

## Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 362 – What Mean Ye Through Turn And Live (Ezekiel 18:1-32)

1. What proverb was spoken in Israel that the Lord was going to cause to cease?

*“(1) The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying, (2) What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? (3) As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel” (Ezekiel 18:1-3).*

- “What mean ye...” See: **Jeremiah 31:27-34**
- They could rightly say their fathers shared blame in their punishment at this time (**Jeremiah 15:1-4**; cf. **II Kings 21:11-13**).
- HOWEVER, their fathers did not have the only blame (**Daniel 9:16**). The greater blame rested up the shoulders of themselves (**Jeremiah 16:9-13** and **Ezekiel 16:45-47**).
- God was going to be sure to have them learn their punishment was THEIR fault (**Ezekiel 36:31-32**).

2. What was/is the result of sin?

*Death: “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4).*

- God’s authority over the souls of men (**Numbers 27:16** and **Hebrews 12:9**).
- Then, literal physical death was often the punishment for sin (i.e. **Exodus 35:2**, **Leviticus 20:9-16**; **27**, **Leviticus 24:16-21**, etc.).
- In the case of Judah, many were going to die for their transgressions (**Lamentations 1:20**).
- Now, spiritual death (**Romans 6:23**, **James 1:13-16**, and **Revelation 21:8**).

3. Did the sins of a father or of a child transfer to one or the other?

*No: “(5) But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, (6) And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, (7) And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; (8) He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, (9) Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. (10) If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things, (11) And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife, (12) Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination, (13) Hath given forth upon usury, and*

*hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. (14) Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like, (15) That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, (16) Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment, (17) That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. (18) As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity. (19) Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. (20) The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezekiel 18:5-20).*

- A man that did that which was lawful and right even if he had [in his past, now repented of] done evil (**Ezekiel 33:19**).
- Eaten upon the mountains was a likely reference to idolatry of some sort (**Ezekiel 18:15; 20:28**; cf. **Isaiah 65:7**).
- Not defiling one's neighbors wife (**Exodus 20:17, Leviticus 20:10, and Deuteronomy 5:21**). They were guilty of this (**Jeremiah 5:8**).
- Not coming near a menstruous woman for the uncleanness of blood (**Leviticus 15:19-32**).
- Not an oppressor (**Leviticus 25:14**).
- Hath surrendered the pledge [security for debt] when its owner came for it (**Exodus 22:6**).
- Cared for the poor (**Deuteronomy 15:7**).
- Fair (**Proverbs 28:8**).
- Dealing truly in accordance with the Lord's will (**Proverbs 12:22**).
- When a righteous man hath a child that does wrong, that child is accountable for his doings (**Proverbs 20:11**). This had always been the case (**Deuteronomy 21:18-21**).
- On the other hand, if a child see's his father's errors he does not answer for them. He can even learn from them (**Ezekiel 20:18**).
- The conclusion, each person is individually accountable for his own transgressions (**Deuteronomy 24:16**).

4. Did the Lord make it possible for the wicked to become righteous?

Yes: “(21) *But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (22) All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not*

*be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. (23) Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live” (Ezekiel 18:21-23)?*

- The Lord grants sinners the opportunity of repentance (**Isaiah 1:10-20, Matthew 3:8, Matthew 18:15-35, Luke 15:1-32, Acts 3:19, Acts 26:18-20, I Timothy 1:13-16, and James 4:6-10**).
- True repentance (**Ezekiel 14:6 and Ezekiel 33:11-16; 19**) grants forgiveness (**Proverbs 28:13 and Isaiah 55:6-7**).
- He does NOT wish any to perish (**II Peter 3:9 and I Timothy 2:3-6**).

5. Did the Lord have an unfair law favoring the righteous if they erred?

No: *“(24) But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. (25) Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? (26) When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. (27) Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. (28) Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (29) Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal” (Ezekiel 18:24-29)?*

- A certain period of righteous living does not grant you some kind of free pass on sin at any point (**Proverbs 21:16, Ezekiel 33:12-13, Hebrews 10:26-31, and II Peter 2:20-22**).
- The Lord is NOT a respecter of persons (**Deuteronomy 10:17, Acts 10:34-35, Romans 2:11, and I Peter 1:17**).
- He does give the fallen a chance of repentance (**Revelation 2:1-3:22**).

6. Since the Lord did not want His people to perish, did He permit some sins that He would not require them to turn away from?

No, He required they repent of all their sins: *“(30) Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. (31) Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (32) For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye” (Ezekiel 18:30-32).*

- **II Chronicles 7:14, Psalms 34:14; 37:27, II Corinthians 7:1, Ephesians 5:1-11, and II Timothy 2:19**