



**Mustard Seed Lesson Summary for August 12, 2007
Released on August 8, 2007**

“Turn and Live”

MEMORY VERSE:

“I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye” (Ezekiel 18:32).

Ezekiel 18:4, 20-23, 30-32

4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

.....
20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

.....
30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

TEACHER’S NOTES ON THE LESSON

Ezekiel was a priest who was carried off in one of the deportations to Babylon. There he preached to the exiles for about twenty years. He spoke of God's future blessing, but he also reminded them of why they were there. They had refused to obey. They had ignored the prophets God sent to warn them. Judgment had fallen on the nation, but Ezekiel also pointed out the responsibility of the individual: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (18:4).

Then came a burst of light in a dark message. Although judgment is required of a righteous God, He receives no pleasure from punishing the wicked. Instead, He pleaded for the people to turn so that they might live.

This lesson will help primaries better understand what God is like. He is compassionate, gracious, and unwilling that any should perish, including them.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that although God must in-deed punish those who will not listen to Him, doing so grieves Him.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. It is right that the Lord does not ignore sin, but having to punish the disobedient gives Him no pleasure.
2. God loves even the rebellious and pleads with them to return.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS

For Telling the Lesson, take in two pictures: one of Ezekiel and one of Jesus speaking to a group.

For Telling How to Live, bring a picture of a cross.

For Helping to Remember, provide

for each child half a sheet of brown construction paper. Also take safety scissors, crayons, and black markers.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

When he came through the door, Don's mother said, "Hi. How did school go today?" Don put his book on the kitchen table. "Fun! A magician showed us how he did some of his tricks." Then he added, "Miss Bixby was really mean, though."

"So, what happened?" Mom asked.

"She went out of the room, and some boys started throwing chalk. She came back and saw them. She made them sit in the principal's office and miss seeing the magician."

Mom asked, "But did that make Miss Bixby mean? The boys disobeyed, right? Did she not have to do something about what they did?"

Don thought about that. "I guess she was not being mean, then. She was just being right."

Some people think God is mean when He does something about the people who will not obey Him. But is He? Let us see what the Bible says.

TELLING THE LESSON

It was a time when God's people were not listening. He sent Amos and Hosea and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Micah and Habakkuk and Zephaniah to talk to them. (Count on fingers.) What all those men said shows us something important about God: He cannot just watch wrong things happening and do nothing about it. But

does that make Him mean?

Another man the Lord sent was Ezekiel. (Show Ezekiel.) What he said shows us something else about God. When enemy soldiers came and took many of God's people to a faraway land, they took Ezekiel too. He began telling the ones who had been taken away what God wanted them to know. So what did Ezekiel tell them? (Open your Bible to Ezekiel.)

First, he reminded them of why they were there. He said it was because they had stopped listening to the Lord. Because they had stopped listening, they had done all sorts of other wrong things. Now they had been taken away from their homeland. Even worse, he said, each person who did not listen, each one who did not do what God said to do, would someday have to be shut away from God and all that is good. He called it a kind of dying.

But the Lord did not want such a sad thing to happen. Having to punish people did not make God happy. Instead, He wanted them to change their minds, turn back to Him, start doing what He said, and live.

That shows us what God is like. Yes, He did have to do something about those people who would not listen to Him. Letting trouble come upon them was the right thing to do, but it made Him sad, for He loved them. So the next thing He said was, "Turn to Me and live!"

Jesus was talking one day to some other people who would not listen (Luke 13:34). (Show Jesus and crowd.) He said, "O Jerusalem, you kill the men God sends to you. I wanted to gather you close to Me the way a hen gathers her baby chicks under her wings, but you said no." You can tell that Jesus was sad. He loved those people and wanted to protect them from harm, but they would not listen.

What does Ezekiel show us about God? He is not mean. He is good and kind and loving. Yes, He must punish those who will not listen, because that is the right thing to do, but punishing never makes Him happy.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE

If people want to turn to God and live, what do they do? Some men asked Jesus that (John 6:18-29). He said, "This is what you must do: Believe in the One whom God has sent into the world." (Show cross.) Believe God sent Jesus to be your Saviour. He wants to forgive your sins and care for you. If you want to believe in Jesus, talk to me when class is over.

HELPING TO REMEMBER

On the brown paper each child should trace around his foot and cut it out. On one side he should print "Turn" and on the other side "and live!"

EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT

"I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (Ezekiel 18:32).

The Lord was talking to some people who were saying no to what He told them to do. It is right for Him to shut such people away from Him, but God does not like doing that. He loves people. So He was saying to them, "Oh, come back to Me. I want you to live."

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Study Zechariah 1:1-6; 7:8-14 for our next lesson. We will see how Zechariah, another of the prophets in the Old Testament, called the people back to repentance and God.

Lesson Summarized By

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"Turn and Live"

S Y R Q C R D O G H H P E T M
Z S G E E B U H Z Y Z F R X I
R I E H P E G D U J M A U S N
A U T N R E T U R N N S S N E
Y A I D D V N B X S O P A I G
F O S N M E I T G E S I E S S
C Q B Y V F K R I A X R L V Y
W Y E I I Z E C P J K I P H W
V E L B I S I Z I J O T E Q L
L C N J S L P D Z W R A Z Z T
T U Q I M U D B V D R P O T F
D X O W K I D O G T Q O D D F
J N S S E N S U O E T H G I R
S J X B P S E J M X G J D F R
K H T U R N D E J D K V E X G

DIE

HEART

MINE

REPENT

RUIN

SOUL

TURN

FATHER

JUDGE

NEW

RETURN

SINS

SPIRIT

WICKEDNESS

GOD

LIVE

PLEASURE

RIGHTEOUSNESS

SON

TRANSGRESSIONS

"Turn and Live" Solution

S + R + + R D O G + + + E T M
+ S + E E + + + + + R + I
R + E H P E G D U J + A U S N
+ U T N R E T U R N N S S N E
+ A I + D + N + + S O P A I +
F + + N + E + T G + S I E S +
+ + + + V + K R + + + R L + +
W + + I + + E C + + + I P H +
+ E L + + S + + I + + T E + +
L + N + S + + + + W + A + + +
+ U + I + + D + + + R + + + +
+ + O + + I + + + T + + + + +
+ N S S E N S U O E T H G I R
S + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
+ + T U R N + + + + + + + + +

(Over, Down, Direction)

DIE (7, 11, SW)
FATHER (1, 6, NE)
GOD (9, 1, W)
HEART (14, 8, SW)
JUDGE (10, 3, W)
LIVE (3, 9, NE)
MINE (15, 1, S)
NEW (3, 10, NW)
PLEASURE (13, 8, N)
REPENT (3, 1, SE)
RETURN (5, 4, E)
RIGHTEOUSNESS (15, 13, W)
RUIN (1, 3, SE)
SINS (14, 6, N)
SON (11, 6, N)
SOUL (4, 13, NW)
SPIRIT (12, 4, S)
TRANSGRESSIONS (14, 1, SW)
TURN (3, 15, E)
WICKEDNESS (10, 10, NW)