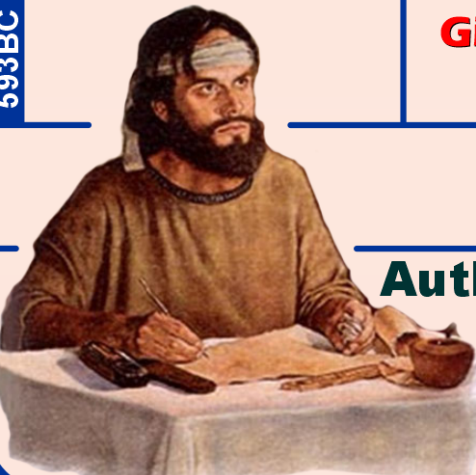


FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM

EZEKIEL

18

BOOK OF EZEKIEL — OUTLINE

INWARD → Personal		OUTWARD ↻ Peoples		ONWARD → Prophetic											
1 — 3		4 — 24		25 — 32		33 — 48									
Ezekiel's Call to Ministry - Ezekiel Birth (623BC) and Ministry Years (593-571BC) 597BC is the 2nd Deportation; Ezekiel taken at age 25 593BC Ezekiel begins Ministry at age 30		Sinfulness of Israel and Fall of Jerusalem - A Disobedient Nation (4-7) - A Departed Glory (8-11) - A Disciplined Nation (12-24) - The Futility of False Optimism (12-19) - The History of Judah's Corruption (20-24)		Judgment on Nations that Opposed Israel - Ammon (25:1-7) - Moab (25:8-11) - Edom (25:12-14) - Philistia (25:15-17) - Tyre (26:1—28:19) - Babylonia (26) - Sidon (28:20-24) - Egypt (29-32)		Restoration of Israel in the Future - Return of Israel to the land (33-39) - Restoration of Israel in the Kingdom (40-48) - Promised Land; Millennial Temple, and the Glory of God									
593BC		Given BEFORE the siege of Jerusalem		587BC		Given DURING the siege of Jerusalem		586BC		Given AFTER the siege of Jerusalem		571BC			
								The City Destroyed 7 Years Prophesying JUDGMENT				The City Restored 15 Years Prophesying HOPE			
Author: Ezekiel (“God strengthens”) Place: Babylonia Time: About 22 years (593-571BC)															
Events: 605BC — FIRST Siege upon Israel by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel taken) Ezekiel 17 years old															
597BC — SECOND assault upon Jerusalem (Ezekiel taken) Ezekiel 25 years old															
593BC — Ezekiel at age 30 called by God to testify against Israel Ezekiel 30 years old															
586BC — THIRD assault upon Jerusalem (City & Temple destroyed) Ezekiel 37 years old															

IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

Ezekiel 18:1-32

INTRODUCTION — EZEKIEL 18

- **Ezekiel had delivered three parables to convict the nation of her sin (chaps. 15-17).**
- **He then returned to the bluntness of a direct message to drive home the fact of Israel's guilt.**
- **The message in Ek.18:1-32 is similar to that in Ek.12:21-28, for they both answered the people's proverbs that denied their coming judgment.**



INTRODUCTION — EZEKIEL 18

- **The Lord told Ezekiel to ask the people what they meant when they used a proverb that implied that the present generation of Israelites was suffering because of the sins of their forefathers (Je.31:29).**

**“The fathers eat the sour grapes, But
the children's teeth are set on edge”**

- **They were claiming to be the innocent victims of the actions of others.**
- **In this they sounded just like many in our own day who refuse to take personal responsibility for their actions.**



INTRODUCTION — EZEKIEL 18

- **To the extent that the charge concerns God at all, it accuses him of disinterest or impotence in the face of the exiles' current crisis.**
- **All these years they have put their trust in their divine patron, only to discover that they are victims of an immutable law of the universe.**
- **The fate of one generation is inexorably determined by the actions of the previous.**
- **Their theology and their God have betrayed them.**



