

With the exception of Judaism and Christianity, none present their gods as having a judicial or legal process of leading or governing human beings. The God of the Bible introduces and teaches His legal perspective with the Mosaic Covenant.

1. Observe the use of the word “transgression.” What does that mean? What is being violated?

He shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their **transgressions** in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities. (Lev 16:16, NASB)

Then Joshua said to the people, “You will not be able to serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your **transgression** or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you.” (Josh 24:19-20, NASB)

2. As you examine the following passages, what do you learn about Jesus’ perspective on lawlessness?

Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice **lawlessness**.’ (Matt 7:22-23, NASB)

Everyone who practices sin also practices **lawlessness**; and sin is **lawlessness**. (1 John 3:4, NASB)

And you were dead in your offenses and sins, in which you previously walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (Eph 2:1-2, NASB)

Sin is lawlessness

Teacher Notes

With the exception of Judaism and Christianity, none present their gods as having a judicial or legal process of leading or governing human beings. The God of the Bible introduces and teaches His legal perspective with the Mosaic Covenant.

It is important to remind the student what the Covenant with Moses is and its importance. Take a moment to discuss and entertain any questions.

While in Egypt, after Jacob dies, the nation of Israel did not hear the voice of God for hundreds of years and they did not know how to live holy before God. With the Mosaic Covenant, the nation learns what sin is and how to atone for it and serve God. The nation also learns that God works within a legal framework and not as a capricious or whimsical God.

1. Observe the use of the word “transgression.” What does that mean? What is being violated?

He shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their **transgressions** in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities. (Lev 16:16, NASB)

Then Joshua said to the people, “You will not be able to serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your **transgression** or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you.” (Josh 24:19-20, NASB)

Help the student use an online dictionary if he does not know what transgression means.

Transgression means to intentionally break or violate a law. It is an outward sign of disobedience or rebellion.

Ask the student: what law(s) was being violated? Have you ever considered why the Mosaic Covenant is known as the Law of Moses not Laws of Moses?

The Mosaic Covenant had three sections: a) commandments that refer to **moral** laws (personal holiness), b) judgments that refer to **social** laws, and c) ordinances that refer to the Tabernacle and **worship** laws. It is important to note that the Law of Moses is singular and refers to all 613 laws as one unit. Breaking just one of 613 laws was the same as breaking the **whole** Law.

Did the student notice that **all** sins were considered a transgression (Lev 16:16)?

2. As you examine the following passages, what do you learn about Jesus' perspective on lawlessness?

Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice **lawlessness**.’ (Matt 7:22-23, NASB)

Everyone who practices sin also practices **lawlessness**; and sin is **lawlessness**. (1 John 3:4, NASB)

And you were dead in your offenses and sins, in which you previously walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (Eph 2:1-2, NASB)

Ask the student: of all the gospels, Matthew wrote specifically to the Jews and records Jesus saying, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." What is He saying about the Jews?

Just like their ancestors who did not fulfill their promised obligations to the Mosaic Law, the Jews did not know God's word and never saw Jesus as the prophesied Messiah. This lack of knowledge of God's word is why the Jews are seen as "without law."

Those Jews who knew God's word recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah placed their faith in Him. As the shepherd of the faithful, Jesus knew who those Jews were.

Ask the student: who is the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience? Disobedience to what?"

The "prince of the power of the air" is another name for Satan. Remind the student that he can always consult a Bible dictionary to learn about new terms.

Disobedience is a reference to disobedience to God's law – God's standard of good and evil.

Ask the student: what if you don't know what the law is?

Just like in our society today, you are obligated to learn what the law is. For example, if you drive without going to driver's school, you are still required to know the laws of driving. You'll still receive a ticket for speeding.

Knowing God's standard of good and evil is similar. Understanding God's view of sin provides another perspective of God. The legal standard by which righteousness is determined is whether one obeys and follows God's word. This objective standard is outside and with an authority above that of any human government. And, as it is embedded in the very nature of God, judgment is not capricious nor whimsical.