

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

**Feb. 9, 2016**

- Exodus 21:1-23:33 – Statutes; abortion and life in the womb.
- John 4:43-54 – The official’s son.
- Song of Solomon 3:1-2 – The Shulamite’s dream.

### **Commentary:**

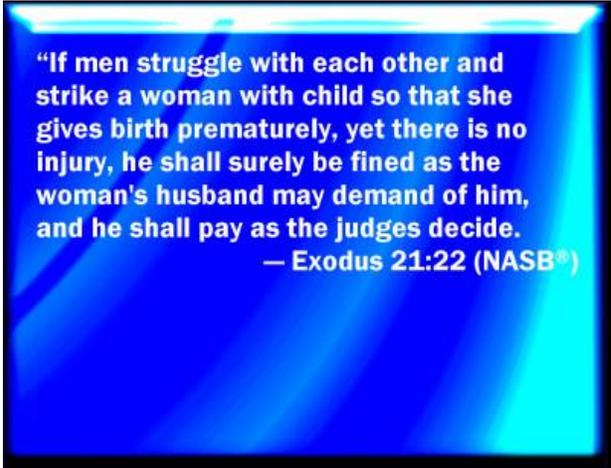
1. Exodus 21:1-23:33. This section is one of statutes regarding the care of servants, capital offenses, physical injury, culpable neglect, thieves, property damage, safe deposits, borrowing, sexual seduction, idolatrous customs, care of the needy, reverence, legal justice, Sabbaths, and annual festivals.

**What does the Bible say about life in the womb?** For some odd reason some translations (like the 1977 NASB) translate the normal Hebrew word for birth ( יָלַד ) with “miscarriage.” The implication is that if men were fighting and woman was caused to have a “miscarriage,” then there is to only be a fine. But if the woman died, then the penalty was capital punishment (21:23). Does this not prove that the unborn was not considered a human being, as the mother was? No! for at least 6 reasons.

- a. First, consider the translation of the great Hebrew scholar Umberto Cassuto, who makes the meaning clear, affirming that the unborn are of equal value to adult beings, and thus serves as a strong passage against abortion:

*When men strive together and they hurt unintentionally a woman with child, and her children come forth but no mischief happens—that is, the woman and the children do not die—the one who hurts her shall surely be punished by a fine. But if any mischief happens, that is, if the woman dies or the children, then you shall give life for life (Commentary on the Book of Exodus).*

In my research, I just now realized that the 1995 NASB corrected their 1977 “miscarriage” translation with the proper “birth prematurely”



**“If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide.  
— Exodus 21:22 (NASB®)**

- b. Second, the Hebrew word, *yatsa* (יָצָא) mistranslated “miscarriage,” literally means to “come forth” or to “give birth” (NKJV, NIV). It is the Hebrew word regularly used for live birth in the OT. *In fact, it is never used for miscarriage.* In this passage, and throughout the Old Testament, it refers to a live birth.
- c. Third, there is another Hebrew word for miscarriage, (*שָׂקוּל*, *shakol*, Ex. 23:26; Job 21:10) and it is not used here. Since this word for miscarriage was available and was not used, but the word for live birth was used, there is no reason to suppose it means anything else than a live birth of a fully human being.
- d. Fourth, the word used for the mother’s offspring here is *yeled* which means “child.” It is the same word used of babies and young children throughout the Bible (cf., Gen. 21:8; Ex. 2:3). Hence, the unborn is considered just as much a human as a young child is.
- e. Fifth, if any harm happens to either the mother or the child, the same punishment was given, “life for life” (21:23). This demonstrates that the unborn was considered of equal value with the mother.
- f. Sixth, other Old Testament passages teach the full humanity of the unborn child and the New Testament affirms the same view:

**Psalms 51:5** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

**Psalms 139:13** For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And *that* my soul knows very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, *And* skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When *as yet there were* none of them. <sup>17</sup> How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!

**Luke 1:41** And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

In closing, I would like to add that no Christian who has ever had an abortion should live out her life in guilt or shame. Jesus Christ died for all sins and that includes the sin of abortion. Moreover, her child or children, are in Heaven, and she will meet them when it is her time to go be with her Lord for all of eternity.

- 2. John 4:43-54. After Jesus’ two-day ministry in Samaria, Jesus and His disciples continued north into Galilee. Now Jesus Himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country. The people’s enthusiasm for the Healer did not always indicate they had faith in Him (Mark 6:1–6). The royal official could have been a Gentile or a Jew, a centurion, or a minor official in Herod’s court. Possibly he was a Jew because Jesus included him among the

people who desire signs and wonders. His son had been sick, and undoubtedly he had exhausted all the local means at his disposal; this drove him from Capernaum to the village of Cana, 20 to 25 miles away, hoping that the Healer would save his son from death. Notice that Jesus was rather blunt with him. The point was that a faith built on miraculous signs is not a complete faith (cf. 2:23–25). It is sinful to refuse to believe in Jesus apart from seeing miraculous signs and wonders. It indicates a suppression of the convicting and illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit. The official was in no position to argue his case theologically or philosophically with the Lord. All he could plead for was mercy, for his child was at the point of death. Jesus announced, “You may go. Your son will live.” If the official really believed that Jesus could make a difference in Capernaum, he must also believe Him now in Cana. So he took Jesus at His word and left. His servants met him with good news. His boy was living. The official asked when his son recovered. The healing was no accident, for it occurred at the exact moment Jesus made His promise to him. The lesson of this incident is that Jesus’ power is able to save from death even at a great distance. He is indeed God incarnate!



3. Song of Solomon 3:1-2. The king returned to Jerusalem, leaving his beloved. The phrase “All night long on my bed” indicates that the experience she was describing took place in a dream. When a person loves another person deeply, it is natural to fear losing him or her. In her dream she lost her lover and sought to find him. The repeated expression “the one my heart loves” revealed the depth of her love for Solomon. She was very passionate about her man.

On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don

