

Wicked in the Bible

How does the Bible define wicked and Evil?

- There are 320 instances of the word wicked in the Old Testament (Hebrew version)
- 23 instances of the word wicked in the New Testament (Greek version).
- 132 instances of the word evil in the New Testament (Greek version).
- 478 instances of the word evil in the Old Testament (Hebrew version).

“Wicked” in Hebrew

H7451

רע רָעָה *rah, raw-aw'*

From [H7489](#) (Root); *bad* or (as noun) *evil* (naturally or morally). This includes the second (feminine) form; as adjective or noun: - adversity, affliction, bad, calamity, + displeasure (-ure), distress, *evil* ([-favouredness], man, thing), + exceedingly, X great, grief (-vous), harm, heavy, hurt (-ful), ill (favoured), + *mark*, mischief, (-vous), misery, naught (-ty), noisome, + not please, sad (-ly), sore, sorrow, trouble, *vex*, wicked (-ly, -ness, one), worse (-st) wretchedness, wrong. [Including feminine ra'ah; as adjective or noun.]

H7489

רָעַע *raw-ah'*

A primitive root; *properly to spoil* (literally by *breaking to pieces*); figuratively to *make* (or *be*) *good for nothing*, that is, *bad* (physically, socially or morally). (*associate selves and show self friendly* are by mistake for H7462.): - *afflict*, associate selves [by mistake for H7462], break (down, in pieces), + displeasure, (be, bring, do) evil (doer, entreat, man), show self friendly [by mistake for H7462], do harm, (do) hurt, (behave self, deal) ill, X indeed, do mischief, punish, still *vex*, (do) wicked (doer, -ly), be (deal, do) worse.

H7489

רעע

ra'ah'

Total KJV Occurrences: 96

evil, 23

[Gen 44:5](#), [Exo 5:22-23](#) (2), [Lev 5:4](#), [Deu 15:9](#), [Deu 26:6](#), [Deu 28:54](#), [Deu 28:56](#), [Jos 24:15](#), [1Ki 14:9](#), [1Ki 17:20](#), [1Ch 21:17](#), [Job 8:20](#), [Pro 24:8](#) (2), [Pro 24:19](#), [Isa 1:16](#), [Isa 41:23](#), [Jer 4:22](#), [Jer 10:5](#), [Jer 13:23](#), [Jer 25:29](#), [Jer 38:9](#)

evildoers, 9

[Psa 37:1](#), [Psa 37:9](#), [Psa 94:16](#), [Psa 119:115](#), [Isa 1:4](#), [Isa 14:20](#), [Isa 31:2](#), [Jer 23:13-14](#) (2)

afflicted, 3

[Num 11:11](#), [Rth 1:21](#), [Mic 4:6](#)

break, 3

[Job 34:24](#), [Psa 2:9](#), [Jer 15:12](#)

displeasure, 3

[Num 22:34](#), [2Sa 11:11](#)

harm, 3

[1Ch 16:21-22](#) (2), [Psa 119:115](#)

Psalms 2:9

9 Thou shalt break^{H7489} them with a rod^{H7626} of iron;^{H1270} thou shalt dash them in pieces^{H5310} like a potter's^{H3335} vessel.^{H3627}

King James Version w/ Strong's Numbers

2 Chronicles 7:22: “And it shall be answered, **Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers**, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath **he brought all this evil upon them.**”

Jeremiah 23:10-13: “For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and **their course is evil**, and their force *is* not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house **have I found their wickedness**, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery *ways* in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for **I will bring evil upon them**, *even* the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; **they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err.**”

Exodus 23:1 – pairs the concept of wicked with “unrighteous”. This concept of wicked being opposite of righteous and just occurs often in the scripture.

Numbers 16:26 – pairs the concept of wicked with “sin”

Deuteronomy 17:1-7 – pairs the concept of wicked with serving other gods and idolatry. It also refers to it as an “abomination.” Also see Colossians 3:5.

Leviticus 20:17: pairs concept of wickedness with incest. A behavior contrary to God’s design.

