

EZEKIEL TEACHES GOD'S IMPARTIALITY

IN DEALING WITH MAN'S SINS

Israel was making the accusation against God that His way was not equal. In Ezekiel 18:25 God said (by Ezekiel) to Israel: *"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?"* In chapters 18 and 33 of Ezekiel, God shows that His way in dealing with man's sins is equal -- that He deals with all alike; He is impartial. Let us look at God's impartial way of dealing with sin.

In Ezekiel 18:4 God tells us that *"...the soul that sinneth, it shall die."* -- one soul will not have to die for the sins of another. In verse 20 He says: *"The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son:"*. So, we learn that sin is an individual matter -- every man is responsible for the sin (or sins) that he commits. We also learn that each individual who sins "shall die" (be separated from God), Isaiah 59: 1 -2). There is no exception because the way of the Lord is equal (Ezek. 18:25). God said to Adam: *"For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* (Gen. 2:17). Friend, when you and I sin today we die (Rom. 6:23); we are separated from God!

God shows that His way is equal in dealing with sin in that He holds the righteous man who sins accountable for his sins. Listen to what God says through Ezekiel: *"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 had trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."* (Ezek. 18:24). In Ezekiel 33:12 He says: *"The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression:"*. So, we learn that when a righteous man sins he dies (is separated from God -- Isa. 59: 1,2). We also learn that his righteousness that he has done in the past *"shall not be mentioned"* (Ezek. 18:24). In other words, God will not hold him guiltless for his present sin just because he has been righteous in the past. God said He would deal with the righteous man's sins without regard to his past righteousness. One of the weaknesses of man is to overlook the sins of a righteous man upon the basis of his past record. Man is prone to say, "Look at the good he has done in the past; surely he will not be condemned for some "little thing" he has done now!" But, REMEMBER -- GOD'S WAY IS NOT UNEQUAL (Ezek. 18:25); neither are His ways like man's ways (Isa. 55: 8, 9; Psa. 50: 21)!!

God shows His way is equal in dealing with sin in that when the wicked man turns from his sins and does that which is lawful and right, he shall live, and his past sins will not be mentioned unto him. Listen to what God says through Ezekiel: *"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. All of his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live."* (Ezek. 18: 21 -22).

God shows His equality in dealing with sin because He has not pleasure when men sin and die (are separated from Him). He wants man, when he sins, to repent, do His will, and live (Ezek. 18:23, 30, 31). The sinner must repent and turn from his sins. This is something man must do for himself; God cannot repent for man! God wills that men repent of their sins (Ezek. 18:30), do that which is lawful and right, and live (Ezek. 18:21). Man must meet God's conditions in order to have life again after he dies in his sins (Ezek. 18: 21, 30).

Brethren, what we all need to learn is that God's attitude toward sin has not changed. It is the same in this, the gospel dispensation! God is no respecter of persons today (Rom. 2:11). When a man does righteousness, he is righteous -- he lives and is accepted with God (Acts 10: 34 - 35; Psa. 119: 172; I John 3: 7). When a righteous man sins, he dies (Rom. 6:23); he must repent of his sin (or sins), confess his sin, and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22; I John 1:9) that he might live (I John 1:7 - 2: 1, 2). God takes no pleasure in our death when we sin! That is the reason He has given us His Son to be our advocate and propitiation (I John 2: 1 -2). When we as children of God sin, we must repent of our sins; confess our sins to God in prayer through our advocate, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness in the blood of Jesus Christ (I John 1: 7 - 9). God wants ALL to come to repentance (II Pet. 3:9).

What righteous men (Christians) must learn is that "*When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, he shall die thereby.*" (Ezek. 33:18; James 2:10); and "*all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.*" (Ezek. 18:24). In other words, when a Christian is generally doing his best to walk in the commandments of God, and on occasion he commits sin through weakness or ignorance, he cannot rely upon his past faithfulness to cover his sin! Righteous men must correct their sins in the way God has prescribed. GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS (Rom. 2:11); and HIS WAY IS NOT UNEQUAL IN DEALING WITH SIN! (Ezek. 18:25).

The Calvinist makes God a respecter of persons and unequal in His dealing with men in sin. He (the Calvinist) teaches that God condemns some without a chance, and saves some no matter what they do! Romans 2:11 and Ezekiel 18:25 deals a death blow to Calvinism!

The new "continual cleansing" position that is being taught makes God unequal and a respecter of persons when it comes to dealing with sin. This position teaches that when a righteous man commits sin (in weakness or ignorance), he is "automatically forgiven" (cleansed) by the blood of Christ, without repentance, confession, and prayer, because he is "generally faithful". This makes God a respecter of persons because He demands of the alien sinner that he meet conditions in order to be forgiven, but then when a righteous man sins he is "automatically forgiven" without conditions, because he is "generally faithful". Romans 2:11 and Ezekiel 18:25 deals a death-blow to this new doctrine which teaches a third law of pardon that is not found in the New Testament.

Remember, GOD'S WAY IS NOT UNEQUAL IN DEALING WITH SIN (Ezek. 18:25). HE IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS! (Rom. 2:11).

~ Donald Townsley