

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

KAPONO: Would you join me and bow your heads in a word of prayer? Lord, ooh, thank You, Lord. I just pray for those who don't know what it's like to have You, Lord, in their life. What a blessing, Lord, and almost unexplainable.

Lord, just thank You. Thank You, Lord. Would You be with us this evening, Lord, as we dig into Your word, Lord? Would You calm our spirits, calm our hearts and our minds, Lord? And give us a focus and attention, Lord, on You that we won't miss what it is that You have that would bless our lives this evening, Lord.

Be with Pastor JD, Lord, as he stands up here and delivers Your word so faithfully, Lord. Watch over him and his family. And thank You for this time that we can come together and study Your word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen! Good evening to you. Hey, before you're seated, if you haven't got the elements for communion at the conclusion, you might want to come up. Hi, Melissa! Good to see you. Go ahead and come on up.

Those of you that are joining us online, we're so glad that you are. If you would like to partake with us, you might want to have the elements ready as well as we will partake together. We always look forward to the communion table at the conclusion of tonight's Bible study.

So Ezekiel, *Chapter 18*: We're making our way through. We're taking our time. And so just one chapter tonight and for a couple of reasons, one of which is I never like to rush through communion.

So we'll just take the one chapter. And there's another reason, and I think you'll see why here shortly. This chapter actually, it's an interesting chapter, and it really is kind of stand-alone. It addresses what is arguably one of the questions of the ages concerning God's justice and God's fairness.

And in so doing, it also addresses the sin nature in all of us, the Adamic nature in all of us. It started with Adam and Eve, and it's that of blaming others. In fact, we blame everybody but ourselves. And it started in the garden.

Have you really thought through the garden account when sin entered the world and God confronts Adam and Eve? And it's almost kind of subtle in a way, but upon closer examination, you know, they're not really blaming — I mean, starting with Adam, he's not really blaming Eve. He's blaming God for giving him Eve. No, right?

"It's the woman You gave me." And then when it comes to Eve: No, it's not my fault. I'm not to blame. It's the serpent You put in the garden. And it started there, and it continues to this day. It's placing the blame on everyone but who the blame belongs to.

And as we're about to see, God, through the prophet Ezekiel, is going to put it to rest. And what He's going to put to rest is this blaming of God or others under the banner of "life is not fair" or worse yet, "God is not fair."

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

I know I've shared this — I hope don't tire of me sharing it — it's kind of an adorable, cute story from when our children were little. We taught them a song early on. We wanted to instill this in them at a young age because isn't it true that young children are always like, "Well, that's not fair!" So we taught them a song. It goes like this. I'm just — yeah, - you're gonna — you already know the song.

♪ The World: It doesn't revolve around you ♪

♪ And life: It isn't fair ♪

♪ Buh bom, bom, bom ♪

♪ The World: It doesn't revolve around you ♪

♪ And life: [Pause] It isn't fair ♪

[Laughter]

Yeah.

[Applause]

Don't do anything with that, Kaponu. Just leave it alone. It's just — let it rest. So my children are traumatized to this day, but you know, it worked. They — because they know if they say that, they know what's coming, and they don't want to hear that song, so they know — they might still think it in their heart, but they won't say it.

How about this? And we will get to the study tonight. But how about this? Someone asks you, "Hey, how's life treating you?" Answer: "Horribly, but God is good."

Life is not fair. Shocking: We live in a fallen world. Everything is wrong. When sin entered the world, everything went upside down. And guess what? God's not to blame. But the problem is, as we're going to see, they're going to blame God for everything. And their fathers — the older generation: they're to blame for our problems. So God is going to deal with that in a very fascinating way.

Why don't we pray, and we'll just ask God to bless our time together tonight?

Father, thank You for Your word. Thank You for this chapter here in Your word. It's so needed. But Lord, it's kind of a bit of a difficult chapter. So we're just going to come to You and commit to You and ask of You for the Holy Spirit to be our teacher tonight and show us what it is that You want us to see here because this deals with a very serious matter, the sins of the fathers, generational sins.

And Lord, You're going to put it to rest as only You can. And I pray that we will, by the power of the Holy Spirit, also be able to put this to rest as well. So bless our time together tonight in Your word and especially the communion celebration at the end. We thank You so much. In Jesus name, Amen.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

All right, let's jump in.

“The word of the Lord came to me again, saying, [Verse 2] “What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?’”