INTRODUCTION — EZEKIEL 18

- **Ezekiel himself had said that the sufferings of the Exile were traceable to the persistent rebellion, idolatry, and unfaithfulness of former generations of Israelites (Ek.16).**
- **Now Ezekiel's hearers concluded that God was being unfair in punishing them for their ancestors' sins.**
- **It is true that the sins of parents result in consequences for their children.**
- **But it is not correct to say that God “punishes” children because their parents have sinned.**



INTRODUCTION — EZEKIEL 18

- **CONSEQUENCES are not the same as GUILT (direct punishment)**
- **Some of what Ezekiel's hearers were experiencing were the consequences of the sins of former generations.**
- **But God was judging them personally because they were personally responsible for their actions that were sinful (Ek.3:16-21; 14:12-20; 33:1-20).**
- **God had revealed this principle of individual responsibility long ago (Ge.2:17; 4:7; Du.24:16; 2Ki.14:6).**



INTRODUCTION — EZEKIEL 18

- **God does not take out His wrath on a child because of his parents' sins.**
- **Yet the child's will to follow God, enabled by His grace and Spirit, can overcome “hereditary sin.”**



IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

Ezekiel 18:1-32

**The word of the LORD
came to me again,
saying,**

EZEKIEL 18:1



The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, (Ek.18:1)

- **Ezekiel is given a new message from God concerning personal responsibility.**
- **One of the foundational principles of Scripture is presented in this chapter.**
- **God had foretold national punishment, but the basis for it was individual sin (Ek.3:16-21; 14:12-20; 33:1-20).**



**"What do you mean when you use
this proverb concerning the land
of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have
eaten sour grapes, And the
children's teeth are set on edge'?"**



EZEKIEL 18:2



"What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge'? (Ek.18:2)

- God asked Ezekiel about a proverb being circulated.**
- This proverb — "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge."**
- This must have been well known in Israel because Jeremiah also quoted it (Je.31:29-30).**
- This means in effect, "They sinned (ate sour grapes); we inherit the bitterness" (teeth set on edge).**



"What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge'? (Ek.18:2)

- The proverb's point was that children were suffering because of their parents' sins.**
- Jerusalem was suffering, but as stated in the proverb the people thought they were suffering not because of THEIR sins but because of their PARENTS' sins.**
- So these people were blaming God for punishing them unjustly (Ek.18:25).**



**"As I live," says the Lord GOD,
"you shall no longer use this
proverb in Israel.**

EZEKIEL 18:3



"As I live," says the Lord GOD, "you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. (Ek.18:3)

- **God saw that this false proverb had to be refuted. Yet, as with all false doctrines, a kernel of truth in the teaching made it seem plausible.**
- **In the Ten Commandments God indicated that He was "a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me" (Ex.20:5; Ex.34:6-7; Du.5:9).**
- **The point was that the effects of sin are serious and long-lasting, not that God capriciously punishes the innocent for their ancestors' evil ways.**



"As I live," says the Lord GOD, "you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. (Ek.18:3)

- The Lord instructed the people not to use this proverb in Israel any more.**
- It implied something about God's dealings with them that was not true.**
- Human beings are free to make their own decisions, and we are responsible for the consequences of those decisions.**
- The sovereignty of God and Human responsibility are both true even though we might not comprehend their reality.**



**"Behold, all souls are Mine; The
soul of the father As well as the
soul of the son is Mine; The soul
who sins shall die.**

EZEKIEL 18:4



"Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die. (Ek.18:4)

- **Blaming others for their misfortunes, the people were denying their own guilt.**
- **This was wrong because every individual is personally responsible to God.**
- **Those who are guilty will receive their own deserved punishment.**
- **The people of Israel could not rightly charge God with injustice.**
- **"Souls" (Heb. *nephesh*) means "lives" (Ek.13:20), not disembodied spirits.**



HYPOTHETICAL CASE 1

Ezekiel 18:5-9

**But if a man is just And does
what is lawful and right;**

EZEKIEL 18:5



But if a man is just And does what is lawful and right; (Ek.18:5)

