

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

Feb. 22, 2016

- Leviticus 12:1-13:59 – Laws regarding childbirth (12), laws of infectious diseases (13)
- John 8:12-30 – Jesus, the Light of the world .
- Song of Solomon 7:3-4–Solomon’s extolling of the Shulamite’s beauty.

Commentary:

1. Leviticus 12:1-13:59. After giving birth to a son, a new mother was ceremonially unclean for seven days (12:2). On the eighth day after birth the baby boy was to be circumcised in obedience to Gen 17:12 (12:3). After the circumcision the new mother had to wait an additional thirty-three days to be purified from her bleeding (12:4). During this period of

time she was not to touch a holy object and had to avoid entering the tabernacle. The fact that she was prohibited from entering the temple during the state of impurity sheds light on what was the true nature of being in an impure state. The real disadvantage to being in a state of impurity was that the individual would not be able to enter into the tabernacle, so the person would be prevented from worshiping God with the people of God.

Gathering with the people of God

was considered a great privilege in the Old Testament and the New Testament. It has been my experience that this is no longer the case among many modern Christians due in no small part to the individualistic, self-centered, and pragmatic mindset of our age. Most today are too busy with the world and simply do not have the energy, time, or interest left to gather with God’s people. Many have effectively forsaken the assembly with other believers (cf., Heb. 10:25), which results in the steady decline in the local church. If not for faithful believers, there would be no local churches today. **Leviticus 12:6-7:** Subsequent to the period of purification (after the birth of a son or a daughter), the new mother was to offer to the priest a year-old lamb for a burnt offering and a pigeon or dove for a sin offering at the tabernacle (12:6). After the priest presented these offerings the new mother was atoned for and ceremonially clean from the flow of blood (12:7). Though the passage states that the new mother presents these offerings to the priest to receive atonement, we should not consider the act of giving birth to be in any case a sinful act. This is supported from our passage in two ways. First of all, in the order of the offerings the burnt offering was offered first and then the sin offering followed. The order was reversed when sin was at issue. When an offering was made in response to the commission of sin, the sin offering preceded the burnt offering. The

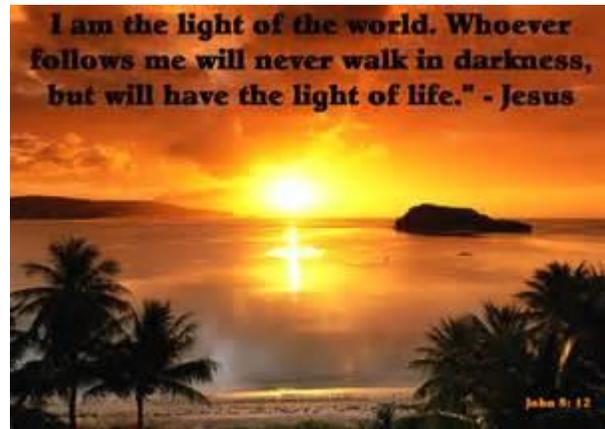
Leviticus 12:2...”When a woman gives birth and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean for seven days, as in the days of her menstruation she shall be unclean.



