

“IT’S NOT FAIR”

Text: Ezekiel 18:2

INTRO: Each of us has observed the inequalities of life & has probably at some time cried out, “It’s not fair!” We pay our taxes knowing that other somehow manage to find loop-holes. It’s not fair.

Let us remember that everything we see is from a very temporary viewpoint. “But indeed, o man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to Him who formed it, ‘Why have You made me like this?’” (Rom. 9:20).

A. Things about Christianity that do not seem fair.

1. Faithful Christians meet on the 1st day of the week to worship. Others have the entire day to sleep in, or play, or do whatever they want.
2. Christians lay by in store as they prosper. Others can spend all their money on boats, golfing equipment, new wardrobes, etc.
3. The righteous sometimes suffer while their uncaring neighbors prosper. BUT LOOK DEEPER.
4. The sinless Christ died for our sins. Not fair.
5. John B was beheaded while wicked King Herod lived on in splendor in his adulterous relationship with Herodias.
6. The rich man lived in luxury while Lazarus lay in the dusty street covered with sores. Which one had it good?

B. The setting of our text: Judah was in Babylonian exile.

They considered their plight as a punishment for the sins of their fathers. Manasseh & his generation had sinned, Josiah & his generation were in exile.

I. “THE FATHERS HAVE EATEN SOUR GRAPES & THE CHILDREN’S TEETH ARE SET ON EDGE,” vs. 1-2.

- A. The people of Judah were observing their physical situation.
- B. The prophet answers by showing that their more important spiritual condition is determined by their own choice of conduct.
 - 1. A just man has God's approval, vs. 5-9.
 - 2. He may have a wicked son, vs. 10-13.
 - 3. That son may in turn have a just son, vs. 14-18.

II. "WHY SHOULD THE SON **NOT** BEAR THE GUILT OF THE FATHER?" vs. 19.

- A. The old King James leaves out the word "not" but the NKJ follows the original text more closely.
- B. Tho they had complained about bearing their fathers' sins, they apparently shied away from the responsibility of their own actions.
- C. Perhaps, also, they were misapplying EX 20:5 & similar passages.
 - 1. Obviously, children do often share in the suffering that results from the sins of their ancestors.
 - 2. We also suffer from being born into a sinful environment. Drunk drivers kill & maim people who never drank.
 - 3. But any philosophy that looks only on the physical side of the result of sin is at best only 1/2 true.

NOTE: 2 farmers: "I plowed my fields on Sunday while you were in church. I planted them on Sunday while you were in church. I even harvested them on Sunday while you were in church, & my crop is as good as yours in every way." "October is not the final harvest."

B. The prophet again calls attention to the more important spiritual side of the matter, vs. 19-20.

C. Ezekiel is careful to point out each person's ability to change his own spiritual condition.

1. God will be completely fair to the man who turns away from God & forsakes His will, vs. 26.

2. He will also be completely fair to the man who turns his back on wickedness, vs. 27-28.

III. "THE WAY OF THE LORD IS NOT FAIR," vs. 29.

A. The charge is unfounded. It comes when the creature dares to judge the Creator, the clay attempts to judge the potter.

[Eliphaz:] Can a mortal be more righteous than God?
Can a man be more pure than his Maker? (Job 4:17)

B. Each individual must turn to God to be blessed with life.
All will be treated fairly & judged righteously vs 29-32

Springhill, La, May 11, 1975

La Porte, TX, June 11, 1975

Burkeville, TX, June 15, 1977 (meeting)

Highway 29, Liberty Hill, TX, October 6, 1977 (meeting)

La Porte, TX, January 24, 1982

Exton, PA, March 24, 1985 (Bible class)

Exton, PA, March 31, 1991

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, May 5, 1996

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, October 3, 1999

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, October 17, 1999 (class)