Translated: It's the sins of the fathers. It's not fair. It's because of them that our teeth are set on edge. Because the father — this was a proverb. And by the way, this was the thing in that day. This is how they would speak and debate and argue and question and answer. They would speak in this kind of parabolic or proverbial fashion.

So this was a well-known proverb and a well-known saying at that time. The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and they're to blame for the children's teeth being set on edge. And by the way, it doesn't help in *Exodus 20*, sadly because this is the go-to passage for those who grab a hold of what's known as generational curses, the sins of the father.

Now, when you read — I want to say it's *Exodus 20:4-6* — my memory is already, you know — and it gets worse. That's why the rapture needs to happen very soon. But read it carefully. **“He visits the iniquity of the sins of the father unto the second and third generation of those who hate Me, but shows mercy...”**

Now, what's he saying? Well, some would have you believe that the children pay for the sins of the father. God's going to settle that right now in this chapter once and for all. He's gonna actually — spoiler alert — flip it around and actually say, no, the sins of the father are not visited upon you, just like your sins are not visited upon the father.

Only God can do that. He flips it around, and He's going to emphasize it and underscore it as we're going to see but stay with me because this is important. And if you don't get this at the start, this chapter is going to be discombobulated.

Yeah, there are, you know, things that we persist in. If you persist in the sins of the fathers, then you're going to reap because God is not mocked. **“Whatsoever you sew, that will you also reap.”**

So if you're going to persist in the sins of the fathers, then yeah, you're going to receive the due result of that and consequences of that. However — and this is where it's missed and misunderstood — when He visits the iniquity of the sins of the fathers unto the second and third generation, it's to show mercy, key word, mercy.

It's almost as if our loving Heavenly Father says, you know, I know that your father did evil, but you stand alone. If you persist in the sins of the father, then I have to judge accordingly. But I'm going to visit the sins, the iniquity, but My intent — and we're going to see that as well — is to show you mercy.

I'm going to visit the iniquity of the sins of the fathers, but I want to show you mercy. It's not to judge you, but if you persist in the sins of the father — and here's one last thing, and I don't want to — when we went through *Exodus*, we actually did more of an in-depth study.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

I won't take the time tonight, but suffice it to say, there cannot be such a thing as a generational curse.

You know why? Because when Jesus said it is finished, the curse had been broken. So there cannot be generational curses. The sins of the father are not that — the children are not punished for the sins of the father. There cannot be generational curses because if that's true, then Jesus is not true or being truthful. It's finished; the curse has been broken, so there cannot be generational curses.

But see, this was the proverb at the time. And now through the prophet Ezekiel, God's going to confront it, and it's going to get real — real starting here in *verse 3*. Because whenever God says, “as I live,” you know, it's serious.

Because God is alive and He says it here — we saw it, I think, last week as well, **“As I live, says the Lord God, you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. [And here's why, verse 4] “Behold, all souls are Mine. The soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins shall die.**

But [The wages of sin is death] But [Verse 5] if a man is just and does what is lawful and right; if he has not eaten on the mountains...”

By the way, this is quite a list, and this was very specific to what they were doing in that day. And lest we disconnect ourselves from this text, we would do well to remember that everything on this list is alive and well today. It's just kind of sort of repackaged. The names have been changed to protect the guilty. Let's say it like that.

So *verse 6*, **“If he has not eaten on the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defiled his neighbor's wife, nor approached a woman during her impurity; if [Verse 7] he has not oppressed anyone, but has restored to the debtor his pledge; has robbed no one by violence, but has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing; if [Verse 8] he has not exacted usury nor taken any increase, but has withdrawn his hand from iniquity and executed true judgment between man and man; if [Verse 9] [Let me catch my breath] he has walked in My statutes and kept My judgments faithfully, he is just; he shall surely live!”** says the Lord God.

[He's walking uprightly in righteous, but now he's going to have a son, *verse 10*] **If he begets a son who is a robber or a shedder of blood, who does any of these things and [Verse 11] does none of those duties, but has eaten on the mountains or defiled his neighbor's wife; if he has oppressed the poor and needy, robbed by violence, not restored the pledge, lifted his eyes to the idols, or committed abomination; if he has exacted usury or taken increase — shall he then live? He shall not live! If he has done any of these abominations, he shall surely die. [And listen very carefully] His blood shall be upon him.”**

Watch this. You've got a righteous father but an evil son. You see where we're going here? And is it not interesting? And when we were in Kings and Chronicles, it just came screaming out of our verse-by-verse study through those books.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

This is many years ago; some of you weren't here yet. Sorry you missed out, but it was an amazing, amazing study of the kings. Did you know that there were only nine good kings, none in Israel, all in Judah, of whom it was said and recorded, **"They did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."**

You know what that means? All the other kings did **"that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."** But there's an interesting detail that's recorded for us in the study of the Kings of Israel because you'll have a good king who gives birth to a very evil and wicked king and vice versa. You got an evil king who **"did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."** And he has a son who becomes king, and he's a good king.