<http://prayercommunicationwithgod.com>

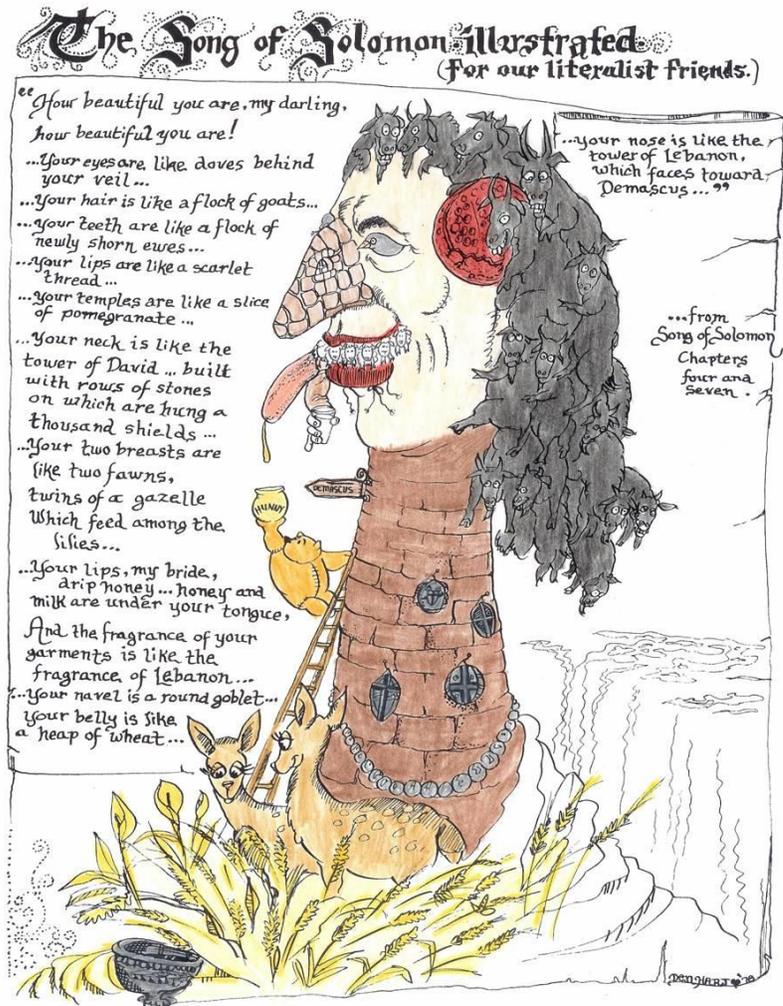
order of the offerings in Leviticus 12 suggests that the personal sin of the mother is not the issue. Moreover, the result of the sacrifice renders the mother “clean”; it does not say that she is forgiven. The issue is thus not the sinfulness of the mother or of the process of giving birth; rather the issue seems to be that of the issuance of blood. Because, in some sense, life is in the blood, the loss of blood required some purification to acknowledge the sanctity of life. It should further be noted that the sacrifices for male and female infant are identical. This observation supports the view that the male and female infants as well as male and female adults were considered equal in value before God.

2. John 8:12-30. Jesus Christ, the Light of the Word—He is His own great theme! What a statement! No man every spoke with such confidence—because no other man is God manifest in the flesh. He speaks with absolute authority as the Source of illumination for the world; the only Source; the Source for all. Moreover, note that ‘following’ Him is the sure deliverance from all darkness. Unless He is God Himself such statements are monstrous assumptions. However, many listen, believe, and follow Him without question. He is the Light of the world, because in Him is the glory of God—the fullness of the Godhead bodily. As John put it, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Note the promise: “‘He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness.’ It is amazing how many difficulties are cleared out of our lives by simply following Him—as per WWJD. Of course, this requires upfront living for God and accepting all that God brings in our lives. The problem all too often is that we are far too self-willed to lovingly embrace His will and thus Him without reservations. Note the deep and grand gift He offers those who will follow Him: “He shall have the light of life.” The bottom line is that we will either increasingly live in the light of life or the darkness of the world as we get ready for the next life—Quo Vadis?



3. Song of Solomon 7:3-4. When the groom said his bride's breasts were like fawns he was comparing their softness, not their color or form. Looking on the soft coat of a little fawn makes one want to stroke it. Solomon wanted his bride to know that her soft and gentle beauty had kindled his desire for her and he wished to express that desire with his caresses. The description of her neck may indicate that she is wearing an ivory necklace; but probably, as in the description of her thighs, it merely means that her neck seems to be highly crafted from the finest materials. The comparison of her eyes to pools indicates the depth of beauty found in them. To the Western reader, the description of her nose hardly seems complementary.

However, the point is neither that her nose is large or that she is superhuman. Viewed from a distance, a mountain (or tower) adds symmetry and comeliness to an otherwise nondescript horizon. Her nose complements and sets off her facial beauty. As we have studied in philosophy of language, the meaning is not determined in the meaning of the words but the reality that the words point to. To illustrate this, note the picture that shows how she would look to one who is Cratylean or a true literalist.



On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don