- **Ezekiel presented three “cases” to prove the principle of individual responsibility (v.5,10,14).**
- **Each hypothetical situation begins with “if.”**



But if a man is just And does what is lawful and right; (Ek.18:5)

- **The cases are those of:**
 - **A righteous man who does right (Ek.18:5-9)**
 - **A violent son of a righteous father (Ek.18:10-13)**
 - **A righteous son of a violent father (Ek.18:14-18)**
- **In each Ezekiel described the individual's actions and God's response.**



**If he has not eaten on the mountains,
Nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of
the house of Israel, Nor defiled his
neighbor's wife, Nor approached a
woman during her impurity;**

EZEKIEL 18:6



If he has not eaten on the mountains, Nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, Nor defiled his neighbor's wife, Nor approached a woman during her impurity; (Ek.18:6)

- **This is a man who was righteous and who followed God's Law with all his heart (Ek.18:5-9).**
- **He was not guilty of idolatry. The “idols” were the foreign images being worshiped by the people.**
- **He did not eat at the mountain shrines (Ek.8:12; 16:24-25, 31, 39; 18:15; 22:9).**
- **The “mountain shrines” were the high places scattered throughout Israel where idolatry was practiced.**



**If he has not oppressed anyone, But
has restored to the debtor his pledge;
Has robbed no one by violence, But
has given his bread to the hungry
And covered the naked with clothing;**

EZEKIEL 18:7



If he has not oppressed anyone, But has restored to the debtor his pledge; Has robbed no one by violence, But has given his bread to the hungry And covered the naked with clothing; (Ek.18:7)

- In Ezekiel's model here was an Israelite was careful not to oppress his fellow Israelites.**
- He would not keep collateral for a loan which the borrower needed (Ex.22:26; Du.24:6).**
- He would never commit robbery, or forcibly take anything from a fellow Israelite (Ex.20:15).**
- He did the opposite; he gave food and clothing to the needy.**



**If he has not exacted usury Nor
taken any increase, But has
withdrawn his hand from iniquity
And executed true judgment
between man and man;**

EZEKIEL 18:8



If he has not exacted usury Nor taken any increase, But has withdrawn his hand from iniquity And executed true judgment between man and man; (Ek.18:8)

- **If this righteous man loaned something to a fellow Israelite, he did not try to profit on the deal by usury (an exorbitant interest rate).**
- **The Law prohibited any charging of interest on loans made to fellow Israelites (Du.23:19-20).**
- **This man carefully followed the Law. He put God's Law ahead of financial gain.**
- **This righteous person was fair (judging fairly between man and man).**



**If he has walked in My statutes—
And kept My judgments
faithfully— He is just; He shall
surely live!" Says the Lord GOD.**

EZEKIEL 18:9



**If he has walked in My statutes— And kept My judgments faithfully—
He is just; He shall surely live!" Says the Lord GOD. (Ek.18:9)**

- **He faithfully kept the highest standards of conduct demanded by God's laws for His covenant people.**
- **The righteous Israelite would surely live. He would be spared from judgment (Ek.14:12-20) and would not suffer for the sins of others.**
- **The vast majority of Jerusalem's inhabitants were not righteous. Therefore the implication is that they would be punished for their sins.**
- **Clearly one's attitudes and actions toward other people demonstrate his or her attitudes and actions toward God.**



HYPOTHETICAL CASE 2

Ezekiel 18:10-13

**"If he begets a son who is a
robber Or a shedder of blood,
Who does any of these things**

EZEKIEL 18:10



"If he begets a son who is a robber Or a shedder of blood, Who does any of these things (Ek.18:10)

- **Suppose the righteous man has a rebellious (violent) son who commits sins his father had avoided (Ek.18:11-13 with Ek.18:8-9).**



**And does none of those duties,
But has eaten on the mountains
Or defiled his neighbor's wife;**

EZEKIEL 18:11



And does none of those duties, But has eaten on the mountains Or defiled his neighbor's wife; (Ek.18:11)