Numbers 16: pairs concept of wicked with those who rebel against God’s chosen people. Also see 1 Samuel 15:23 and Psalm 64:2.

1 Samuel 30:22 – pairs concept with practices of “men of Belial”. Serving other gods / idolatry.

2 Kings 17-18 – pairs concept with burning incense to other Heathen gods in their groves.

Job 31:3 – pairs concept of wicked with destruction and “workers of iniquity” which is law breaking. The word wicked is used often throughout the book of Job.

Psalm 9:16: concept of wicked is paired with “work of his own hands.”

Psalm 9:17: “wicked will be turned to hell and all those that forget God” Those that break the first Commandment. Of course, you break one Commandment you break all of them.

Psalm 10:2: concept of wicked is paired with those with pride, and those that persecute the poor.

Psalm 11:5: concept of wicked is paired with those who love violence.

Psalms 28:3: concept pairs wicked with “workers of iniquity” but also those who “speak peace to their neighbors, but mischief is in their hearts.”

Psalm 36:1: pairs wicked with those who do not “Fear God.”

Psalm 37:32: pairs wicked with those who plot to kill the righteous, and have hatred in their heart.

Psalm 58:3: pairs wicked with liars. Also see Psalm 109:6.

Psalm 119: pairs wicked with those who forsake God's Law, who commit robbery with oppression, and plot to undermine the righteous (breaking 8th Commandment).

Proverbs 3: the wicked are those who are cursed, as per Deuteronomy 28. Lawbreakers.

Proverbs 12: the wicked are paired with men who lay snares and nets for the just, use deceit, wait for blood and have no fruit.

Proverbs 28: They that forsake the law are wicked, as well as those that praise them, but those who are righteous contend with both.

Ecclesiastes 9:2: the concept of wicked is paired with the unclean, including unclean sacrifices and those that fear an oath.

Isaiah 32:7: the "instruments of the churl" is those who withhold things from others and are not generous to the poor. Unnecessarily miserly, perhaps covetous. Also pairs this with those who lie and scheme to destroy the poor (breaking 9th & 10th Commandment).

Isaiah 57:20: wicked are those who are troubled and have no peace.

Ezekiel 3: concept of wicked is paired with iniquity or lawbreaking.

Ezekiel 18: pairs concept of wicked with iniquity, unrighteousness and abominations.

Deuteronomy 28:54: (under the section on curses) associate hatred in the heart with evil in the eye, or a simpler way of putting it, "unforgiveness" is wicked.

"Wicked" in Greek

G4190

Πονηρός ponēros

From a derivative of G4192; *hurtful*, that is, *evil* (properly in effect or influence, and thus differing from G2556, which refers rather to *essential* character, as well as from G4550, which indicates *degeneracy from original virtue*); figuratively *calamitous*; also (passively) *ill*, that is, *diseased*; but especially (morally) *culpable*, that is, *derelict*, *vicious*, *facinorous*; neuter (singular) *mischief*, *malice*, or (plural) *guilt*; masculine (singular) the *devil*, or (plural) *sinners*: - bad, evil, grievous, harm, lewd, malicious, wicked (-ness). See also G4191.

G4192

Πόνος *ponos*

From the base of G3993; *toil*, that is, (by implication) *anguish*: - pain.

G4550

Σαπρός *sapros*

From G4595; *rotten*, that is, *worthless* (literally or morally): - bad, *corrupt*. Compt. G4190.

Defining Scriptures (New Testament)

Matthew 12:45: wicked is paired with concept of those with evil spirits.

Matthew 13:19: wicked is deception sown in the heart.

Matthew 13:38: wicked associated with the tares among the wheat.

Matthew 16:4: wicked are adulterous (breaking 7th Commandment).

Matthew 18:32: wicked associated with those who are unforgiving (including debts owed).

Matthew 25:26: wicked associated with the slothful and lazy.

Acts 2:23: wicked associated with murderers (breaking 6th Commandment).

2 Thessalonians 3:2: wicked are “unreasonable” and “have no faith.”

2 Peter 2:7: wicked is paired with concept of those who “vex with filthy conversation”, giving example of Lot at Sodom who was delivered out of the city before God destroyed it (The men of Sodom with their children had defiled hearts and minds (Genesis 18-19) who wanted to rape angels who appeared male and strangers to the city).

