

# Ezekiel 18:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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"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." God offers hope to the wicked through genuine repentance. The phrase "turn from all his sins" emphasizes comprehensive transformation, not selective reformation. True repentance involves both turning from sin and turning to God's statutes. The promise "he shall surely live" guarantees salvation for genuine converts. This demonstrates both God's justice (sin brings death) and mercy (repentance brings life). The gospel offers this hope to all who truly repent.

## Historical Context

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The exiles (591 BC) needed assurance that genuine repentance would be accepted despite past wickedness. This encouraged hope while maintaining moral seriousness. The principle appears throughout Scripture: God welcomes repentant sinners regardless of past (Luke 15:11-24, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). However, the repentance must be genuine—comprehensive turning from sin, not mere regret. This shaped Christian understanding of conversion: radical transformation through faith and repentance, not gradual self-improvement.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does the promise that the wicked can live through repentance demonstrate God's mercy?
2. What does comprehensive turning from sin involve practically?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהָרָשׁ ע	כִּי	יָשׁוּב	מִכָּל	חַטָּאתוֹ	אֲשֶׁר	וַעֲשֵׂה ה
But if the wicked	H3588	will turn	H3605	from all his sins	H834	and do
H7563		H7725		H2403		H6213
וְשָׁמַר	אֶת	כָּל	חֻקֹּתַי	וַעֲשֵׂה ה	מִשְׁפָּט ט	וְצִדִּיק ה
and keep	H853	H3605	all my statutes	and do	that which is lawful	and right
H8104			H2708	H6213	H4941	H6666
יָחִי ה	יָחִי ה	ל א	יָמוֹת:			
he shall surely	he shall surely	H3808	he shall not die			
H2421	H2421		H4191			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 33:19** (Word): But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

**Proverbs 28:13** (Sin): He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

**Acts 3:19** (Sin): Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

**Luke 24:47** (Sin): And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel 18:9** (Parallel theme): Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.

**Romans 8:13** (Parallel theme): For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

**Ezekiel 18:5** (Word): But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,

**Psalms 119:112** (Parallel theme): I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end.

**James 2:26** (Parallel theme): For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

**Ezekiel 18:19** (Word): Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.