

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

QUESTION #4 - “The Sins of the Parents”

Are the sins of the parents visited against the children or not?...2 passages in Exodus and one in Deuteronomy seem in conflict:

Exodus 20:5 says sins of fathers ARE visited against children

Exodus 34:6-7: says sins ARE FORGIVEN BUT ALSO sins of fathers ARE visited against children – how can it be BOTH?

Deut. 24:16 says children are NOT punished for sins of fathers

KEY SCRIPTURES:

- ✚ Exodus 20:5 - “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me;”

- ✚ Exodus 34:6-7 - “And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*.”

- ✚ Deuteronomy 24:17 - “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”

VERY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER IN BIBLE READING & STUDY:

- 📖 There are no contradictions or conflicts in scripture.
- 📖 There are things that SEEM that way on the surface.

☞ BUT some key factors have to be taken into consideration when examining these seeming conflicts:

- Context
- Who is speaking to who?
- Was it a special instance or occasion where God dealt differently in a particular situation than He did others?
- Compare scripture with scripture (there might be a 'supplemental' text somewhere else in scripture that tells another part of the story)

✚ EXODUS 20:5

- CONTEXT:
 - the giving of the law – the “Ten Commandments”
 - “Idolatry” (v. 1-5)
 - God took idolatry VERY seriously
 - It is not a mistake that out of the 10 commandments, God dealt with idolatry in the very first commandment (v.2, 4)
 - Deuteronomy 4:39
 - Isaiah 44:18
 - Isaiah 45:5, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22



**It is no secret in reading the Old Testament
that one of Israel's great national sins was *IDOLATRY*.**



- “...visiting the iniquity...” (Webster's “VISIT”)
 - To visit in wrath, or visit iniquity or sins upon
 - To chastise

- To bring judgments on
- To afflict
 - *God promises to visit – address – send – His chastening to those guilty of breaking of his commandments or laws.*
- CONTRAST:
 - Look at verse 6
 - God makes a promise of shewing mercy on the obedient

EXODUS 34:6-7

- CONTEXT:
 - God “re-gives” the law that He first gave in Exodus 20
- Seeming conflict:
 - v. 6 talks about God being merciful, longsuffering, abundant in goodness
 - v. 7 talks about mercy and forgiveness and then not clearing the guilty and visiting the iniquity unto the third and fourth generation
- RECONCILING THE TEXT:
 - This is important to remember...

Sin FORGIVEN does not necessarily
mean the sin is not JUDGED.

- Yes – God does forgive sins.
- Yes – God does show mercy.
- Yes – God is longsuffering.
- BUT – just because God forgives sin does not mean He will withhold chastening from the offender.
- PROOF: a parent can forgive a child who disobeys them, but that does not mean there won't be consequences from the disobedience.

DEUTERONOMY 24:16

- CONTEXT:
 - v. 5 and following (⇒) are a list of general points to the Law where God addresses various topics.
- A close examination of the *actual wording* of the verse sheds light on the subject of God visiting the sins upon the third and fourth generations.
 - God is making a simple statement about the “death penalty” he placed on certain violations of the law.
 - Any violation of the law that required the death penalty (usually stoning in the Old Testament) was only to be carried out on the GUILT PARTY **(v.16 end)**.
 - “Generational judgment” might include:
 - Limiting access to the tabernacle
 - Losing land
 - Defeat in a war and battle
 - Etc.

The death penalty was not a judgment that God passed on between generations.

The person worthy of the death penalty received that judgment, not a proceeding or previous generation.

REMEMBER:

- ✓ Chastening is FOR us.
- ✓ Actions have consequences.
- ✓ Those consequences RARELY affect just us. Others are almost always affected by our actions – good OR bad!