

TRUTH & RIGHT

the bulletin of the Wellsburg church of Christ

WELLSBURG
CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.wellsburgchurchofchrist.com

Volume 17 Issue 9

February 27, 2022

THE SOUR GRAPES

In Ezekiel 18:2-3, Ezekiel told the people, *"The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel."* The proverb that the children of Israel used had to do with those who taught that the guilt of a man's sins was inherited through his father. Thus, while the "fathers" ate the sour grapes, the "children's" teeth were the ones set on edge! Does this proverb sound familiar? The doctrine of inherited sin (Total Hereditary Depravity) states that we are born with a "sinful nature" because Adam sinned. With such, we are born sinners, and there is nothing we can do about it. We can do nothing "good" by ourselves. We might be familiar with this teaching through the acronym "THIIP." Our study will

focus on the "T" in the abbreviation (Total Hereditary Depravity, or Inherited Sin). This is the cornerstone of the doctrine popularly described as "Calvinism." Though folks before Christ's time had taught it, and Augustine taught it in his time, it was John Calvin who "popularized" it. Still, if we can prove the first point of this doctrine to be untrue, the rest of the doctrine falls. **The Fall Of Adam.** When discussing "inherited" sin, it is only logical to look to the first man and see if he actually placed sin upon all mankind. Therefore, we need to see what Adam's nature was in the beginning. In Genesis 2, God created man (Gen. 2:7). After man's creation, God gave him something to do (Gen. 2:15-17). At this time, God and man had a close relationship with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8). In Genesis 3:1-6, we see man yielding to temptation and sinning against God. Adam and Eve yielded to the three avenues in which one

can be tempted (I Jn. 2:15-17). Because Adam and Eve sinned:• Man's eyes were opened (Gen. 3:7).• Woman assumed the role that she has today (Gen. 3:16).• Adam was cursed (Gen. 3:17-19).• God dressed them in proper clothing (Gen. 3:21).• They died spiritually that day (Gen. 3:23-24).• Eventually, they died physically (Gen. 5:5). Up to this point, both those in the Lord's church and those belonging to denominations would agree. The question is, what happened to Adam's children? Were they born in sin? Was Adam's guilt passed on to them? Read Genesis 4:6-7. God told Cain, *"Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door..."* Take note of this because God's word in Genesis 4 differs significantly from the doctrine of Calvinism that says we can do nothing that is not sin! According to Calvinism, sin did not *"lie at the door"* for Cain; it was already deeply rooted in Cain, thanks to Adam's sin! Yet, God did not say that. In fact, He had respect toward Adam's other son, Abel, and his offering. (Therefore, how could he be born in sin?) Later we read that Abel lived *"by faith"* (Heb. 11:4)! Another descendant of Adam that needs to be studied is Enoch. The Bible says he *"walked with God"* (Gen. 5:21-24). How can one *"walk with God"* if he is born in sin? How could God fellowship

someone whose every move was sin? God cannot fellowship those in sin (Isa. 59:1-2; I Jn. 1:5). We could pose the same question for Noah, who also *"walked with God"* (Gen. 6:9) When we look at Adam's descendants and their ability to please God, the only logical conclusion is that there is no inherited sin. A man is responsible for his own sin, just as God says (Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:1-3, 20; Col. 3:25). **Some "Proof-Texts" Of Inherited Sin.** Knowing that so many believe in "inherited" sin, we need to study some passages used to support the claim that we have inherited sin from Adam. One passage used to prove "inherited" sin is Psalm 51:5. It says, *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."* Sounds convincing, does it not? However, Psalm 51:1-4 sheds greater light on David's words. *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: ... blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,...."* In context, this psalm was written after Nathan had confronted David about his adultery (II Sam. 12:1-7). Psalm 51:5 is not an account of David being an illegitimate son, for he was Jesse's eighth son (I Sam. 16:10-11). He was not confessing something over which he had no control, like "inherited" sins. This

psalm is very personal. He confessed that he had been a sinner from an early age. Thus, he asks for God's forgiveness of his sins and his sins alone! Another passage to study is Psalm 51:7 and 9-12. David said, *"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."* David begged God's forgiveness for his sins. Why was David not concerned with Adam's sin or his children's sin in this psalm? It is because he knew that his sin was not inherited, nor would he "pass" his guilt on to others! He would answer for his own sins and no one else's! Some have claimed that the apostle Paul taught "inherited" sin in Romans 3:23. He wrote, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* In truth, this passage teaches that each individual sins when he chooses to transgress God's law. He said, *"All have sinned."* This phrase shows action on the part of every individual. James said, *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brinaeth forth death"* (Jas. 1:14-

15). If we can understand James, we can understand that Paul was teaching the same thing about temptation and sin! He continued by saying that those that have sinned *"come short of the glory of God."* Paul did not say that men were *"born short of the glory of God."* Paul showed that every man has a choice to make. Another passage that the Calvinist uses is Romans 5:12. It says, *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* Once again, this shows action and decision-making on the part of each individual (Jas. 1:14-15). For this verse to say what the Calvinist wants, it would have to read, *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, by Adam's sin."* These are not the only passages used, but these are common ones used by the Calvinists. In truth, these passages teach the opposite of what the Calvinist wishes to teach. **Conclusion.** The text of Ezekiel 18 teaches that man does not inherit sin. Read Ezekiel 18:4, 20. Why did God have to tell the people that they did not inherit their father's sin? The reason is that they didn't listen to God in Deuteronomy 24:16! God said, *"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel"* (Ezek. 18:3). – Jarrod Jacobs

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. Jesus said He spoke in parables "because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they ____."

- a) Speak
- b) Understand
- c) Whistle
- d) Breakdance

2. Seed sown beside the road is snatched away by the ____ one.

- a) Crazy
- b) Fidgety
- c) Shy
- d) Evil

3. Wheat and tares will be allowed to grow together until the ____.

- a) Harvest
- b) Birthday
- c) Evening
- d) Sunset

4. When the mustard seed is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a ____.

- a) Turtleneck
- b) Harmonica
- c) Swatch
- d) Tree

5. The ____ of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.

- a) Kingdom
- b) Jello
- c) Noodles
- d) Pudding

6. Jesus did not speak to the crowds without a ____.

- a) Powerpoint
- b) Lazerpointer
- c) Pulpit
- d) Parable

7. "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things ____ since the foundation of the world."

- a) Silly
- b) Fantastic
- c) Hidden
- d) Frightening

8. The man who found the treasure hidden in the field sold all he had and bought the field from ____ over it.

- a) Fear
- b) Joy
- c) Suspicion
- d) Confusion

9. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine ____.

- a) Turtles
- b) Fannypacks
- c) Pearls
- d) Frogs

10. At the end of the age, ____ will take out the wicked from among the righteous.

- a) God
- b) Jesus
- c) Holy Spirit
- d) Angels

- 1) B, Reference: Mt. 13:13
 2) D, Reference: Mt. 13:19
 3) A, Reference: Mt. 13:30
 4) D, Reference: Mt. 13:31-32
 5) A, Reference: Mt. 13:33
 6) D, Reference: Mt. 13:34
 7) C, Ps. 78:2; Mt. 13:35
 8) B, Mt. 13:44
 9) C, Mt. 13:45
 10) D, Mt. 13:49