You see where I'm going with this? Dad, son: You can have a righteous son come from an evil father and vice versa. You can have an evil son come from a righteous father.

Oh, how parents are so beat up and condemned by the enemy. When it comes to parenting — I've often said — I hope you don't tire of me saying it — but I've started up and owned and operated businesses over the years in the corporate world. I've started up and planted and pastored churches. And combined, owning and operating your own business and planting and pastoring your own church, combined it is not as difficult as parenting.

Can I get a witness? Because you're looking at me like — I mean — I mean, are you kidding me? I've got all kinds of sayings — I won't torture you with them — but I'll just give you one. Parenting isn't for wimps. It is tough, man. I like how one said it. They titled the book by the same saying, "Parenting is heart work." Oh yeah.

When I say this, I know that some of you will know exactly what I mean when I say this. But as a parent, you never knew that you could love so deeply, and so too, as a parent, you never knew that you could be hurt so deeply. Man, I just want to close in prayer right there and just leave the pulpit just weeping like the cry baby that I am. It's just hard. This is hard. Don't let the enemy beat you up. I had — I remember — and you probably heard this.

Think about this. The ultimate parent: God the Father himself. Adam and Eve: How did that work out? Just saying. If anything, please, just don't let the enemy build this guilt and this condemnation on you.

I mean, you trained them up in the ways of the Lord, the fear and the admonition of the Lord, and now they're adults, and they've chosen their path. God's never going to violate their free will. And it is probably the most heart wrenching experience for a parent, especially when you have a wayward daughter or a prodigal son. You taught them the things of the Lord, and they've chosen this path and walked away from the Lord, don't want anything to do with the Lord.

And the enemy is right there, right? He's produced a movie for you. He's popped the popcorn for you to watch it, too. And what's the movie about? How bad of a parent you were. It's your fault that those kids are like that.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

And you know what's even — I didn't mean to take it this far, but here we go. I think it's sad because Christians — I'll be gracious when I say this — well-intentioned Christians — they judge the parent based on the behavior of the son or the daughter.

And I just want to say that is wrong on every level. And is it any wonder that many a mother and father don't feel safe sharing their parenting struggles with their brothers and sisters in Christ for that reason?

Well, anyway, I digress. Let's get back to our Bible study already in progress. I completely forgot what verse we were on, so... Did we make it to *verse 13*? Yeah, we did.

Yeah, we God we did because, **"His blood shall be upon him."** [Not the father] **If [Verse 14], however, he begets a son [Okay, now we've got a grandson here, okay] who sees all the sins [Now watch this] which his father has done and considers but does not do likewise..."**

Wait, just bear with me. I've shared this before — I don't mean to continually refer to my own personal experiences — but I think it's apropos.

I did not have a good relationship with my father. My father was not a believer. I hope he came to Christ. He knew the Bible, very intelligent man, but I don't think he had a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. He died suddenly of heart attack. I hope he gave his life to Christ before. I think he did. I hope I'll see him in heaven. I know I'll see my mommy in heaven.

But he was not a good role model for me. And I learned that's not how to be a father from my father. Now, why do I say that and make that personal reference? Because this is exactly what God's going to say now.

Now, you got a grandson. He came from this father, this grandfather, and he's watching what's been modeled for him because it's not what's taught; it's what's caught. I'll never forget it.

When my daughter was very young, and this is back when I was younger and had energy, and I would yell at the TV more often than I care to admit. (Yelling in anger) you know, just yelling at the TV. I can't believe it! Are you kidding me? I look over; here's my precious baby girl imitating me.

[Laughter]

No, no, she can't even talk yet. She's going (Baby angry yelling sounds)

I'm like, what have I done? What have I just taught my daughter? It's not what's taught. It's what's caught. She's imitating me. I never yelled at the TV again in front of her.

(Chuckling)

Yeah, that's a work in progress. **"Faithful is He who began that good work."**

So here's now the grandson, and he **"considers but does not do likewise. Who [Verse 15] has not eaten on the mountains, nor lifted his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor**

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

defiled his neighbor's wife; has not oppressed anyone, nor withheld the pledge, nor robbed by violence, but has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing..." *[This is a good kid]*

Wait, he came from that dad? Yeah. Go figure.

