

## **Ezekiel 18v19-32—Repent, And Turn From All Your Wrongdoing, So That Guilt And Punishment Will Not Be Your Ruin—Part 2**

### ***Memory Verse***

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

**Revision:** Last week in verses 1-18 we saw very clearly the individual responsibility for each person to have to decide for themselves: whether or not to love and obey God, or reject God and live for themselves. We can't blame our environment, parents, or any other factor—it's completely our own choice. God gave the example of a son who grew in a very godly household but chose to reject God, and then a second example of a son who grew up in a very wicked and godless home, but decided to reject that lifestyle and instead chose to love God and obey Him.

### **The responsibility of the individual soul (19-32)**

Ezekiel 18:19-32 NKJV

“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. <sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> “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. <sup>22</sup> None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. <sup>23</sup> 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?”

<sup>24</sup> “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.

<sup>25</sup> “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? <sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. <sup>28</sup> Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. <sup>29</sup> 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?”

<sup>30</sup> “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. <sup>31</sup> 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? <sup>32</sup> For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the Lord God. “Therefore turn and live!”

## Even in a collective or honour-shame society, each person is individually accountable (19-20)

### Ezekiel 18:19-20 NKJV

“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. <sup>20</sup> 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.

v 19 **Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?** In the eyes of the Jews, father and son were linked, and therefore, why shouldn't the son bear the guilt of the father? To understand their way of thinking we need to look at the Middle Eastern, honour-shame culture of the Israelites, and how this would affect their way of looking at things.

There are three main or common types of cultures in the world:

1. **Guilt/innocence or western culture**—An individual makes decisions based primarily upon how they affect *himself*.
2. **Honour/shame or collectivistic culture**—This is common in the rest of the world, including Israel and the Church, Asia, and the Middle East. An individual makes decisions based primarily upon how they affect *the group or family*.
3. **Fear based culture**—based on animism, which is common among tribal groups.

Here's an example to help us to understand the difference between our guilt/innocence western culture and the honour/shame culture common to the rest of the world (except some tribal groups). Imagine I was choosing my career path:

- In western culture, if I was looking to choose a career, I would look at what was best for me—what suited my goals, my desires, my preferences, and my abilities; it would all be about what would bring me the most satisfaction. What my family thought would be a distant second priority.
- In an honour-shame culture, my choice of career would be based on what would bring the most honour and benefit to the rest of my family. If my family ran a dry cleaning business, and it was considered honourable in my culture to continue the family business, then I would have a career as a dry cleaner, regardless of if I liked it or not, because to me the most important consequence of my choice is not my own benefit or what I would like to do, but rather how it affects the honour or social status of my family. You see, it's not about me, but rather, how does my decision affect the group. For me to choose *not* to be a dry cleaner would bring shame on my family—they would lose honour, dignity, and status within the community; I would cause other families would look down on my family—“Well your son's not very loyal to you, is he!”

Israel, being a Middle Eastern country, was a honour-shame or collectivistic culture, meaning what one person did had a real effect on the group. So think about their mindset—“our fathers sinned against God and so brought shame on the nation, because of that, now we are suffering.” In other words, some people brought shame on the rest of the group and now we all must suffer—logical honour-shame thinking.

v 19 **Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?**: God now answers one of the people's questions as He tries to help them understand personal or individual responsibility.

"God's question sounds a bit crazy to our modern individualistic ears. It is often hard for us to relate to cultures where there is a much stronger sense of family and community solidarity, where what one does affects the entire clan or community." (David Guzik)

"We have to reflect that, however reasonable it may appear to us, habituated as we are to the sense of personal responsibility [western culture], it [personal responsibility] was a revolutionary idea to present to Ezekiel's contemporaries. They were more at home with the idea of collective righteousness and blame." (Vawter and Hoppe)

"Communal solidarity and corporate responsibility were facts, to which experience bore witness. Ezekiel's aim is to show that they are not the only facts. **God's redeemed community is a nation of righteous or repentant individuals.**" (Taylor)

The last quote from Taylor sums it up well. While it is true that the sin of one person or group or generation did bring shame (a loss of honour) on both the nation and God, that person's relationship with God was still an individual relationship based on personal choice—"God's redeemed community is a nation of righteous or repentant individuals". A good example of how a choice has an effect on both the individual and the group is when David committed adultery with Bathsheba; it affected his relationship with God and also brought shame on God and the nation.

