

Lessons from Ezekiel: The Consequences of Sin and the Rewards of Righteousness¹

Ezekiel 18–19

The Principle of Personal Accountability Emphasized (Ezekiel 18:1–32)

Two scenarios are proposed to clarify the matter of personal guilt: (1) a just father of an unjust son (vv. 5–13) and (2) an unjust father of a just son (vv. 14–18). The next case involves an unjust person turning to righteousness (vv. 21–22). Finally, a fourth scenario is a righteous man turning to a life of sin (v. 24).

Note: “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 (Ezek. 18:13). Second, he clearly indicated that these righteous works would spring only from a ‘new heart and a new spirit’ (v. 31). Good works result from a changed life; they do not bring about such a change.”²

Note on exacting interest (usury) [v. 8]: “The prohibition of lending money at interest to a fellow Israelite is qualified by Exodus 22:25 and Leviticus 25:35–37, which indicates that it restricts its application to the poor and prevents further impoverishment. But it was allowed for foreigners who were engaged in trade and commerce to enlarge their wealth. According to Deuteronomy 15:1–6, it is also clear that money could be legitimately lent in the normal course of business, subject to forgiveness of all unpaid debt in the sabbatical year” (MacArthur, 51; see also Deuteronomy 23:19–20).

Two Figurative Laments over Judah and Her Last Davidic Kings (Ezekiel 19:1–32)

Chapter 19 concludes a section (12–19) on the futility of false optimism with a lament for Judah and her kings.

- Like _____ (vv. 1–9). “The lioness/mother [v. 2] ... is [Judah]. She was the one who set up her kings but saw them destroyed, and she was the one who would go into captivity.”³
- Like _____ (vv. 10–14). Here Israel is described with a frequently employed metaphor (Isa. 5:1–7; Ezek. 15; 17:5–10; Matt. 21:33–41). “

Applications

1. God is _____ in all his dealings with people.
2. People are always _____ for their actions, though circumstances may influence them.

The Scriptures speak of God’s mercy being extended in the face of ignorance (e.g. 1 Timothy 1:12–14; cf. Luke 23:34; Acts 3:17, 17:30; Hebrews 5:2).

3. The Lord always provides a merciful means of _____ God’s judgment.

Jesus is the ultimate provision and ultimate expression of God’s mercy (Ephesians 2:4–9; Titus 3:4–7)!

¹ Adapted from *Ezekiel: Redemption for God’s People* (2024) by John MacArthur.

² Dyer, C. H. (1985). [Ezekiel](#). In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1261).

³ Dyer, C. H. (1985). [Ezekiel](#). In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1262).