Verse 17, "Who has withdrawn his hand from the poor and not received usury or increase but has executed My judgments and walked in My statutes. He shall not die for the iniquity of his father. He shall surely live!"

In other words, it's not — the father's not going to pay for the son's sins, and the sons not going to pay for the father's sins. Are we clear? You would like to think that the chapter could end right there, but it doesn't. God's going to drive it home even further.

"As for his father [Verse 18] because he cruelly oppressed, robbed his brother by violence, and did what is not good among his people, behold he shall die for his iniquity. Yet you say, 'Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?' Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live.

The soul [Verse 20] who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself."

Nice try. You stand and give an account for yourself. And you don't say, well, it's because of the woman You gave me. Or because You put the serpent there. If You wouldn't have done that, then I wouldn't be guilty of this. No, it's on you. You stand alone.

The wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself just as the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself. *[Verse 21]* **"But [This is where it gets really interesting] if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live."**

And I want you to pay particular attention to *verse 23* because this is the heart of God because **"it's not God's will that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."**

He says, asks rhetorically, **"Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord God, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?"**

In other words, I don't take any delight in punishing and judging the wicked. I want to show mercy. I'm going to visit the iniquity, but not to judge. I'm not waiting at the ready. I'm going to judge you! No, I want to show you mercy. I want you to live. I don't want you to die. I don't take any pleasure in judging the wicked.

But see, the problem for us is, is that because we don't grasp that God is just, but so too is God love. So He cannot be one without the other.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

The best illustration I ever heard was that of — and you'll forgive the courtroom illustration — but if you got a judge that is unjust and he just wants to show some love, he cannot be “just” if he, under the banner of well, I'm just a very loving judge, I'm going to go ahead and let this criminal go because I'm just a loving guy, well, that's not “just” for the victim.

So God is just, but if He's not loving, He cannot be “just.” And if He's not “just,” He cannot be loving. And we get all twisted up in that. We've talked about it. I won't do it to you again. I think once is enough.

But we talked at length, I think, just recently. I don't remember when it was. It's pretty bad when the pastor doesn't remember what he taught on. But we talked about this question of: If God is love, why does He allow evil? And we tackled that tough topic.

Because God will not violate the free will, and God had to let sin run its course. Otherwise the whole heavenly host and all of His creation would not have served Him out of love, but out of fear and force because they had to.

God wants us to choose of our own volition to love Him and to serve Him. He's not going to force His love on anyone. He is love, but He's also just, and He has to justly judge.

Now He's going to hit this head on here in a moment, *verse 24*. **“But when a righteous man [Verse 24] turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity [Notice He's flipping it around again] and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed because of them he shall die.**

“Yet you say, [Now watch, verse 25] the way of the Lord is not fair.”

That's not just, that's not — that's not fair. God is not fair. How could a loving God — you fill in the blank. **“Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair?”**

It probably bears repeating. We, again, talked about it, but you know that question: Why do bad things happen to good people? The question's wrong. And you cannot answer a wrong question with a right answer. You first have to get the question right, and then you can get the answer, the right answer. S

o let's get the question right here, okay? It's not: Why does bad things happen to good people? It's: Why do good things happen to bad people? Now we can talk. Because see, last time I checked, the Bible said, “All have sinned.”

We're all sinners. There's no one good. We're all bad. We've all sinned. So it's not a question of: Why do bad things happen to good people? No: Why do good things happen to bad people?

Because God is good. That's why. Because God is merciful. That's why. Because God is love. You know that — I think it's Proverbs, right?

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

Boy, it's getting really bad. Jesus, You have to come very soon.

[Laughter]

“The rain falls on the just and the unjust alike.”

How about this one? This one I am almost certain is in the Proverbs. Please, Lord, let it be in the Proverbs. You want – to heap burning coals on your enemy's head.

Now, as a young believer, I'm like, yeah! Yeah, that's what I'm talking about, huh? Heap burning coals? I'm gonna burn them, fry! That's not what it says. You know what it means?

See, in that day if your fire went out, you weren't warm, you couldn't cook food, so you would go to your neighbor and say, “Hey, can I get some of your coals to start the fire?” Oh, really it means a good thing?

Here, I've got this picture: I'm scorching them, burning them, pouring, heaping, burning coals on their head. No, that's a good thing. You're doing a good thing for your enemy. Does that sound a little bit like what Jesus said in *Matthew's gospel, Chapter 5*?