2 Samuel 12:13-14 NKJV

<sup>13</sup> So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

And Nathan said to David, "**The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die [David's individual relationship with God is restored].**" <sup>14</sup> *However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme [the collective or honour-shame consequence that affected both God and the nation], the child also who is born to you shall surely die.*"

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### **Application: The church is based on an honour/shame culture**

We need to understand that, like Israel, the church is an honour-shame collectivistic culture. When we don't, we fail to realise that we are actually hurting the body of Christ when we fail to honour each other.

1 Corinthians 12:24-26 NKJV

But God composed the body, having given greater *honour* to that part which lacks it, <sup>25</sup> that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup> And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is *honoured*, all the members rejoice with it.

This is why the command to esteem others as better than yourselves is so important.

Philippians 2:2-4 NKJV

...fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

When I obey this command to honour others by treating them as being more important than myself, I bring honour to the whole group, which includes me. Therefore, when I honour or lift up someone else, then I am also indirectly bringing honour to myself. However, if I seek to make myself look good at the expense of others, then it brings shame to the others, and the net effect is that the whole group, including me, is shamed.

In addition to each other, we also bring honour or shame to God by the way we treat each other. Consider what Jesus said in:

John 13:34-35 NKJV

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

You see, if the world looks at the church, and sees all kinds of different people who don't usually get along, actually getting along and sacrificially loving and giving place to one another, they will **know** that this is only possible because a work that Jesus is doing in us—Jesus is honoured or glorified.

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**Application: Collective guilt and righteousness—first Adam, second Adam (see Romans 5:12-21)**

In all our discussion about individual responsibility, where what I do affects only me, we need to consider a unique case where this doesn't apply. Adam's sin was passed on to everybody, just as Christ's righteousness is passed on to all who choose to receive it. What Adam and Christ did didn't just affect themselves, it affected the whole human race.

However, this is actually a good thing? Actually, yes. Even though I suffer the consequences of Adam's choice to sin, which resulted in me being born a sinner and therefore separated from God, I also can be blessed and gifted with Christ's perfect righteousness because of what He did for me. You see, if it were left just to me, and I choose to sin, then I would have no hope; I could not save myself, and there would be no one to save me. However, as a part of God's great plan, I have the choice to decide for myself which group or family I choose to belong to—the power of darkness or the kingdom of the Son of His love (see Colossians 1:13). By the Holy Spirit working in my heart, I have the opportunity to be blessed by what someone else (Jesus) did on my behalf—Jesus becomes my substitute instead of Adam.

“The New Testament clearly teaches us that the guilt of Adam was passed on to the entire human race, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ is passed on to all who believe upon Him (Romans 5:12–19). These two men—absolutely unique in all humanity as representative heads of humanity—see their respective wickedness and righteousness **upon** others.” (David Guzik)

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v 19 **Because the son has done what is lawful and right:** This should remind us of the whole point of the first part of the chapter (1-18). With regard to eternal life and eternal reward, God sees people as *individuals* before Him, even though as a church He often blesses us collectively or communally because together we make up the *body of Christ*.

v 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:** Again, when we each stand before God, the righteous or justified will be rewarded, while the ungodly will be condemned—based solely on our personal choice accept or reject God’s free gift of salvation. We will not be justified or condemned on the basis of family or community.

v 20 **The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself:** Yet another way of describing the same thing. God is going to great lengths to help the people to understand this important truth by repetition and restating it in different ways. When it comes to our righteousness or lack of, it is all upon ourselves—it’s our personal responsibility.

## **God desire for the wicked to repent and live (21–23)**

### **Ezekiel 18:21-23 NKJV**

**“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. <sup>22</sup> None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. <sup>23</sup> 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?”**

v 21 **But if a wicked man turns [repents] from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right:** This is a good description of what true repentance looks like; a changed heart will lead to a changed life, as we previously read in James 2:14-26 and Matthew 7:21-27.

v 21-23 **He shall surely live; he shall not die:** Three times God repeats the principle that if the wicked choose to repent, then they **shall live**—forever!

