

Turn and Live

Ezekiel 33:10–20; 18:30–32 · This week: A New Spirit Will I Put within You, Ezekiel 1–3; 33–34; 36–37; 47

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 45, “A New Spirit Will I Put within You,” on Gospel Library**



START

The captives in Babylon asked a question many people ask after doing wrong. “If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?” (Ezekiel 33:10).

READ TOGETHER

To pine away is to waste away slowly, like a plant without water. The people believed their sins had ruined them for good.

EZEKIEL 33:11

¹¹Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

EZEKIEL 33:14–16

¹⁴Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; ¹⁵If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. ¹⁶None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

WHAT IT TEACHES

The Lord answered with an oath. “As I live,” he said, he has “no pleasure in the death of the wicked” (Ezekiel 33:11). Then he pleaded with them twice in one breath, “turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways.” He had said it before, “wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye” (Ezekiel 18:32).

Verse 15 shows what turning looks like. The man gives back the pledge he took and repays what he

stole. A pledge was something a borrower handed over until he paid, sometimes the coat he slept in (Exodus 22:26–27). Repentance includes making things right wherever we can.

The Lord promised that “none of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him” (Ezekiel 33:16). When the Lord forgives, he does not bring it up again. In Isaiah he says he “will not remember thy sins” (Isaiah 43:25).

Some of the people called this unfair. “The way of the Lord is not equal,” they said (Ezekiel 33:17). They wanted to be judged by their past, and the Lord looks at which way a person is walking now (Ezekiel 33:18–19). Jesus told of two sons. The one who refused his father and then went to work in the vineyard was the one who did his father’s will (Matthew 21:28–31).

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the Lord chooses not to bring up sins he has forgiven? What would change in our family if we did the same with each other’s mistakes?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Ezekiel’s people thought their sins had ruined them for good. The Lord told them to turn and live, and he promised that forgiven sins would never be mentioned again.