- **Many of the wrongs previously mentioned are repeated because of the importance of the subject.**
- **Eaten upon the mountains is a reference to the idolatrous feasts that were performed on the various “mountains” (high places).**



**If he has oppressed the poor and
needy, Robbed by violence, Not
restored the pledge, Lifted his
eyes to the idols, Or committed
abomination;**

EZEKIEL 18:12



If he has oppressed the poor and needy, Robbed by violence, Not restored the pledge, Lifted his eyes to the idols, Or committed abomination; (Ek.18:12)

- **Robbed by violence means to use force in taking from another his property.**
- **“Not restored the pledge” refers to the law which required a lender to return a pledge at the end of the day.**



**If he has exacted usury Or taken
increase— Shall he then live? He
shall not live! If he has done any
of these abominations, He shall
surely die; His blood shall be
upon him.**

EZEKIEL 18:13



If he has exacted usury Or taken increase— Shall he then live? He shall not live! If he has done any of these abominations, He shall surely die; His blood shall be upon him. (Ek.18:13)

- **God's verdict on this man was unfavorable. He would be put to death and his blood would be on his own head.**
- **The father's righteousness would not benefit his son (Ek.14:16, 18).**
- **He would die for his own sins. The responsibility for his death would be his own.**
- **This confirmed the fallacy of the people's proverb (Ek.18:2) and the truth of God's principle (Ek.18:4).**



HYPOTHETICAL CASE 3

Ezekiel 18:14-18

**"If, however, he begets a son Who
sees all the sins which his father
has done, And considers but does
not do likewise;**

EZEKIEL 18:14



"If, however, he begets a son Who sees all the sins which his father has done, And considers but does not do likewise; (Ek.18:14)

- Ezekiel's third case continued to follow this hypothetical family.**
- Suppose this wicked son has a son who sees all the sins of his father but does not do such things himself.**
- Instead of following in the sin of his father, this son followed in the righteous path of his grandfather (Ek.18:15-16 with Ek.18:6-9).**



**Who has not eaten on the mountains,
Nor lifted his eyes to the idols of the
house of Israel, Nor defiled his
neighbor's wife;**

EZEKIEL 18:15



**Has not oppressed anyone, Nor
withheld a pledge, Nor robbed by
violence, But has given his bread
to the hungry And covered the
naked with clothing;**

EZEKIEL 18:16



Has not oppressed anyone, Nor withheld a pledge, Nor robbed by violence, But has given his bread to the hungry And covered the naked with clothing; (Ek.18:16)

- **To “oppress” in the sense that is condemned means to take undue advantage of another.**
- **One way in which you withheld a pledge was to retain a pledge beyond the legal hour which was stipulated by the law to be at sundown.**



**Who has withdrawn his hand from the
poor And not received usury or
increase, But has executed My
judgments And walked in My statutes
He shall not die for the iniquity of his
father; He shall surely live!**

EZEKIEL 18:17



**Who has withdrawn his hand from the poor And not received usury or increase,
But has executed My judgments And walked in My statutes He shall not die for
the iniquity of his father; He shall surely live! (Ek.18:17)**

- **God's conclusion is obvious: He will not die for his father's sin; he will surely live.**
- **A righteous son will not be punished for his father's evil deeds.**



**Who has withdrawn his hand from the poor And not received usury or increase,
But has executed My judgments And walked in My statutes He shall not die for
the iniquity of his father; He shall surely live! (Ek.18:17)**

- The Israelites had illustrations of this alternation of good and evil individuals in succeeding generations even in the royal family.**
- King Hezekiah, for example, was good, his son Manasseh was bad, and Manasseh's grandson Josiah was good.**
- God does indeed punish entire groups for the sins that they as groups commit, even when some members of the group may be innocent.**
- Such groups are often nations, cities, or may also be societal groups such as priests or prophets.**