Sorry for the voice inflection — that was— that's what — that's how I think in my own mind.

You know why Jesus said, **“Pray for your enemies, those who do spitefully use you, speak evil of you”**? Don't you hate that? Like I'm going to pray for my enemies that who do spitefully use me and speak evil of me? I'm going to — oh, I'll pray all right.

(Chuckling)

And then we go into the Psalms, you know, where David's like, you know, crush their teeth in their mouth and make them choke. And that's not what you think either. Because what he's saying is, Lord, don't let them do what they're doing to me to anybody else. Silence them.

“The rain falls on the just and the unjust.”

We're like, yeah! Rain is a good thing. That changes everything, doesn't it? Because see, you need your crops to grow, and God is so merciful and God is so loving and God is so gracious that here's someone who's unjust, and God provides rain for the unjust, just as He does for the just.

Here's your enemy. You're going to — his fire went out. You're going to heap burning coals on him. That's how they would carry it.

You're going to give him — I'm not giving him my burning — he can get it from somewhere else. Too bad for him. That'll teach him.

Come on. Don't look at me like that. You think like that too, right?

That's not the heart of God. That's not God's heart. God is merciful, God is long-suffering, slow to anger. Can you imagine if God had a quick temper? We would all be toast.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

[Laughter]

Talk about changing your prayer life!

"Loving Heavenly Father..."

"What!"

"Oh, this is a bad time."

[Laughter]

You'll forgive the humorous illustration, but no, He's long suffering. He's slow to anger. He doesn't have a short fuse. It takes a lot!

You know what long suffering is? I know this is deeply profound. It means that you suffer long, long suffering. I mean, why? Because He's merciful. And He's loving! But He's just. And if He wasn't just, He wouldn't be loving. And if He wasn't loving, He wouldn't be just. "All of His judgments are true, fair, just, and amen."

[Audience says, "Amen and Amen."]

Nobody — I better do this because it's true. Nobody in heaven is going to be going, hmm. I think I got the short end of this deal. Because there's no sin in heaven, right? So we're not going to be coveting the bigger mansion they got.

It's kind of like, oh, you're looking at their treasures going, hmm. All their crowns: you're going, wow.

No.

Why?

Because God's judgments are just. And He will recompense everyone according. And He's just and fair.

"Yeah, but what about?"

"Okay, fine. What about?"

I have no answer. But here's what I do know. When I don't know, I go back to what I do know, and I know that God is just, and God is fair.

And it goes the other direction, too, in the other place. You know God doesn't send anybody to hell. They send themselves there. That's the judgment of rejecting the gift of eternal life found in the person of Jesus Christ. I like how one said it: "Jesus literally said, 'Over My dead and resurrected body do you go to hell.'" I died for you so you wouldn't because it's not My will that any should.

It's almost like God's looking for a way to be merciful, not for a way not to be merciful. And that's what He's saying here.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

So... and here you are accusing Me of not being fair? I think you got it backwards. I'm fair. I think you're the one that's not fair.

And that's what He says in *verse 25*. **“My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair. [Verse 26] When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies.”**

It's on him. I mean, if it sounds like God, through the prophet Ezekiel, is putting this proverb to rest and, I mean, just driving it home, that's because He's just driving it home. I mean, He's approaching it from every angle. He's covering every base. He's answering every unanswered question. He's giving them no excuse to continue with this proverb.

“Again [Verse 27, here's another repeating of what He just said] when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

Yet [Here it is again, verse 29] the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not fair.’ O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair?”

Can you indulge me for just a moment? This is that disconnect that we talk about often, and I'm just as prone as anyone, probably more so, if I'm honest. You read a verse like that and, **“O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair?”** This is the Lord's response to them saying, the way of the Lord isn't fair, God is not fair.

Now, here's the disconnect. I would never do that. In the Exodus, how many times did the Israelites murmur and complain against the Lord after witnessing, I mean, miracle, literal miracle after miracle after miracle? And it lasts for 72 hours. And now they're complaining and murmuring again.

And it gets so bad — there's one very, I mean, brutally raw and honest dialog between Moses and God where neither Moses or God wants to take credit for them being His people. Moses is like, “Your people!” You know, “the woman You gave me.” The people You gave me!

And God's like, they're not Mine; they're yours.

I'm not — you know, it's kinda like when the parent says, “Your son!”

“My son?” Oh, only when they do something wrong. They're my son now.

