

The Fathers Have Eaten Sour Grapes

²⁹ *In those days they shall no longer say: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." ³⁰ But everyone shall die for his own sin. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge. ³¹ Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:29-34)*

² *What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, declares the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die. (Eze 18:2-4)*

(See also: 2 Kng 14:6; Isa 3:11; Gal 6:7; Gen 9:25; Dt 24:16; Lam 5:7)

Only if the children do not overcome their fathers' sins or iniquities will they die for their fathers' sins, since they are passed on to them. The children will die for the sins of their fathers which they did not overcome — which became their sins as well.

The misunderstanding of Ex 20:5 and Num 4:18 is that the children will die for their fathers' sins and iniquities, but their fathers' sins *became* the children sins if they *let* them overcome them. So no one will have an excuse, not even the nations (Rom 1:18-20). A child will die for his own sins, since he *allowed* them to overtake him. He blamed his parents and not himself. The children must remember that their fathers had the sins of their fathers passed on to them as well.

If you blame others, you will die. But if you blame yourself, you will live. A father's sins can have a permanent negative effect on his children only if the children do not understand that it is their responsibility to combat it at the gate. So many of us, as in

old Israel, thought that the hand of judgment against us was not due to our own sin, but to the sin of our fathers or ancestors. But as Jer 31:30 says, and Dt 24:16, and Eze 18:3-4,20, *the soul who sins shall die* (Eze 33:7-18).

Eze 18:4 — It is a matter of individual responsibility: blame yourself and not your forefathers. Ezekiel spoke out against inherited guilt, as Mt 27:25 applies in this day. The guilt is upon the heads of the Jews and their offspring unless they repent for the attitude of Satan passed down to their succeeding generations, as Acts 2:23,36,37. Acts 2:38 is the only remedy for the inherited guilt which the child takes in from parents who instill this evil attitude into their children, as in the Talmudic teachings concerning our Master. The bloodguilt is on their heads (Mt 27:25).

Ezekiel 18 is prophetic of three generations who will break the third-or-fourth-generation pattern in Ex 20:5 and 34:7. All the mentioned crimes in Eze 18:5-9 describe the curse which is upon the Jews (Mt 27:25) and passed on to succeeding generations if received by the child.

Eze 18:14 says that the child can stop the process in his own life. But the influence in public school can bypass the good intentions of the parents who were as verse 14 themselves, but who have a child who is as verse 10. The child is inculcated with these tendencies by the children who are his peers in school. A child can overcome his father's iniquity as in verses 14-17, and only the father will die for his own iniquity (verse 18).

The turnaround is possible, as in verses 19-32. The chain of inherited guilt can be broken. Verses 21-29 teach that the power of guilt accumulated within a person's life can be overcome, just as a man can knowingly and willfully turn from righteousness (verse 26). So regardless of how evil the church is, or Judaism, or the schools are, God's judgment will be just, based on each one's individual responsibility to his own conscience and the Word of God and the relationship with Him.

Verse 21 — A man cannot wait until it is too late, but he must act before it is set in his soul. The father is guilty also for his son and will die for his own sin and for his neglect in violation of the word of God (Pr 13:24; 20:30; 22:6,15, etc., Heb 12:7-9).

Ezekiel 20 is the nature of old Israel, and is why Mt 21:33-45 had to be done. This nature permeated the remnant of the Jews in Judea after the Babylonian captivity and return to the land, and after the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem, Mt 27:25 took over to the Holocaust. You can read all about it in Ezekiel 36 and Deuteronomy 27 and 28.

Yet Eze 20:39-44 must be fulfilled.