

The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. 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."

Then I will read also the 19th and 20th verses of the same chapter : (Reads.)

"Yet ye say, 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. 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."

Then, there is a heresy extant with reference to the child in its relationship to God and His Book, which might be termed the theory of organic religion; that is to say—and I quote the exact words of one to whom I listened not long ago who was a hearty champion of the theory—that the "religion of the parent is the matrix of the religion of the child." In other words, that because the parent is religious, therefore, *per se*, as a spiritual consequence the child must be religious. I find no warrant for that in the Scriptures. I find the contrary to be the true experience in the Scriptures.

Now, I want to turn again to the Scriptures. I go back to old father Abraham, the father of the faithful, to whom the promise came, to whose seed the promise descended. In Genesis xviii. 17, 18, 19, you will find these words: (Reads.)

"And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

God knew Abraham; God blessed Abraham; God's blessing descended upon his children, because He knew Abraham would command his household and his children; not because Abraham was good himself would his children be good and blessed afterwards, but because he would start in the way of parental discipline, and govern by commanding his household and setting their feet in the way of the Lord. There is no warrant for organic religion in that passage.

I turn now over here to the beautiful picture concerning Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 1 and 2: (Reads.)

"Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."