They do something good? They're our son. Oh, how does that work? Give me a break. Anyway, maybe that was too much. Let's get back to this disconnect because we need to talk about this.

Let's be careful here. The way of the Lord is not fair? I mean, we just recoil and wince. And ho! How could they say that?

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

Well, now, wait a minute. Maybe you've never said it, but when adversity strikes, you've thought it. God, why are You allowing this to happen to me? This does not seem fair.

Oh, we've — we've kind of, you know, cutened it up and tightened it up and cleaned it up. But it's still the same thing. **“Because as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”**

We're going to be talking about that on Sunday. I mean, the fruit of my life will always expose the root of my life. So let's be careful because in our hearts, we can think God as and see God as not being fair in allowing this or that. That seems unfair to me. We may not say it directly, but indirectly, what we're insinuating is, is that God is unjust. It may not have the same bite that this does, but let's be very careful that we don't come down too hard on the house of Israel because that's our house, too.

And I don't think the emphasis is so much on **“your ways are not fair.”** It's more on no, **“My ways are fair.”**

“Yeah, but God,” and you can again fill in the blank.

“Well, JD [*I'll use myself because we have this conversation often*] You don't know what I'm doing, but I know what I'm doing.”

What is it about you that you want to know? Oh, I know; you want to see because you want to walk by sight, not by faith. But see, **“the righteous shall live by faith.”** And sight is the antithesis of faith.

Because see, I want to see it. God, I — and we're not in control. Oh, that's the biggie. You know who you are; I won't look at anyone when I say this. We have to trust that God is in control. But that drives control freaks — again, I'm not going to look anybody — crazy because, see, we don't have control, and we want to have control.

We want to know: “Hey, what's the plan here?”

“Well, you're on a need-to-know basis.”

“Well, that's not fair! I want to know. I want to see.”

“Oh, JD, I'm sorry, but that's why it's called faith, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of that which is yet unseen.”

Oh, I know what's going on here. You think it unfair of Me not letting you in on what I'm doing? Well, actually, I'm protecting you from yourself. Because if I were to tell you; first of all, you wouldn't be able to fathom it anyway.”

Just like a little, little child., you know, all those “why questions.”

“Why is the sky blue?”

“Oh because it's God's favorite color.”

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

"Why is that God's favorite color?"

"Oh because..." and then "why, why, why, why, why?"

Yai yai, yai yai, yai yai!

"How can finite comprehend infinite? So that's one reason why I can't. I would love to, but it would just create more questions than answers. So that's one of the reason why I'm not letting you in on it.

Here's another reason. *[And you know who you are too, and again, I won't look at anybody]* You'll try to help Me out. If I let you in on what I'm doing, you're like, "Wow, cool. Can I help?"

"No. You want to help Me? Don't help me."

I mean, your kids are adorable. Well, my boys, when they were little, oh, so adorable.

"Baba, can I help?" I'm like, uh, here's a 30-minute project that I'm going to let them help me with that's going to take eight-and-a-half-hours because they helped me. It just made it worse, but they're so adorable.

"So I already know you're going to want to try to help Me, and you're just going to mess it up and make it take longer anyway. That's one reason. But here's the big reason. *[And this hits every single one of us]* I'm not going to let you in on what I'm doing and why I'm doing it even though you're accusing Me of being unfair and not letting you in on what I'm doing because I'm teaching you to trust Me. You kind of got to trust Me, don't you? I brought you to this place where you really have — you're all out of options now."

"I mean, God this is impossible!"

"Good. It's about time. Because I'm the God of the impossible. See if it was still possible for you, then it was impossible for Me."

And again, God's not — He's just waiting — He's just — "Just let Me know when you're — when you're done for the 134th time trying to figure it out, work it out. I'm just going to let you come to the end of yourself where you throw up your hands and go, "God, I can't do this."

It's like God saying, "Good. Can I do it now?"

You remember the three steps?

Step 1: No, you can't.

Step 2: Know He can.

Step 3: *[This is the hard one]* Let Him. Get out of His way. I mean, how long suffering is God?

Can you just (Stuttering) I'm trying to do this, and you're like (Stuttering)

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

"And then you keep bugging Me."

"God, what are You doing?"

"I can't tell you. It's a surprise."

Right? Am I right? And that — (Stumbling)

"Well, can you give me a hint?"

"No."

"Well, that's not fair." Waa-waa-waa-waa-waa.

"Nah, you'll see. You'll see."

Verse 30, "Therefore, I will judge you, O house of Israel."

