

Week 4 Student Study Guide

Title: Personal Responsibility & the Watchman Renewed

Primary Text: Ezekiel 18; Ezekiel 33 (KJV)

Historical & Literary Context

By Ezekiel 18 and 33, Jerusalem's fall is either imminent or confirmed. The people of Israel are wrestling with despair, believing they are suffering for the sins of previous generations. God confronts this fatalism directly, redefining covenant responsibility at the individual level. These chapters mark a theological shift from collective guilt toward personal accountability.

Theological Exposition

Ezekiel 18 dismantles the proverb, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' God declares that each soul is accountable for its own conduct. Righteousness and wickedness are not inherited states but lived realities. This does not abolish communal identity; it clarifies moral responsibility within it.

Ezekiel 33 renews the watchman commission after Jerusalem's fall. The prophet's role is reaffirmed not as a predictor of outcomes, but as a faithful messenger. God measures success by obedience to the warning, not by the people's response. Together, these chapters form the ethical backbone of Ezekiel's ministry.

Key Verses for the Week (KJV)

- 1 Ezekiel 18:2
- 2 Ezekiel 18:4
- 3 Ezekiel 18:5
- 4 Ezekiel 18:9
- 5 Ezekiel 18:20
- 6 Ezekiel 18:21
- 7 Ezekiel 18:23
- 8 Ezekiel 18:24
- 9 Ezekiel 18:30
- 10 Ezekiel 18:31
- 11 Ezekiel 18:32
- 12 Ezekiel 33:2
- 13 Ezekiel 33:6
- 14 Ezekiel 33:7
- 15 Ezekiel 33:11

Memory Verse

Ezekiel 18:20 (KJV): "The soul that sinneth, it shall die..."

New Testament Cross-Text Mapping

• Matthew 12:36–37 – Accountability for words and actions. • Luke 13:1–5 – Personal repentance emphasized. • Romans 14:12 – Each person gives account to God. • 2 Corinthians 5:10 – Individual judgment before Christ. • James 5:19–20 – Responsibility to warn and restore.

Contemporary & Spiritual Application

Ezekiel 18 and 33 challenge modern believers to abandon blame-shifting and spiritual passivity. Faith is not inherited—it must be chosen. Leaders are reminded that silence carries consequences, and believers are called to respond personally to God’s call for repentance and faithfulness.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Why was Israel tempted to blame previous generations for present suffering?
- 2 How does Ezekiel 18 reshape our understanding of covenant responsibility?
- 3 What does God require of a watchman, and what does He not require?
- 4 How do these chapters speak to accountability in the church today?