

Sin

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

This lesson covers sin. It will give an idea of how some of the different religious traditions might treat sin and the concept of transgression. You'll look at examples from the Abrahamic traditions, and examine the idea from a Buddhist perspective. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

[1. Sin in Abrahamic Traditions](#)

[2. Sin in Buddhism](#)

1. Sin in Abrahamic Traditions

Speaking generally, most religions consider the notion of **sin** to be related to misdeeds, wrongdoing, or disobeying a holy order or rule of law. In the Jewish and Christian tradition, sin is understood as working against God's will, causing the sinner to be alienated from God.

Some forms of Christianity contain the doctrine of original sin. This is found in the book of Genesis, in the Christian Old Testament. This is the idea that mankind made a fatal error by disobeying God's command in the Garden of Eden. It's the story of Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As a result, they were cast out of paradise and became subject to illness, old age, and death.

In the Christian tradition, Christ is the intermediary who restores the relationship between humankind in God. Taking on the sins of the world, He offers a release from suffering and restored communion with God. The Christian Eucharist is understood to be a ritual reenactment representing the holy mystery of Christ's death for the salvation of humankind.

Belief in this person of Christ and the divine process of transfiguration is believed to bring redemption and eternal life to the adherent of the faith.



TERM TO KNOW

Sin

Violation of divine will.

2. Sin in Buddhism

Sin in Buddhism is treated a bit differently. First of all, sins are considered to be misguided actions like in many other traditions, but they're not associated with disobeying a divine authority. The cause of sin, the cause of impure actions, has to do with the clouded mind.

These clouded, negative mental states are called **kleshas**, and all of the numerous states of impurity ultimately derive from the three primary kleshas: ignorance, attachment, and aversion. They're also called the "three unwholesome roots" and "the three poisons."

Poor judgment based on the kleshas leads to poor practice and actions, which would also be considered and called sinful. Buddhist monks, in fact, have specific confessional prayers, such as the Prayer of the 35 Buddhas, which is meant to purify the mind, speech, and action in the world.



TERM TO KNOW

Klesha

One of many different negative emotions that impede liberation and enlightenment.



SUMMARY

Every religion has some kind of relationship to wrongdoing and misguided action. Oftentimes, sin is a common translation for these things. Sin is treated differently in different traditions. **Sin in the Abrahamic Traditions** is disobedience of God's will. Sin comes from the original sin in Christianity. **Sin in Buddhism** results from the different kleshas that cloud the mind.

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TERMS TO KNOW

Klesha

One of many different negative emotions that impede liberation and enlightenment.

Sin

Violation of divine will.