### Ezekiel

## Chapter 18

1And the Word of Jehovah came to me and said:  
  
 2‘O son of man,  
  
 ‘How does the proverb apply  
 To the land of IsraEl, which goes:  
  
 ‘When the fathers eat unripe grapes,  
 The mouths of the children get toothaches?  
  
 3‘Jehovah says:  
  
 ‘As I live,  
 Will this proverb prove true among IsraEl?  
  
 4‘I’m the One who owns all their souls…  
 Yes the souls of both the fathers and sons.  
 And since they are all really Mine;  
 The sinners among them will die!  
  
 5‘But the one who is fair, righteous, and just…  
 6Who doesn’t feast to idols on hills…  
 Whose eyes are not [filled with pride]…  
 Whose thoughts are of the House of IsraEl…  
 Who doesn’t defile the wife of his neighbor  
 Nor does he dirty his wife  
 By approaching her in menstruation…  
 7Who does not tyrannize others…  
 Who asks no collateral [for loans]  
 – The things that he doesn’t return –  
 Who takes nothing by force…  
 Who gives bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked…  
 8Who doesn’t require interest on loans  
 – Who asks no payment of interest –  
 Who turns his hand from injustice…  
 Who is fair when he serves as the judge  
 Between a man and his neighbor…  
 9Who follows all of My orders…  
 Who guards My Laws and obeys them…  
 Such a man will be thought of as righteous,  
 And he will then receive life,’ says Jehovah.  
  
 10‘But, if he should father a bad son…  
 One who sins and sheds blood,  
 11And won’t follow his father’s righteous ways,  
 But feasts before idols on mountains,  
 And willingly defiles the wife of his neighbor…  
 12Who tyrannizes the needy and poor  
 And seizes collateral by force,  
 Then chooses not to return it…  
 Who turns his eyes towards the idols,  
 Then practices all that is lawless,  
 13And lends his things out for interest…  
 He will not receive life.  
 For his lawless deeds, he will die,  
 And his blood will be upon his [own head].  
  
 14‘Then, if he should father a son  
 Who fears all the sins of his father,  
 And refuses to act as he did…  
 15If he’s one who won’t feast to idols on hills,  
 And remembers the house of IsraEl…  
 If he doesn’t defile the wife of his neighbor…  
 16If he doesn’t act like a tyrant…  
 If he doesn’t require collateral for loans…  
 If he doesn’t take things by force…  
 If he gives bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked…  
 17If he doesn’t turn his hand towards injustice  
 Or charge interest for the loans that he makes…  
 If he’s righteous and follows My orders…  
 He’ll live and not die for his father’s sins!  
  
 18‘But because his father was oppressive and bad…  
 Because he took things by force  
 And was contrary among his own people…  
 For his unrighteous ways, he will die!  
  
 19‘But then, you will ask:  
  
 ‘Why won’t the son bear the sins of his father?’  
  
 ‘It’s because he is merciful, righteous, and fair…  
 He’s kept My Laws and obeyed them,  
 And as a result, he will live…  
 20Just the soul that is sinning will die!  
  
 ‘So the son won’t be blamed for his father’s bad ways,  
 And the father won’t be blamed for those of his son.  
 Yes, the righteous ways of each person  
 And lawless ways of each person  
 Are what they will bring on themselves!  
  
 21But, if the lawless one turns from what’s bad  
 And starts to keep My Commandments...  
 If he becomes merciful, righteous, and just...  
 He will be granted life,  
 Yes, he will live and not die!  
 22I will forget all his sins,  
 No matter how many there are…  
 For his righteous ways, he will live!  
  
 23‘Do I wish to bring death to the lawless,’ asks Jehovah?  
 ‘No, I want them to turn from the bad, so they’ll live!  
 24But, if the righteous should turn from right ways  
 And commit all the sins of the lawless…  
 Yes, if they do such things, they will die…  
 I’ll forget all the righteous things that they did  
 And destroy them for their errors and sins.  
  
 25‘But then, you will say:  
  
 ‘The ways of Jehovah aren’t right!’  
  
 ‘Pay attention, O house of IsraEl!  
 Haven’t My ways proven straight?  
 Aren’t yours the ways that are crooked?  
  
 26‘When a righteous man turns from right ways,  
 Shouldn’t he die for his sins…  
 Since he’s the one who’s to blame,  
 Isn’t he the one who should die?  
  
 27‘And when the lawless turn from bad ways…  
 When they start acting righteous and fair  
 28And recognize how godless they’ve been;  
 All these people should live…  
 No way should they have to die!  
  
 29‘Yet, the house of IsraEl still claims  
 That the ways of Jehovah aren’t straight.  
  
 ‘O house of IsraEl,  
  
 ‘Is it really My ways that aren’t straight?  
 Aren’t yours the ways that are crooked?  
  
 30‘Therefore, O house of IsraEl,  
  
 ‘I’ll judge each man by the things that he does,’ says Jehovah.  
 ‘So, if you will turn from your bad ways,  
 You won’t be punished for the bad things you’ve done!  
  
 31‘But, you must discard all your bad ways,  
 As well as your irreverence towards Me…  
 Create for yourselves new breaths and hearts!  
  
 ‘O house of IsraEl,  
  
 ‘Why should you die?  
 32I want no one to die,’ says Jehovah…  
 ‘So return [to Me] and you’ll live!’