**Faith Foundations 2023-2024**

**The Book of Ezekiel**

**Session 11—Ezekiel 18**

**In this passage of Ezekiel, God turns His attention to those who trusted in their birthright or ancestry to save them from His coming wrath. Many of the Israelites at the time believed that children would be saved from their sins because of the righteousness of their parents; or, conversely, that children would be punished for the sins of their parents. God wanted to make it very clear that His wrath comes down upon those who sin, regardless of how their parents or children have behaved. The Israelites would all be held accountable for their own actions; no one else’s works could save them or condemn them.**

**1.) Read Ezekiel 18:1-4. What proverb were the Israelites repeating amongst themselves? What does this proverb mean?**

**2.) According to God, should the Israelites regard this proverb as truth? Why or why not?**

**3.) Read Ezekiel 18:5-9. What kind of man does God describe in this passage? What makes him righteous or unrighteous?**

**4.) What will happen to this man in the end?**

**5.) Read Ezekiel 18:10-13. How does God describe the man’s son? What will happen to the son?**

**6.) Read Ezekiel 18:14-18. How does God describe the son of an unrighteous man? What will happen to the son, and what will happen to his father?**

**7.) Read Ezekiel 18:19-20. How does the righteousness or unrighteousness of a father affect the fate of his son? How does the righteousness or unrighteousness of a son affect the fate of his father?**

**8.) What general point is God making in this chapter?**

**9.) Read Ezekiel 18:21-24. What will happen to a wicked person who turns away from his sin? What will happen to a righteous person who turns away from righteousness?**

**10.) Read Ezekiel 18:25-29. Why were the Israelites accusing God of injustice, and what does the proverb quoted in verse 2 have to do with it?**

**11.) How does God refute the Israelites’ accusation toward Him of injustice?**

**12.) Read Ezekiel 18:30-32. What does God invite the people of Israel to do, and what does He promise to do for them?**

**13.) How does God feel when people die in their sin? What would He rather they do?**

**With this final exhortation to repent and return to Him, God invited His people of Israel to forsake the idols they were worshiping and instead embrace the grace and love He desired to give to them. Their rebellion against Him had greatly pained Him, and He wanted to see them walk in the way of life rather than the way of death. He also wanted them to know that the actions of their families would have no bearing on their own salvation: the sins of their fathers or sons would not doom them, nor would the righteousness of their fathers or sons save them.**

**Of course, as we know, most of the Israelites did not listen to these warnings, which led to the sorry fate of King Zedekiah and Jerusalem described in chapter 17. Those who did listen, however, found a God who welcomed them back with open arms, forgave their sins, and granted them life in His kingdom. And how much more is this true for those who repent and believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ today!**