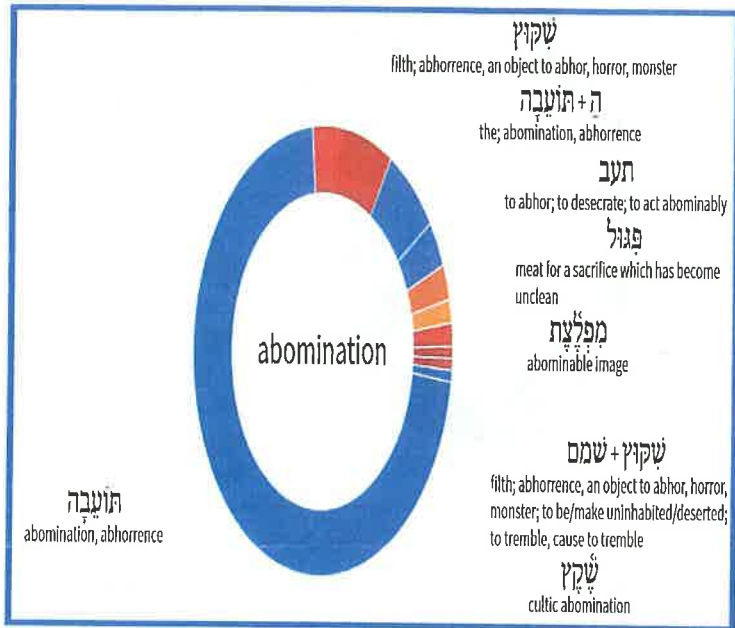


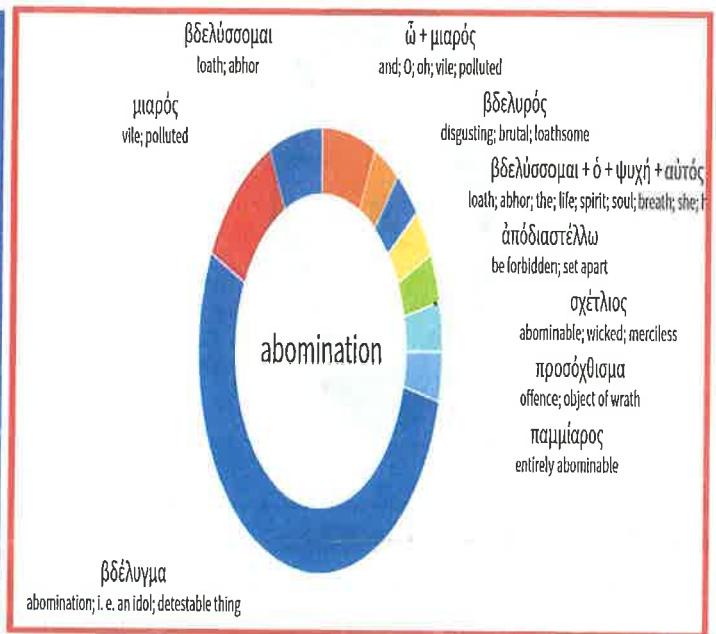
Abomination versus Sin: Is there a difference?

An **abomination** is described in the Dictionary of Bible Themes as “That which is utterly detestable in the sight of God, particularly sin and idolatry.”¹ In the Old Testament, the main Hebrew Word translated as “abomination” is “toebah” (תועבה) - pronounced “to-ay-baw’.” This word is also translated as “detestable” in some English Bible versions. In the New Testament, the main Greek Word translated as “abomination” is “bdelugma” (βδέλυγμα) - pronounced “bdel'-oog-mah.”

Hebrew (Old Testament)



Greek (New Testament)



What is considered an abomination to God²:

- Idolatry, Deut. 7:25; 27:15; 32:16;
- unjust weights and measures, Deut. 25:13–16; Prov. 11:1; 20:10, 23;
- uncleanness, Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 24:4;
- incest, Lev. 18:6–18;
- lying with a woman in her menses, Lev. 18:19;
- adultery, Lev. 18:20;
- homosexuality, Lev. 18:22, 23;
- offering seed to Molech, Lev. 18:21,
- offering children in sacrifice, Deut. 18:10;
- sorcery and necromancy, Deut. 18:10, 11;
- the hire of a prostitute and price of a dog, as a consecrated gift, Deut. 23:18.

