

# The Soul Who Sins Shall Die

Ezekiel 18

## I. Background

- a. Ezekiel – prophet of God; one of many captives taken to Babylon; contemporary with Jeremiah
- b. Israel’s proverb: “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”
  - i. God displeased with this proverb
  - ii. They were blaming their own suffering upon the sins of the fathers even though they were just as bad or worse than their fathers
  - iii. They were impugning the justice of God
  - iv. The truth: God judges every man upon his individual and personal conduct

## II. All souls are the Lord’s. v.4

- a. God created man upright. Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 7:29
- b. God made man such that he would seek the Lord. Acts 17:26-27
- c. Children are innocent, without sin. Inherit neither sin nor righteousness. v.20
  1. Deuteronomy 1:39; Isaiah 7:14-15
  2. Thus, the idea that children are born sinners is wrong. Calvin’s “total hereditary depravity” is wrong.
  3. The idea that children are right with God based on a parent’s faith is wrong.
    - i. 1 Corinthians 7:12-14 – in gospel dispensation, marriage with an unbeliever is not unclean nor are the children unclean; in Jewish dispensation, men who had married foreign wives were told to put away both wife and children in Ezra 10:3
- d. Man goes astray – sins – in his youth
  1. Jeremiah 32:30; Job 36:14
  2. Romans 3:23

## III. The soul who sins will die. v.4

- a. Genesis 2:17
- b. Sin brings spiritual death = separation from God
- c. Romans 6:21-23
  1. Fruit = wages
- d. God is no respecter of persons
  1. God has no pleasure in the wicked dying. v.23
  2. Acts 10:34-35
  3. God’s way is fair; man’s is not. v.25

## IV. The righteous man shall live. v.19

- a. Spiritual life
- b. His character/deeds – vss. 5-9
  1. See that there are sins of commission and sins of omission.
    - ii. I John 3:4
    - iii. James 4:17
    - iv. Romans 14:23
- c. The grandson in v.14 – the child of a wicked father who sees and considers.
  - v. Our children hear & see! What kind of example are we setting?
- d. Cannot pass character to children by inheritance or gene

- vi. Character molded through teaching truth and morality, exhibiting it, taking it to heart; but still free will

V. The wicked shall die for his own iniquity. v.26

- a. Spiritual death
- b. His character/deeds – verses 10-13
- c. Sin or its guilt not inherited – Calvin’s “total hereditary depravity” is wrong

VI. Personal responsibility and individual accountability. v.4, 20

- a. Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10
- b. Sowing & reaping
  - 1. Reap according to sowing. Galatians 6:7-10
  - 2. And reaping in this life: Proverbs 22:8; Job 4:8; Hosea 8:7
- c. Personal responsibility and individual accountability does not suggest absence of duty to others
  - 1. Ezekiel 3:18; James 5:19-20
- d. Sinner cannot blame:
  - 1. God’s willingness. Ezekiel 18:32. 1 Timothy 2:4. 2 Peter 3:9
  - 2. God’s provisions to save him. Romans 5:6-8.
  - 3. Inability to appropriate God’s provisions for him. Matthew 11:28-30. Acts 13:46
  - 4. Parent. Ezekiel 18:14. Luke 14:26
  - 5. Others. Take responsibility for your own actions.
    - vii. 1 Peter 2:18-23
    - viii. Romans 12:18-21
- e. Sin is of one’s own choosing and doing and results in spiritual death. v.14
  - 1. James 1:13-15
  - 2. Any doctrine that denies the free will of man is wrong

VII. Turning from righteousness to iniquity. v.24, 26

- a. 2 Peter 2:20-22
- b. Brings guilt and death
- c. Christian who sins must repent and confess his sin to God, asking for forgiveness – Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:5-10
  - 1. “Perseverance of the saints” (tenet of Calvinism) is wrong
  - 2. Continual cleansing is wrong

VIII. Turning from iniquity to righteousness. v.27-28

- a. Considers, turns away, does what is right
- b. Brings forgiveness and life
- c. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

IX. Conclusion

- a. “Why should you die?”
- b. Choose the way of life not death
- c. Cannot have both ways