**"As for his father, Because he
cruelly oppressed, Robbed his
brother by violence, And did
what is not good among his
people, Behold, he shall die
for his iniquity.**

EZEKIEL 18:18



"As for his father, Because he cruelly oppressed, Robbed his brother by violence, And did what is not good among his people, Behold, he shall die for his iniquity. (Ek.18:18)

- **But his father will die for his own sin.**
- **The proverb being quoted (Ek.18:2) was incorrect.**
- **When the people were judged, it was not for the sins of someone in a former generation.**



**"Yet you say, 'Why should the son
not bear the guilt of the father?'
Because the son has done what
is lawful and right, and has kept
all My statutes and observed them,
he shall surely live.**

EZEKIEL 18:19



**"Yet you say, 'Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?'
Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept
all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. (Ek.18:19)**

- The Israelites were claiming that a righteous son (themselves) would die for his father's (their ancestors') wickedness. But this was not true.**
- Individuals who practiced righteousness would experience God's covenant promise of blessing on their lives even though their fathers practiced wickedness.**
- By the word “live” Ezekiel meant escaping punishment in this life.**



The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

EZEKIEL 18:20



The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.(Ek.18:20)

- **Ezekiel then repeated his point: The soul who sins is the one who will die (Ek.18:4.20).**
- **It is true that we are sinners not only because we practice sin personally (Ro.3:23; 6:23) but also because we were born with a sinful human nature that we inherited from our parents (Ps.51:5; Ep.2:3; Ga.5:17) and because God imputed the sin of Adam to us (Ro.5:12-21).**
- **People die for their own sins, not for the sins of their fathers or the sins of their sons.**



**"But if a wicked man turns from
all his sins which he has committed,
keeps all My statutes, and does
what is lawful and right, he shall
surely live; he shall not die.**

EZEKIEL 18:21



"But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. (Ek.18:21)

- Escape from judgment was possible. Sinners could avoid judgment if they repented of their sins by turning from them (Pr.28:13) and kept God's statutes.**
- If a wicked person repented of his wickedness and pursued righteous behavior, he would live and not die.**
- For the Jews still in Jerusalem this might mean deliverance from death at the hands of Babylon's invading soldiers.**
- This whole chapter deals with the consequences of good and bad conduct IN THIS LIFE under the Mosaic Covenant.**



**None of the transgressions which
he has committed shall be
remembered against him;
because of the righteousness
which he has done, he shall live.**

EZEKIEL 18:22



None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. (Ek.18:22)

- **Ezekiel was not teaching salvation by works.**
- **First, he was speaking of a temporal deliverance from Babylon's armies rather than eternal deliverance from the second death (Ek.18:13).**
- **Second, he clearly indicated that these righteous works would spring only from a "new heart and a new spirit" (Ek.18:31).**
- **Good works result from a changed life; they do not bring about such a change.**



None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. (Ek.18:22)

- **The stipulations of the Mosaic covenant were given to a people who were already in a trusting relationship with God.**
- **But if they failed to live according to God's ways as revealed in the law, the Mosaic covenant declared that even those who had believed would die physically (Du.28:58-66; 30:15-20).**



**Do I have any pleasure at all that
the wicked should die?" says the
Lord GOD, "and not that he should
turn from his ways and live?**

EZEKIEL 18:23



Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live? (Ek.18:23)

- Why would God allow a sinner who repented to avoid judgment?**
- The answer lies in God's character. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ek.18:32). Instead, He is pleased when they turn from their ways, and so they continue to live.**
- God is not a petty despot who holds grudges and longs to inflict punishment on those who wrong Him.**
- As a God of grace He longs for people to forsake their wickedness and turn to His righteous ways.**



"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.

