

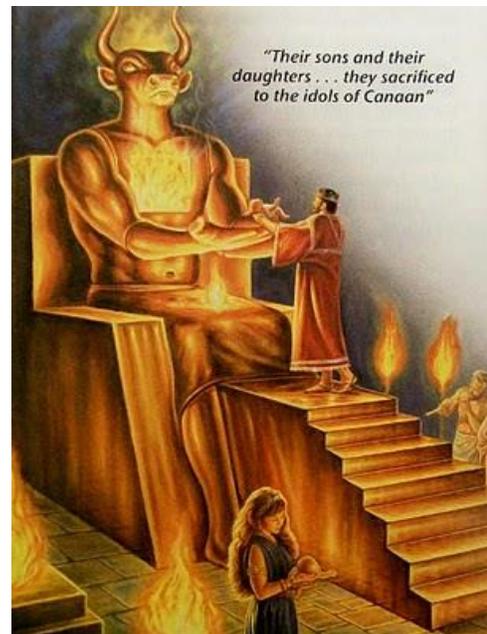
## “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

**Feb. 26, 2016**

- Leviticus 20:1-22:33 – Laws requiring capital punishment (20); priestly holiness (21-22).
- John 9:35-41 – Blind religious leaders who are blind to their blindness.
- Song of Solomon 8:1-5 – The beloved’s desire for greater intimacy.

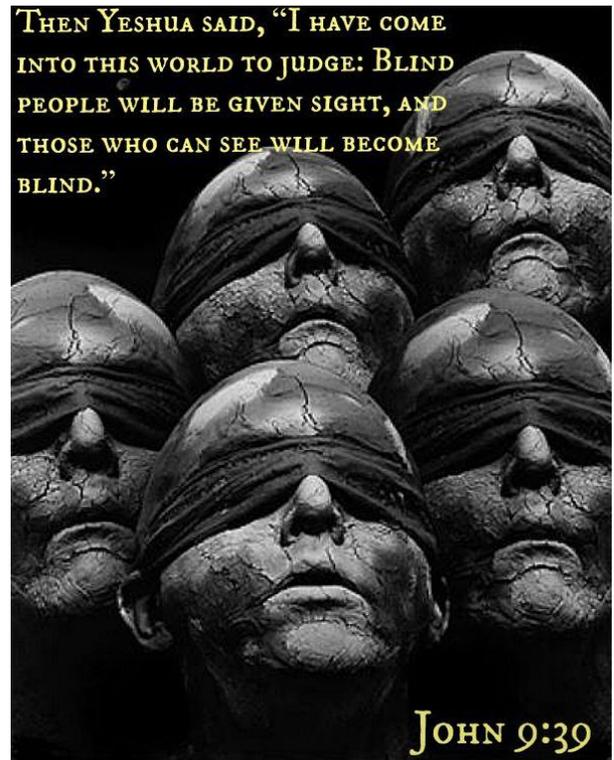
### COMMENTARY:

**Leviticus 20:1-22:33.** The commandment in Lev 20:9 that required the death penalty, the cursing of parents, is repeated by Jesus in the New Testament in His interaction with the Pharisees (Matt 15:4; Mark 7:10). Under Roman law Israel could not carry out this punishment. Since it is part of Israel’s civil law, this punishment is no longer applicable for the Christian today. The moral principle and the respect one should have for one’s parents is not abrogated, however, and is reinforced by the Lord and by Paul (Eph. 6:2). As moral laws the sexual offenses are still applicable during the age of the church, though like the crime of cursing of parents the capital punishments for these offenses were limited to the time when God’s people constituted a redeemed theocratic nation (John 8:1–11). The capital punishments for these sexual offenses were not intended to be executed beyond Israel. The emphasis on all of these commandments is protection of believers’ theocratic nation, their spiritual lives, and protection of the family. The goal was to keep Israel from following the customs of the pagans, whose laws were more severe for economic crimes and less for crimes against God and family. It is not an accident that all of the nations around Israel failed to survive. We know from archaeology the appalling practices of the other nations such as cannibalism, bestiality, incest, and burning their own children to death in honor of the Devil. No wonder they ended up in the ashbin of history and Israel continues to live.



**John 9:35-41.** Note the blindness of the Pharisees, “We also are not blind, are we?” They expected a negative answer because they assumed that certainly they, of all men, possessed spiritual perception.

Although it is easy to shake our heads and condemn religious leaders, the problem of self-deception to Whole Truth, Total Truth, is something *we all* have great difficulty overcoming. To be sure, every sin we commit is an act that is a result of some self-deception as we mistakenly view sin as a good that is greater than the good of God, fellowship, growth in God and development spiritual virtue, which alone gives us a will that desires rightly. To think that sin does not adversely affect us because we have grace (1 John 1:9) is just another form of deception that has pernicious effects on our character—who we are and what we desire! A weak and immature will lacks the virtue or strength to desire true good and so is far more attracted to sin and evil than a mature virtuous will. Note that the Pharisees, also, thought they could see and this made them more accountable. When we think that we have no self-deception in us, we too are accountable and only invite more of God corrective discipline to open our eyes. The primary locus of culpability is in the will. The intellect provides all of the choices, and all of the choices that appeal to us do so because of some “good” in them. It is the will that decides to highlight one “good” and suppress another “good.” Consider how this played out in Adam and Eve’s choices to take the “good” delicious fruit (instead of seeing God’s will as the greatest good) in contrast to Christ’s desire in temptations in the desert when He desired the good of the plan of God instead of creating good/delicious bread from the stones in the desert. Only with spiritual virtue will a believer think rightly and desire rightly. A believer may have a ton of doctrine and be a baby with respect to his desires due to lack of developed virtue. Such a baby believer is guaranteed to be a daily failure—as evidence by the need to confess his sins constantly, all due to bad desires from lack of virtue/good in the will—unless and until he grows in virtue. There is simply no way any baby believer can have success when his will and mind is weak as per disordered desires. The only believer who becomes a success is the one who continues in the Whole Truth, Total Truth, which really is the only way to develop virtue. In short, there is no real growth in virtue apart from life in Total Truth in the context of philosophical Realism. Conduit Christianity is a joke as a method to the development of virtue—but then again so is anything that is not biblical.



**Song of Solomon 8:1-5.** The Shulamite's wish that her lover were her brother seems strange to our way of thinking. The point, the reality, is that she wishes she were free to display her affection openly. In the ancient world this would have been impossible for a woman with any man except a father, brother, or other near relative, the kissing of whom would not be construed by the public as a quasisexual act. The freedom to kiss in public would not apply to her husband. Thus, the wish expressed here *is not sexual* but is a desire to be free to show her love for the groom freely and openly. In our culture spouses are freer to expressive love for one another openly in public as long as it is in good taste and not overly sexual. On the flip side, it is never appropriate for a Christian husband or wife to denigrate in any way a spouse in public.

On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don

