

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

HAVING SEEN WHAT THE SCRIPTURES PRINCIPALLY TEACH US CONCERNING GOD, IT
FOLLOWS TO CONSIDER WHAT THEY REQUIRE AS THE DUTY OF MAN

QUESTIONS # 152 & 84.

(Larger Catechism)

Q #152. *What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God?*

A. Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty,¹ goodness,² and holiness of God,³ and against his righteous law,⁴ deserveth his wrath and curse,⁵ both in this life,⁶ and that which is to come;⁷ and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.⁸

(Shorter Catechism)

Q #84. *What doth every sin deserve?*

A. Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.⁹

Question 1—*What does every sin deserve?*

Answer—Although some sins are greater than others, yet there is somewhat in every sin that deserves damnation, Deut. 27:26. This is affirmed by the apostle Paul in his affirmation that every breach and all transgressions of the law, whether great or small, are liable to the God's curse, Gal. 3:10. Indeed, he warns that even the least of these breaches procures the wrath of God upon those who disobey, Eph. 5:6. This appears:

First, God's wrath against the sinner is no passion but the expression of a determined opposition to the rebellion of the creature, Ps. 5:4, 5. Sin makes the soul loathsome and hateful in God's sight and kindles in God a holy fire against the sinner, Ps. 90:11. Thus, it comes to pass that God deals with sinners as with his enemies, against whom he is enraged, Nah. 1:2. His wrath is such that it seeks to be eased of those who provoke it, Isa. 1:24.

Second, God's curse is his separating those under it unto evil, Deut. 29:21. It is a devoting of the sinner to all destruction, to all the horrible effects of the divine wrath, Josh. 6:17.

That every sin deserves this wrath and curse appears: 1.) Because the wages of every sin is death, Rom. 6:23. This death is eternal death as is clear from its opposition to eternal life, Rom. 5:12. The grave of all is made in sin, Job 24:19. 2.) Every sin, even the least, is a breach of the law, and he who breaks it in one point, is guilty of breach of the whole, Jas. 2:10. 3.) It was required that Christ die for all, not merely some, of the sins of the elect, 1 John 1:7. Since he suffered God's wrath and curse for them all, they certainly

¹ Jas. 2:10, 11.

² Ex. 20:1, 2.

³ Hab. 1:13; Lev. 10:3; 11:44, 45.

⁴ 1 John 3:4; Rom. 7:12.

⁵ Eph. 5:6; Gal. 3:10.

⁶ Lam. 3:39; Deut. 28:15-68.

⁷ Matt. 25:41.

⁸ Heb. 9:22; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

⁹ Eph. 5:6; Gal. 3:10; Lam. 3:39; Matt. 25:41.

deserve it, 1 Pet. 3:18. 4.) The very least sin will condemn a man, if it is not forgiven, Matt. 5:19. It should be remembered that even our idle words stand in that condemnation, Matt. 12:36, 37. All sins and iniquities must be forgiven graciously, for God might in strict justice not forgive them, Ps. 103:3, 4.

Question 2—*Why does every sin deserve so much wrath and cursing?*

Answer—There is, in the very least sin, a manifold wrong done to God:

First, there is a wronging of his infinite majesty and sovereignty over the creature, Jas. 2:10, 11. Because God is the sovereign ruler of all his creatures, his will must be the law of the creature, since by his will they were created, Rev. 4:11. However, every sin casts off the natural yoke of his sovereign authority, and it sets the will of the sinner contrary to it, whereby it is rightly accounted a fighting against God, Acts 5:39.

Second, it is a wronging of his infinite goodness, especially against his covenant mercies toward his own people, Ex. 20:1, 2. All the good natural, moral, or spiritual, which the creature has, he has only from God who is the fountain of all goodness, Ps. 33:5; 2 Thess. 1:11.

Third, it is a wronging of his holiness, Hab. 1:13. His holiness is the grand motive and reason which lies behind all commands to conform ourselves unto his law and rule, Lev. 11:44, 45. His holiness is also that which demands the complete obedience of those who come before him, Lev. 10:3.

Fourth, it is a breaking of his law, which is the eternal rule of righteousness for all his creatures, 1 John 3:4. His law is all right, and of perpetual equity, and it forms that boundary which God has set about all his rational creatures, whereas sin breaks down this hedge and overruns it, Rom. 7:12. The sinner is, by his breaking of that law, made a rebel against the law of his great King, and sets himself in defiance of the Almighty, 1 Sam. 15:23.

Question 3—*Wherein do sinners deserve to suffer both the wrath and curse of God?*

Answer—The breach of the law deserves the wrath and curse of God:

First, in this life, wherein men are cursed: 1.) In both bodily and personal possessions, Deut. 28:15-19. 2.) In their daily activities, Deut. 28:20. 3.) By means of pestilence and plagues, Deut. 28:21, 22. 4.) By means of drought, Deut. 28:23, 24. 5.) By means of war, Deut. 28:25, 26. 6.) By means of disease of both body and mind, Deut. 28:27-29, 35. 7.) By dispossession and conquest by foreign powers, Deut. 28:30-34. 8.) By casting into servitude of body and soul, Deut. 28:36, 37. 9.) By economic scarcity and captivity, Deut. 28:38-44.

Additionally, these curses will be running and overtaking curses, Deut. 28:45-52. They shall bring great affliction upon the family, Deut. 28:53-57. They shall overspread such a people with sore sickness and disease, Deut. 28:58-61. They shall finally terminate in the dispersal and enslavement of those so cursed, Deut. 28:62-68. All of which fall upon men for their sins, Lam. 3:39.

Second, in the life to come, Matt. 25:41. This punishment, due to the infinite sinfulness of all sin, is of everlasting duration, 2 Thess. 1:9.

Question 4—*Is there any way to escape the deserved wrath and curse of sin?*

Answer—Justice reigns, through man's merits, in hell, 2 Cor. 5:10; but grace, through the merits of Christ, reigns in heaven, 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. According to the law, it is only through the shedding of blood that there can be remission of sin, Heb. 9:22. Thus, Christ has freed those who believe on him from the desert of their sins, John 3:18; Rom. 4:25.