EZEKIEL 18:24



"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die. (Ek.18:24)

- Though God forgives the sins of those who turn to righteousness, He does not excuse the sins of someone who has been walking in righteousness and then turns to wickedness.**
- Will such a person live? None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered.**
- God was not saying that a saved Israelite would lose his salvation if he fell into sin.**



"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die. (Ek.18:24)

- Both the blessing and the judgment in view here are temporal, not eternal.**
- The judgment was physical death (Ek.18:4, 20, 26), not eternal damnation.**
- An Israelite who had followed God's Law but who later turned to idolatry or immorality could not expect his past righteousness to negate his present sins.**



"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die. (Ek.18:24)

- **God does not balance an individual's good deeds against his bad deeds to determine his fate.**
- **An individual's relationship with God when the judgment arrives determines whether he will live or die.**



**"Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord
is not fair.' Hear now, O house of
Israel, is it not My way which is fair,
and your ways which are not fair?"**

EZEKIEL 18:25



"Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair? (Ek.18:25)

- Israel had charged God with unrighteousness, but God now turned the tables.**
- In spite of God's righteous dealings with people on the basis of their conduct, the Israelites were accusing Him of not doing right.**
- The Lord asked if it was their ways rather than His that were not right.**



**When a righteous man turns
away from his righteousness,
commits iniquity, and dies in
it, it is because of the iniquity
which he has done that he dies.**

EZEKIEL 18:26



When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies. (Ek.18:26)

- **Ezekiel reminded Israel of the responsibility for sin borne by each member of the nation.**
- **The Lord repeated for clarification that turning to sin results in death but turning from sin (obeying God's covenant stipulations) results in life (Ek.18:21-22, 24; Ro.6:23).**



**Again, when a wicked man turns
away from the wickedness which
he committed, and does what is
lawful and right, he preserves
himself alive.**

EZEKIEL 18:27



Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. (Ek.18:27)

- **God means that a final turning is in view rather than a superficial or temporary turning.**



**Because he considers and turns
away from all the transgressions
which he committed, he shall
surely live; he shall not die.**

EZEKIEL 18:28



Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. (Ek.18:28)

- **If a person abandons God to pursue a life without God (i.e., apostasy), or vice versa, the result will be death or life respectively.**
- **The reference is not to a temporary lapse, but to a persistent choice of evil which changes the course of a man's life.**



**Yet the house of Israel says,
'The way of the Lord is not fair.'
O house of Israel, is it not My
ways which are fair, and your
ways which are not fair?**



EZEKIEL 18:29



Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair? (Ek.18:29)

- **Nevertheless the Israelites were claiming that God's ways were not right.**
- **It was really their ways that were not right (Ek.18:25).**



"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin.

EZEKIEL 18:30



"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. (Ek.18:30)

- **I will judge you, each one according to his ways.**
- **If Israel fell, it would be for the sins of her own generation.**
- **The nation needed to repent if she hoped to escape. Israel needed spiritual renewal.**
- **God promised to judge each Israelite according to his or her own conduct.**



Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel?

EZEKIEL 18:31



Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? (Ek.18:31)

- **The people needed to get rid of their offenses and get a new heart and a new spirit (Ek.11:19; 36:26).**
- **It was unnecessary that they die prematurely for their sins when they could turn from them and continue to live (Ro.13:14).**



For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!"

EZEKIEL 18:32



For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!" (Ek.18:32)

- **The life or death of the people depended on their individual responses to God.**
- **Those who continued to rebel would die; those who repented and turned from sin would live.**
- **Repentance was possible for the generation of Jews to whom Ezekiel ministered in Babylon.**



For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!" (Ek.18:32)

- God still deals with people in the same righteous manner under the New Covenant as He did under the Old.**
- For Christians, who live under the New Covenant, premature death may be God's judgment for sin (Ac.5:1-11; 1Co.11:30; 1Jn.5:16).**
- Under the New Covenant what we do in this life also has eternal consequences, not that we will lose our salvation, but we will suffer the loss of some eternal rewards (Ro.14:10-12; 1Co.3:8-15; 2Co.5:10).**



For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!" (Ek.18:32)

- **The Lord normally gave Old Testament saints the hope that their reward would come before they died (but see Da.12:2-3, 13), but He has given Christians the hope that our reward will come mainly after we die.**



FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM

EZEKIEL

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