“One can sense Ezekiel’s excitement as he announces the verdict for those who meet these conditions: *He shall surely live! He shall not die!* The past rebellious acts will be discounted, and his present righteousness will be all that matters.” (Block)

A good example that shows that this is not all about works is the repentant thief on the cross. In his heart he turned from sin, and as a result he was welcomed into Paradise by Jesus. If this man had had the opportunity to live on after the cross, we would have seen a changed life, the fruits of righteousness. Instead of stealing, he would have started working and giving to others (see Ephesians 4:28). But even on the cross, we can see a dramatic change in how he talked to and about Jesus.

### **Mark 15:31-32 NKJV—*before the thief’s conversion***

Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.”

**Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.**

### **Luke 23:39-43 NKJV—*after the thief’s conversion***

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

<sup>40</sup> But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” <sup>42</sup> Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

<sup>43</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

In Mark's gospel we see that both thieves were mocking and reviling Jesus. But then one of them has a change of heart. Imagine just how bold he would have had to be to say this in front of all those who were actively mocking Jesus. He also would have become an object of their ridicule. The repentant thief on the cross had the honour of being able to suffer for the sake of Christ (see Colossians 1:24) as he shared the insults directed at Christ.

Truly, the door of repentance and restoration is open to any man, even on their death bed—but remember that true repentance starts with a change of heart towards God—the change on the outside must be the result of a new heart and God's Spirit living inside of us. We'll look more at genuine repentance at the end.

v 22 **None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him:** Here we see full forgiveness, full restoration to relationship with God, and all because of God's grace.

"Leave your own [sin], and you shall never suffer for others' sins." (Poole)

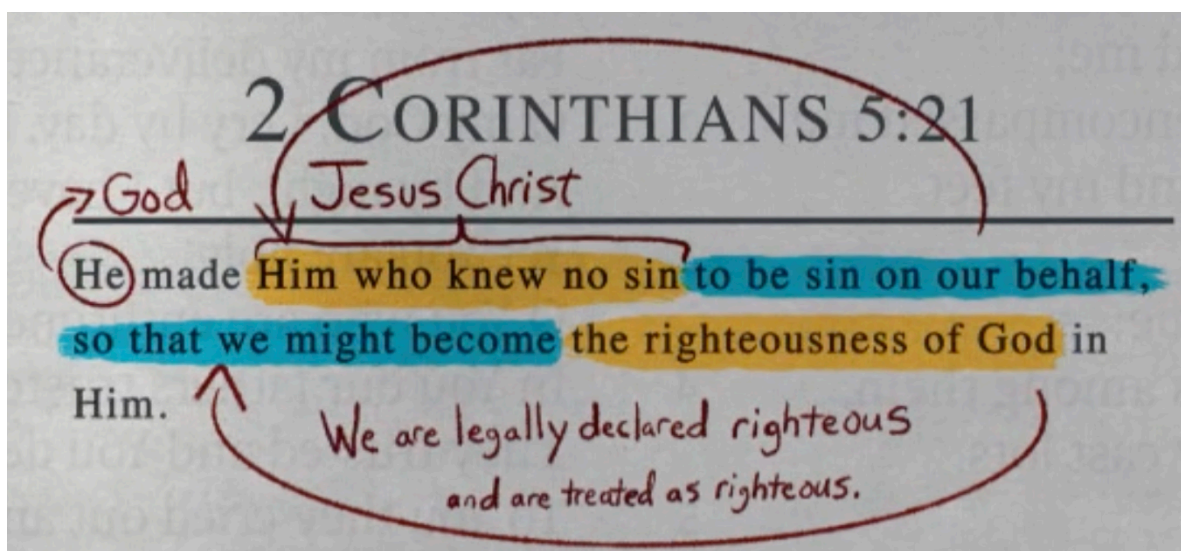
"The lesson from these two examples is obvious and answered their questions: *people determine their own character and destiny by the decisions that they make*. Neither the exiles in Babylon nor the citizens in Jerusalem were the prisoners and victims of some cosmic determinism that forced them to act as they did." (Wiersbe)

v 23 **Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?** This reveals the tender father heart of God towards sinful man. God made man to be in relationship with Himself. It's God's greatest desire that sinful man is reconciled back to Himself through repentance and faith. God wants every man to, by faith, **turn from his ways and live**. In fact, telling others about this reconciliation between God and man is the main purpose of our existence as believers in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 NKJV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. <sup>18</sup> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that **God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.**