Other unclassified scriptures relating to abomination: Deut. 22:5; Prov. 3:32; Prov. 6:16–19; Prov. 8:7; Prov. 11:20; Prov. 12:22; Prov. 15:8, 9, 26; Prov. 16:5; Prov. 17:15; Prov. 20:10 v. 23. Prov. 21:27; Prov. 24:9; Prov. 28:9; Prov. 29:27

¹ Manser, M. H. (2009). Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies. London: Martin Manser.

² Quispel, J. & New, G. (2004). New-News's Topical Bible. Oak Harbor, Iowa: Research Systems.

A **sin**, whether of commission or omission, which is the outcome of a free personal act of the individual will.³ It is “evildoing seen in religious perspective, not only against humanity, society, others, or oneself, but against God.”⁴ This can be traced to deliberate misuse of God-given freedom in disobedience of a single limiting prohibition, allurements, deceit, and evil persuasion assisting.

Hebrew (Old Testament)

חטא
 to miss (a mark); to wrong, offend, sin, be culpable; to bear the loss; to cleanse from sin, purify, make a sin offering

חַטָּאת
 sin; offence; guilt

חַטָּאתֹת
 sin; sin-offering

חַטָּאתֹת + הַ
 the; sin; expiation, sin-offering

עוֹנֵשׁ
 punishment; misdeed, sin; guilt caused by sin

סִי
 Sin (wilderness)

חַטָּאת + לְ
 for; until; into; to, towards; away, from; of, about; to miss (a mark); to wrong, offend, sin; be culpable; to bear the loss; to cleanse from sin, purify, make a sin offering

חַטָּאתֹת
 sin; expiation, sin-offering

Greek (New Testament)

ἁμαρτάνω
 sin; do wrong; fail

ἁμαρτήμα
 sin; failure

ἁμαρτωλός
 sinner

ἔξαμαρτάνω
 fail; miss the mark

σκανδαλίζω
 cause to sin

προαμαρτάνω
 sin beforehand

παράπτωμα
 trespass; transgression

παραβαίνω
 transgress; pass beside

ὀλισθάνω
 slip; slip and fall; to slip

πλημμελέω
 offend; trespass

ἁμαρτία
 sin; failure

Frequent ideas of sin in the Bible:

- Israel’s God sets the standard for human behavior, and the most frequent biblical words for sin (Heb. ḥāṭā’; Gk hamartēma) meant originally “to miss the mark, fail in duty” (Rom 3:23).
- God sets limits to man’s freedom; another frequent term (Heb. ‘ābar; Gk parabasis) describes sin as transgression, overstepping those set limits. “Iniquity” often translates ‘āōn (Heb.) (perverseness, wrongness), for which the nearest NT equivalent is anomia (Gk, lawlessness), paranomia (Gk) (law-breaking), rejecting divine rule; rāša’ (Heb.), also, means “lawless, unruly.”
- Hosea sets Israel’s “adulterous” sin in contrast with God’s faithful love: such sin is falseness, bad faith, ma’al (Heb.).
- God’s holiness is outraged by sin, which explains hālāl (Heb.) (to desecrate), tō’ēbā (Heb.) (abomination, abhorrence).
- God being devoted to the right, sin is ‘ewel (Heb.), adikias (Gk) (unrighteousness; for description cf. Ez 18:5–9).
- Sin against religion itself is asebia (Gk) (ungodliness, impiety, withholding due reverence).
- Sin is spoken of as debt, an unpaid obligation to God, who is good (Mt 6:12).
- Since in Israel God owned land, nation, and neighbor, every social crime—adultery, oppression, injustice, theft, cruelty, inhumanity, neglect of the poor—is also sin (Ex 20:12–17; Dt passim; Jb 31; Is 1:12–20; Am 1:3–2:16).

³ Cross, F. L., & Livingstone, E. A. (Eds.). (2005). In *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed. rev., p. 14). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

⁴ Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). In *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (p. 1967). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.