Now, remember, this is because they are judging God as unfair. This is their response. You judge Me as being unjust?

No, **"I will judge you, O house of Israel, everyone according to his ways," says the Lord God. [And here it is: Repent] "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin."**

Like I want to see you — I love you so much. I cannot just sit idly by and watch you ruin your life because of your own iniquity and then blame Me for it.

"Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? [And he says it again, and it brings the chapter to an end] For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord God. "Therefore turn and live!"

This is the new life in Christ, the new heart, a new spirit, the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, the new life. **"The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."** Why should you die? Choose life, live, repent, turn, and live.

I want you to live. I created you for eternity in My image, to be with Me for all eternity. I don't want you to die in your sins. I want you to live forever. I love you. Repent.

You're judging Me for being unfair? I'm fair. And I'm so fair that that's why I have to judge you. Because if I didn't, then I would be unfair and unjust. I have to judge you; you've judged Me as unfair. I have to judge you. I don't want to, but I have to.

It's almost like pleading with you. How much time does God give us to repent? I think it was the Amorites He gave 400 years. 400 years for them to repent, and they didn't. 400 years. How much time has God given us to just repent? And what does repent mean? It just means a change of mind.

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

Do a 180. It's a change of mind so that God now can change your heart from the inside out with a new heart, a new spirit. But He won't violate that free will. So He waits for us to repent, have a change of mind.

He says, all right, now I can change your heart. Give you a new heart and a new spirit, and you can live. Turn and live. I don't want you to die. I love you so much.

Ah, what a great way to Segway into the Communion celebration! Is this not exactly what the communion table is all about? *Luke 22*, I'll begin reading in *verse 14*. **"When the hour had come, He [Speaking of Jesus] sat down and the 12 apostles with Him. Then He said to them, 'With fervent desire, I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; [Speaking of the cross] for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.'**

Then He took the cup and gave thanks and said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves [And He says for a second time] for I say to you [Verse 18] I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes.'"

Some of your translations render it this way. He eagerly awaits, fervently desires. It's almost like Jesus is saying, You guys, this is the last time we're going to partake together. We're going to celebrate Passover for the last time because I'm going to the cross. And I can't wait until what we're going to do tonight is fulfilled in My kingdom. I eagerly await! I fervently desire! I can't wait!

This is what a bridegroom says to his bride because what He's referring to, the fulfillment in His kingdom, is the wedding feast of the Lamb. When we're with Him, I mean, let that sink in. What we're about to do tonight there's coming a day very soon, I believe, and so do you, I believe, where what we're about to do tonight we are going to do with Him [Chicken skin] in His kingdom.

"So He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

If you'll — for those of you here — take the packaging and peel back the top, you'll find the bread. Just hold on to it for a moment. So the bread, a symbol of the body of Jesus Christ, broken, not the bones, that would disqualify Him as the Passover Lamb. No bone could be broken. The skin was broken, His body was broken. And this bread is a symbol of His body broken for us instead of us.

And the key is, I want you to do this in remembrance of Me. The significance of this, and we're going to be talking about this in the Prophecy Update on Sunday, the Passover celebration, which we affectionately refer to as the Last Supper, the Communion: This was the Passover. It was the fulfillment of the Passover because Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the Passover.

What was the Passover?

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

It was that 10th plague in Egypt when God in haste, haste, key word, had them take the unleavened bread, no leaven, leaven, a type of sin, and it would be the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is what this symbolizes. The first fruits, the Feast of First Fruits: the resurrection, the first resurrection.

But the Passover, the Feast of Passover was when the Angel of death would pass over the house that had the lamb's blood, whose body had been broken, put on the door posts, and that death would pass over, and they would be saved. That's what this represented.

But the key was, and the significance is for us today: I want you to always remember, as often as you do this, you can do this as often as you want, but as often as you do this, I want you to remember.

What do You want me to remember?

I want you to remember Me and what I did for you. I died for you so that the angel of death would pass over you and you would not die, but you would live and be saved. And I want you to also remember this: That the Passover was such that there was no time to put leaven in the bread because they had to be ready because I was ready to take them out of Egypt. And He's getting ready to take us out of this Egypt, of this world. Egypt is always a type of the world.

So it had to be done in haste. And they had to be ready and prepared. And I want you to do this. And every time you do this, I want you to do this in remembrance of Me because I'm coming to take you out. And when I do, we're going to do this. We're going to do this when it finds its fulfillment in My kingdom. So a symbol of His body broken for us.

