

## ***AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY***

- 1. The age of accountability is when a person becomes sufficiently conscious of God, sin, and his or her need for Jesus.**
- 2. The Bible teaches there is an age of accountability.**
  - a. **Dt 1:39** 39 ...As for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, who today have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in there. And to them I will give [the land of Canaan], and they shall possess it.
  - b. **Ne 10:28-29** 28 The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all who have separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Torah of God, their wives, their sons, their daughters, all who have knowledge and understanding, 29 join with their brothers, their nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in God's Torah that was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of Yahweh our Lord and his rules and his statutes.
  - c. **Is 7:14-16** 14 Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15 He [Messiah] shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the boy [Isaiah's son] knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.
  - d. **Ro 9:10-12** 10 ...When Rebekah had conceived children [Esau and Jacob] by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— 12 she was told, The older will serve the younger.
- 3. The age of accountability differs for each person.**
  - a. Only God knows exactly when a person reaches the age of accountability.
  - b. The age of accountability may occur sooner than we think.
    - (1) **Pr 20:11** 11 Even a child makes himself known by his acts, by whether his conduct is pure and upright.
  - c. The age of accountability is inevitable.
- 4. Those who never reach the age of accountability cannot be condemned for unbelief.**
  - a. A person is condemned to the lake fire only for unbelief.
    - (1) **Jn 3:17-18** 17 ...God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
  - b. Those who have not reached the age of accountability lack the capacity to disbelieve.
    - (1) **Heb 3:18-19** 18 ...To whom did [God] swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

- (2) **Dt 1:39** 39 ...As for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, who today have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in there. And to them I will give [the land of Canaan], and they shall possess it.
- c. Jesus has already paid for the personal sins of those who never reach the age of accountability.
  - (1) See *Unlimited Atonement*.

**5. Those who never reach the age of accountability will go to heaven.**

- a. David says he will go to his son who died shortly after childbirth.
  - (1) **2 Sa 12:21-23** 21 Then his servants said to [David], What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive. But when the child died, you arose and ate food. 22 He said, While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live? 23 But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.
- b. Human beings who die in the womb through miscarriage or abortion will go to heaven.
  - (1) **Ps 139:16** 16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance. In your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.
  - (2) We do not know the exact point in pregnancy when the immaterial soul joins to the material body. Most likely it is during the first six weeks of pregnancy.
- c. No child will be condemned based on the unbelief of his or her parents.
  - (1) **Eze 18:20** 20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

**6. God has a special love for those who never reach the age of accountability.**

- a. **Eze 16:20-21** 20 ...You took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. Were your whorings so small a matter 21 that you slaughtered my children and delivered them up as an offering by fire to them?
- b. **Mt 18:2-4** 2 ...Calling to him a child, [Jesus] put him in the midst of them 3 and said, Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- c. **Mk 10:13-16** 13 ...They were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. 16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

**7. It is parents' responsibility to prepare their children for the age of accountability.**

- a. At a relatively young age, children are able to receive the kingdom of God.

- (1) **Mk 10:13-16** 13 ...They were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. 16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.
- b. Set your children up for success by teaching them about God, sin, and Jesus as they approach the age of accountability. Instil within them a keen awareness they will be held accountable.