<sup>20</sup> Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though **God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.** <sup>21</sup> *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* [see screenshot from *American Gospel: Christ Crucified* below]



God backed up His words with action—He suffered the whole world’s eternal punishment, dying in the place of every person (1 John 2:2, John 3:16). Psalm 103 beautifully summarises who God is and His attitude towards the people He created:

Psalm 103:2-5, 8-14 NKJV

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:

3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,

4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

9 He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever.

10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

13 As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him.

14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

### **Application: If God is such a good and loving Father, then why does God allow sin, pain, and suffering?**

God warned Adam that the consequences of sin would be death, but Adam, as we still do, thought that he knew better than God. It wasn’t God’s desire for sin to enter the world, but, in order for there to be love, there must be free choice to love or hate, to obey or disobey, to accept or reject, to trust or not to trust. The price of a love relationship is vulnerability—the willingness to love and trust someone knowing that you will probably get hurt because of it (If God was willing to make Himself vulnerable to us, then we should be willing to do so with other believers—close relationships don’t come easy—forgiveness is required).

God hates to see people suffer, although because of sin, suffering and death are for now unavoidable. However, God doesn’t just stand back and laugh at us, telling humanity a cosmic “I told you so”. Instead He feels our pain, and suffers along with us, just like a parent is grieved when one of their children is hurt or sick. Merissa tells the story of when a mosquito was buzzing around her when she was breastfeeding one of the girls and she couldn’t move. She said to the Mosquito, “Don’t you dare bite my baby, but you can bite me instead.” Many a parent has said that they would gladly take the place of their sick child who may be dying of cancer. God reveals this same tender heart as His people Israel suffered through their afflictions:

Isaiah 63:9 NKJV

**In all their affliction He was afflicted**, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old.

God is so loving and fatherly, that, just like the parent in a real way suffers more than their sick child dying of cancer, so God suffers more than we do a result of the suffering caused by sin. As the child is abused, as the missionary is executed, as the Egyptians drowned the Israelite babies in the Nile river, God is deeply grieved—more than we will understand or comprehend. Like any good parent, in response to our suffering, He comes alongside us and bears us up and comforts us, even though many of us don’t appreciate or recognise God’s care and concern for us—we are often too busy complaining about our circumstances. In addition, as the ultimate demonstration of love, God willingly chose to suffer the punishment we deserve for the sins that we have committed (see Romans 5:8). God, by His own free will, because of His great love for us, suffered more than anyone—for God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son... (John 3:16).

1 Timothy 2:3-6 NLT paraphrase

This is good and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. <sup>5</sup> For, there is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. <sup>6</sup> He gave His life to purchase freedom for everyone.

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v 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?:** “This is what Ezekiel’s audience needs to deliver them from their bondage of depression and despair—a new vision of God, a God who is on the side of blessing and life, not on the side of the curse and death.” (Block)

“Sinful mankind normally sees judgment as God’s delight. Nothing could be further from God’s desire, else he would not have sent his only Son to be judged on the cross for the sin of the whole world (1 John 2:1–2).” (Alexander)

“It is the Lord’s longing and will and purpose that men should be saved. Such a longing should be shared by every preacher who ventures to speak about the judgment of God.” (Taylor)

“The fact that God does not take **pleasure** in the death of **the wicked** does not mean that it will not happen. God’s general desire for all humanity is that they would repent, turn to Him and be saved; yet He will not spare the requirements of justice and holiness for those who refuse to **turn** to Him.” (David Guzik)

## **God’s promise of judgment to the righteous who turns away (24)**

**Ezekiel 18:24 NKJV**

**“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.**

v 24 **But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, ... All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered:** This is true *in a practical sense* even for the saved. A preacher can be faithful to live a good and honourable life for 20 years, but then have an affair with the secretary and leave his wife. All the good he has done will have been forgotten. All that will be remembered will be his treachery and unfaithfulness towards his wife, his God, and his congregation. He is saved, but he will have lost his reward (see 2 John 8) and reputation.

v 24 **because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die:** Can the believer lose their salvation? I believe not. But here is a scripture that reveals that there are false converts, people who are faking their salvation, whether it be consciously or unconsciously, who will eventually turn away from the truth and follow the desires of their sinful nature.