Would you partake with me?

Thank You, Lord! Lord, thank You for giving us this to do in remembrance of You in the first place. Because if we didn't do this, it would not always be in the forefront of our remembrance.

It really is a commemoration and a celebration of what You did for us, Your body broken for us, and not just that, but even as we are about to partake of the cup, it's a reminder, a much-needed reminder, like it was for the Israelites to be ready because You're going to do this in haste.

Because I'm taking you out to that place that I prepared for you in my Father's house so that we can partake together. And I can't wait.

Oh, Lord, neither can we. So thank You for giving us this to do in remembrance of You.

Luke goes on to write, **"Likewise, He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for You.'"**

Now, again, for those of you here, if you'll peel back the remainder of the packaging, you'll find the cup, and just hold on to it for a moment. I always — how do I say this?

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

I always take very seriously the cup, and here's why. Because it's a symbol of His blood shed in our stead. Why do I take that so seriously? Because there's no remission of sin without the shedding of blood.

So when Jesus says — He offers them the cup — and imagine now in that Upper Room, and this was the custom — so much in the cultural dynamics and the customs and the typology and the symbolism that is so missed in our day.

But in the Middle East, you would eat from the same bread, you would drink from the same cup. Why? Because we're one. I'll never forget growing up as a kid, I would watch my dad with my uncles. They would sit around the table, and they would take the unleavened bread, the pita bread, and they would break it, and then they would dip it in the hummus. And I hope you had dinner.

The baba ghanoush with the garlic and the olive oil. Oh! And they would take the bread, they would dip it, and then they would take the same bread and double dip.

[Laughter]

Are you kidding me?

No because the whole idea was that bread that's in you is the same bread that's in me, common union. It doesn't matter. We're the same. We're one. No longer two. We're united. It's a common bond.

You know, in the Middle East, when you eat — oh, man, I shouldn't have done it. It's too late now. Toothpaste is out of the tube, as they say. Real quick, I'll make a quick. Famous last words. You know that proverb again? I know this is in the Proverb because when we were studying through the Proverbs, it got worse and worse for this husband who had this contentious wife.

First, it was better for him to go eat crumbs on the roof than it was steak in the house with a contentious wife. Then you go a little bit further — guys, don't — be careful here. So then you a little bit further then. Now he's not no longer — he has to go further. So now he's in the wilderness. It'd be better to be — and then I think by the time he's like on a different continent, you know, it'd be better to just like, not eat anything, you know, and instead...

Anyway, that was unnecessary, probably, but there's a cultural importance and significance to that. You bond when you break bread with somebody in the Middle East. That's how you make a deal. You don't sign; you break bread, you eat with them.

That's why in 1993, in September, when then President Clinton on the White House lawn signed the Oslo Peace Accords with Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin, and they shook hands, it meant nothing. That's not how you make a deal or a covenant.

How do you do it?

Ezekiel 18
'Life Isn't Fair, But God Is'
Pastor JD Farag

You break bread together and you eat, and there's a bond that's formed. And by the way, this — you know when you're — when you're eating with somebody, if there's contention there, it ruins the whole thing that they eat.

And it's locally here in Hawaii. And this is what I love about the islands. And by the way, there's going to be food in heaven. That alone is — new bodies, no calories or the — you know cholesterol — none of that.

But when you eat with somebody, it's intimate. It's intimate; there's an intimacy and there's a bond that is formed. And that's what the communion table is. It's a bond for life unto death. Because we've broken bread together, we've drunk from the same cup, we've eaten from the same bread. It's a common union. We are now bound together as one.

And when He says, **“This cup is the New Covenant in My blood which is shed for you...”** in other words, all of your sins are covered and removed as far as the East is from the West because of My blood shed for You.

Would you partake with me?

Thank You, Lord. Please stand; we'll have Kapono come up. We'll close in prayer and song. Thank you for your patience. I love communion! Lord, thank You so much! I always feel so inadequate when it comes to the communion table because there's just so much, so much for us to understand and grasp and comprehend and remember, more importantly, remember.

So Lord, thank You. That's all we can say for now, and it's going to have to do until we have all of eternity to thank You, and praise You, and worship You! But Lord, that You would come and die for us shed Your blood for us, pay for us, purchase us... And what we did here tonight was just a — a remembrance of that, that points us to when we're going to partake with You.

Oh, Lord! We, too, fervently desire, eagerly await. Thank You, Lord Jesus. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, we pray. Maranatha. In Jesus' name, Amen.