

## Intro - Open to Exodus 21:22-25

Many objections, far more than I can get to tonight are raised against Christians who will advocate for a biblical basis to protect unborn children.

My hope tonight, following the command of Paul from 2 Corinthians 10:5, is to **destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ** when it comes to the murder of preborn children. We can destroy the tactics and expose the texts that are misunderstood or intentionally twisted to go against the knowledge of the true and living God.

The three tactics, which will each have a prime example text or two are:

- 1) Twist Scripture
- 2) Sin excusing Sin
- 3) God is immoral

## Pray

### One – Twist Scripture

Read Exodus 21:22-25

I started here because this is a very confusing passage. You won't hear it preached our taught on significantly unless someone is trying to use it in the abortion debate.

The law starts that if a pregnant woman is hit in the context of a brawl, and now we get to the challenge in the Hebrew is whether it refers to the woman being harmed or the child. But regardless of what is chosen, look at the implications. Who is involved here? A pregnant woman. What does it mean to be pregnant? To be with child. A woman and baby are both in harms way of this brawl and the result is that child is born prematurely or miscarried as a result of the fight. Its not a clump of cells, it is clearly a human child.

Now notice that the person who struck the pregnant woman is to be fined and the husband of the pregnant woman can impose a fine which is paid based on the judgement of the judge. When no harm is done, either to woman or child. The act of the child being born after the pregnant woman is struck is still punished but to a lesser degree.

Then, verse 23, if there is harm, we find the great statement of fair judgment that is quoted throughout the Pentateuch and into the New Testament. The principle of life for life and eye for eye is for a just and right balance of crime to punishment. It would be a horrible mistrial of justice for an apple thief to receive the death penalty. Yet a murderer? Life for life.

This verse, far from being a specific verse about abortions or even centrally about miscarriages or early deliveries, is about appropriate justice. It is about how judges are supposed to restrain the injured party from imposing overbearing fines for offenses. But when real harm is done, appropriate punishments should be given.

John and Paul Fienberg wrote in my Christian ethics textbook this summary of Exodus 21:22-25: “When the baby is born prematurely, but unharmed, a fine is assessed. When there is harm to either mother or baby, the law of retaliation is required. And both stipulations apply in a case where what happens is totally accidental. In fact, this is the only place in the Mosaic Law and Scripture as a whole where the death penalty is required for accidental homicide.”

Let's recap why this verse does not say what pro-abortion advocates claim.

First, this is a law for Israel. It is the civil law given for how to deal with penalties for injuries, murder and destruction of property. I believe the first place to start is to recognize that we do not hold to this law as Christians. We agree with the principles, and those should guide our laws. Yet, we submit to the governing authorities of our land for how accidental deaths or injuries should be handled and how they will wield the sword when it is just according to the principle laid out in verses 24 and 25. This is Romans 13 interacting with Old Testament law.

Second, this is about an accidental death of a child, not about the willful killing of a child in the womb. The focus is on the man who injures a pregnant woman, not on the woman. To relate this to abortion is a stretch, but what it is not a “shout your abortion” or a “clump of cells” position.

Third, the main disagreement between what I believe is a faithful interpretation of the text and the pro-abortion interpretation is based upon what is the purpose of the text? I believe that this is an example of how injury can happen in degrees and how appropriate justice should be applied. It is not about an abortion and it is far from approving of it.

Let's do one more example. [Read Numbers 5:17-18, 27-28](#)

This is obviously not a practice that Christians do today. So, what is going on here? Well, this was a test that God designed to test for adultery to protect a woman from a jealous husband. We have many examples from then and into Jesus' day where husbands would divorce their wives and make claims that they were adulterers.

Notice this is also not about the purposeful ending of the life of a child so that a woman can get her education, or be prevented from carrying a pregnancy. This text is about jealousy and adultery. I argue it was put into place based on the cultural context to protect women, not to harm them or babies.

So before you would get confronted by this text and it would be claimed that you shouldn't stand against abortion because God supported this practice... make sure you know the text.

Nowhere does this talk about this dirt/water mixture causing a miscarriage or even discuss a baby. The swelling of the womb and the thigh falling away is about your ability to have children which in that day, was shameful to be unable to have children. This is decidedly not an abortion potion.

So that's what happens when you read into the Bible what is clearly not there and decide ahead of time that you are going to mislead about the text. Twisting of scripture can leave us confused and I have been troubled by these texts in the past. I am not anymore and neither should you.

## **Two – Sin excusing Sin**

[Read Deuteronomy 24:16](#)

So for a long time in the debate in America about abortion has been that there should be exceptions for women who are victims of rape or incest.

The trouble for Christians is that the pro-life movement have long argued against abortion, except for the cases of rape and incest. We should start by recognizing what is easy to do. Rape and incest are horrible sins and, in most cases, horrible crimes. We will not and cannot, as Christians, deny the truths of sin and its implications. Yet I have wondered over the last few years if we can back up this idea with scripture.