1 John 2:18-19 NLT paraphrase

Dear children, the last hour is here. You have heard that the Antichrist [the counterfeit Messiah] is coming, and already many such antichrists [counterfeit christians] have appeared. From this we know that the last hour has come. <sup>19</sup> These people left our churches, but they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. **When they left, it proved that they did not belong with us.**



## God declares that His ways are fair and just (25–29)

Ezekiel 18:25-29 NKJV

“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? <sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. <sup>28</sup> Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. <sup>29</sup> 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?

God’s ways are fair—the innocent are set free and the guilty are judged. God again repeats and emphasises the individual responsibility of every person to chose their own eternal destiny—life or death. The choice to repent and choose life is available to all.

## God’s invitation to “turn and live” (30–32)

Ezekiel 18:30-32 NKJV

“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.” <sup>31</sup> 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? <sup>32</sup> For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the Lord God. “Therefore turn and live!”

v 30 **Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways:** Again, remember that the Israelites understood salvation to be national or communal, but God reminds them once again that their relationship with Him is not based on family or communal relationships—it all comes down to the individual’s choice to turn from sin.

The modern equivalent of this is belonging to a particular religious organisation or church; unfortunately, labelling yourself a Christian doesn’t make you a Christian, any more than parking yourself in a garage makes you a car.

Also keep in mind that their external circumstances were not necessarily a reflection of their standing with God. This is another false sense of security, or doubt, that people experience. Just like the Israelites thought that God had abandoned them because of their adverse circumstances, they also would have thought that good circumstances signified that their relationship with God was all good. As Psalm 73 describes, there are times when the wicked will prosper and the righteous will suffer. Consider Ezekiel and Daniel, both righteous men, but both taken into captivity.

v 31 **Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit:** This shows that true repentance is based on a work that God does in the hearts of all men and is much more than an external change of behaviour. For example, a guy can pretend to be a Christian to win a Christian girl, but his heart hasn’t changed—his motivation is external, and temporary. As soon as he gets what he wants his behaviour will change back—the Christian girl has been deceived. It is easy to modify our behaviour for a time to get something we want.

## **Application: Genuine repentance**

In contrast to an externally motivated and temporary change in behaviour, God works on our hearts. The Holy Spirit is convicting men of their sin (see John 16:8), something that God has been doing all along—for example, God confronting Cain (see Genesis 4:1-7) and Nathan confronting David over his sin with Bathsheba (see 2 Samuel 12). Without God drawing us to Himself (see John 6:44), no-one would seek God (see Romans 3:11), and therefore no-one could be saved. However, God gifts each of us with a measure of faith (see Romans 12:3), and it becomes our responsibility to respond to the truth that God reveals to us. The Holy Spirit reveals through the Word of God that:

- I am a sinner who deserves to be punished for my rebellion against God (sin)
- God is perfect and holy and so must punish sin (eternity in hell)
- God proved His love for me when He willingly took my place and absorbed the punishment for my sin that I deserved (see Romans 5:8 and John 3:16).
- To receive forgiveness **I must submit\*** to Christ's lordship over my entire life by being willing to forsake all (see Luke 14:25-33), and giving Him permission to change me into His image (see 2 Corinthians 3:18)—only then will God make His home in me.

***If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. <sup>24</sup> He who does not love Me does not keep My words... (John 14:23-24)***

*\*Genuine repentance is based on my willing submission to God because I am in awe of all that He has done for me and I am beginning to understand just how much God loves me—my obedience is in response to God's demonstrated love for me.*

***\*My submission or repentance is based on a radically new motivation for obeying God—a love for and appreciation of God. This is the mark of genuine repentance, when a person is drawn to God because they begin to understand how much He loves them, and how He so desires for them to be in right relationship with Him.***

*For the love of Christ compels [motivates] us... <sup>15</sup> and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NKJV).*

Here are some verses that show that the new life in Christ is not humanly possible, but is a direct result of God living in us and transforming us to become like Himself.

Galatians 2:20 NLT paraphrase

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Philippians 2:13 NLT paraphrase

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Ephesians 3:20 NLT paraphrase

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Roman 6:6-7 NLT paraphrase

We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. <sup>7</sup> For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.