2 Peter 3:17: wicked are those in error, who are not steadfast in knowledge. Also see Hosea 4:6. The same chapter in Hosea associates the wicked with whores, those who are idolaters, adulterers and who sacrifice in groves.

1 John 3:12: wicked is associated with Cain (Genesis 4), who murdered his brother over an unfavored offering to God. This chapter also frames the wicked around those who transgress God’s Law, who are deceived, and those who sin, and those who are of the Devil.

So how does this wickedness manifest in the world? They often have the following characteristics:

- Arrogance and Pride
- High minded and boastful

- Hating God and No Fear of Him
- Disobedient to God and to parents
- Rejects God's name, or makes it irrelevant; even His Son's name.
- Encourages no accountability for actions
- Corrupt Hearts
- Violent
- Self-willed & Selfish
- Reprobate
- Greedy
- Lazy
- Liars

Also describing the wicked characteristics:

Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Revelation 22:15: Regarding those who do not do God's Commandments; "For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Ephesians 2:1-3 "And you *hath he quickened*, who were **dead in trespasses and sins**; Wherein in time past ye walked according to **the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience**: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the **children of wrath**, even as others."

Colossians 3:5-8: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the **wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience**: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."

1 Peter 4:15-18: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, **what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel**

of God (This is the 10 Commandments, FYI)? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Additional Commentary

The wicked also match the Bible's definition of sin (**1 John 3:4**), which have to do with those who break God's Commandments. And because of Satan and sin, the Bible also tells us the "whole world is deceived", except for the very elect (**Revelation 12:9/ Matthew 24:24**) and all the churches will be apostate in the later days and full of strong delusions (**2 Thessalonians 2:3-12**). All the bad qualities and characteristics of a wicked and fallen people mentioned in Romans chapter 1 are the result of "covenant breakers" and people who hold the "truth in unrighteousness" --this includes many in the Christian churches! You know, all the "nice people!" Who do you think God has more mercy and love towards; and who does God have more anger and wrath stored up for? Is it those who claim to love Him yet do nothing that he says for them to do; or, those who have turned away many from him because of those same people who claim to love him, yet by their actions repulsed them with their hypocrisy?

Paul says, "Be not high minded, but fear" (**Romans 11:20**).

In Revelation, it is clear that God gives his churches warning that it is better to be "Hot" and on fire for God or to be "Cold", but the lukewarm will he spit out of his mouth (**Revelation 3:15-16**). The Hot people are those who Keep God's Commandments and teach others to do so, even if they are persecuted for doing so. The Cold are those in ignorance. The Lukewarm are those who hold "the truth in unrighteousness", and are perhaps slothful servants, or those who simply didn't love their neighbor as themselves and buried their talents. These people perhaps have a "form of godliness" but deny the power thereof" (**2 Timothy 3:5**).

According to all this evidence from scripture, the "wicked" are those who are part of Satan's Kingdom, which is of this world, which is carnal, which is "enmity towards God" (**Romans 8:7**). The wicked will be cut off from God's Kingdom, unless they repent and start to walk in God's ways. The wicked are not set apart—they blend in! They are contrary to God's Word and fight against His servant's work. They willingly break God's Law (the 10 Commandments) and teach others to do so (**Matthew 5:19-20**). They preach lies and fables, not truth. They may be filled with unclean spirits. Evidence of their defilement is what comes out of their mouths, because it comes from the heart (**Isaiah 59:13 / Matthew 15:18/Ephesians 6:6**), and their path is the wide road to destruction (**Matthew 7:13-14**). In other words, the wicked represent the majority of people's behaviors, attitudes, traditions, doctrines and understanding. God's way is narrow and his truth is like a consuming fire, and his authority is a Rod of Iron, ready to break to pieces all these pots fitted for destruction! Yet his arms are stretched out still for his people to return to Him so He can have mercy upon them (**Ezekiel 18:23-30 / Deuteronomy 32**)!