

Research: Ezekiel 18:1–3 Sour grapes

This chapter is an enlargement of [Jeremiah 31:29](#) (in those days they shall say no more: ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’) and sets forth fully the doctrine of individual responsibility.

For a higher sense of these passages go to MIS. WRITINGS: 71-72:11 to 17 np

1 The word of the Lord came unto me again, saying,

2 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?

“The proverb means that the children suffer the consequences of the sins of their fathers. Sour or unripe grapes are occasionally eaten, and naturally the effect upon the eater’s teeth is immediate—his teeth are set on edge, lit. blunted, the edge of them turned. Here, however, the effect is first felt by the children. Such feelings could not but arise in the troubled times of the fall of the state, when the righteous suffered with the wicked, and the most righteous were carried into exile, and just because they still slave to their own faith in the midst of heathenism endured severer sufferings than others who accommodated themselves to their circumstances. Soon after the fall of Jerusalem we hear the same complaint in literal terms: “The fathers sinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities” ([Lamentations 5:7](#)). (Cambridge Bible).

“The present generation is punished for the offences committed by their forefathers, particularly for the sins committed in the time of Manasseh, king of Judah” (Benson Commentary).

“**Israel**; the two tribes, not the ten.

“**The fathers**; our forefathers have sinned, and we their children, who were unborn, do suffer now for their sins” (Matthew Henry).

3 As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

“*ye shall not have* occasion] Or, it shall not be permitted you” (Cambridge Bible).

“Rather, "in the land of Israel," i. e., upon Israel's soil, the last place where such a paganish saying should be expected. The saying was general among the people both in Palestine and in

exile; and expressed the excuse wherewith they ascribed their miserable condition to anyone's fault but their own" (Barnes' Notes).