I argued last week that God made man in his image, from conception and should not be murdered. I hope it was clear that these were derived from the clear teaching of scripture and not just some form of moral interpretation.

The question for us tonight is do the rape and incest exceptions fit within the broader biblical argument and with Deuteronomy 24:16 specifically.

In the case of rape, who has sinned? Most likely the father. Should the child be killed for that sin? Men and women conceived in rape share many stories online of how their life would never have been if their mother aborted them after being conceived in rape. Isn't life valuable regardless of the circumstances of conception? Even if we had no such anecdotal evidence, it still doesn't provide a warrant for exceptions to the nature of that child's image bearing and therefore right given by God to life. Adoption may be the best avenue for that child if trauma for the mother would be too severe.

In the case of incest, who has sinned? Mother or Father and rape may have been involved. Is the moral implication that a child born of incest has a high change of disabilities? We do not take this logic for other birth defects, why should the origin make a difference?

We would have to argue in the cases of rape and incest that they override one of the premises from my argument last week.

Do rape and incest make the child not created in the image of God? No. Do rape and incest make the child not a human baby from conception? No. Do rape or incest make the child guilty or the sins of its conception and therefore require capital punishment by killing it? No. I therefore believe that from a biblical worldview, rape and incest are not proper exemptions to excuse the murder of preborn babies.

The Bible teaches that children should not be condemned for the sins of their parents. Although there may have been times that Christians have advocated for these exceptions as a part of the pro-life movement out of misguided compassion, I believe it is clear that we should reject this middling commitment to the dignity of human life. A child is a child, sin is sin, and we should not confuse the two that by condemning a sin we should condemn the child.

The last tactic is simply to elevate ourselves over God and claim that God is immorally inferior to us. I think you know how this will go.

## Three – God is Immoral

Read Joshua 6:20-21

What is described here in these verses is the climax of the first battle of the conquest of Canaan. God commands the people to go in and wipe out the Canaanites from the land. The first stop is Jericho and when they obey God and march instead of building siege towers, the walls come down and they kill every man, woman and child and animal in the city.

Now it makes me very uncomfortable thinking about this reality of children being slaughtered. I know that war brings about horrible things but I would be lying to you if I did not picture Jude and Grace as children in Jericho as I pondered this passage. It brings tears to my eyes and a turn to my stomach.

What do we do with this? What do we do with the passage and secondly what do we do with out reaction and emotion to it? Murder of the preborn activists will use texts like this to say that Christians cannot rely on the Bible for moral backing or on God for a moral standard since he advocates for genocide.

With the passage let us better consider the context and who God is.

First, why is Israel commanded to wipe out the Canaanites? We have to understand that all of humans are sinners. Sin is the equal opportunity destroyer. The nations and peoples that lived in Canaan worshipped false God's that did detestable things. We discussed Molech last week which was an idol that had children sacrificed by fire as its worship. When God gives the command to wipe out the nations in the land, it is because he is giving Israel the land as an inheritance. In **Deuteronomy 20:16-18**, it says that to wipe them out, **Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God.** Two reasons are given for the Canaanites to be destroyed. First, the nation of Israel will be corrupted and worship false gods and participate in evil. Second, they will then sin against God.

We must submit to God's reasoning here. He is God and we are not. God is first. He is the true God where the others are false. He is righteous and we or an idol man creates or an evil spirit that operates on earth, are unrighteous. We must therefore believe that when God says to wipe out a people it is for the good of his people and for God's glory.

We know that ultimately the nation of Israel fails to obey this command. So, what do they do? They intermarry, they worship false Gods, they commit evil because they did not obey. They perpetuated the evil that God warned them about. God's prediction proved true so therefore so did his command to wipe out the Canaanites. We cannot fail to see that. It is not as if we look at God's commands to destroy the Amalekites and we are left thinking, well I hope God is good. No, we know God is good, and the Scriptures testify and back it up. Every. Single. Time.

When it comes back to abortion, we must consider the commands of God to be right and not our feelings or moral judgements. He is the perfect judge so we submit to him.

I don't assume to say that this answer is completely and wholly satisfying to the non-believer or a watching world. Yet, as Christians, as slaves to Christ and as God's people we love what God loves and hate what he hates. We love that God cherishes the purity of his people and the prevention of evil of the Canaanites and those they would marry. Even their children were evil as is every child who is born. But it is by the grace of God that he saves children according to his good pleasure. He saves us according to his good pleasure and we pray that he uses us to save children in the womb and children into adulthood from the false worship of abortion or another idolatry today.

## Conclusion

I know there are many more that we could spend time on but I hope there are a few principles to take away from tonight that will help you as you interpret and understand scripture on any topic which is being assaulted by the world.

First, just read the text and understand its context. Is it really saying what they say it is? If it approves abortion, we can be confident that is not what the text says.

Two, let scripture be the authority. We don't let pro-life arguments guide our principles. We let the scripture be the authority.

Third, the error is in us, not God. We must come to God and the Bible with humility that if there is error it is with us and not Him or His Word. God is God and we are not.