

Solomon Judges Wisely

16 Some time later two prostitutes came to the king to have an argument settled. 17 “Please, my lord,” one of them began, “this woman and I live in the same house. I gave birth to a baby while she was with me in the house. 18 Three days later this woman also had a baby. We were alone; there were only two of us in the house.

19 “But her baby died during the night when she rolled over on it. 20 Then she got up in the night and took my son from beside me while I was asleep. She laid her dead child in my arms and took mine to sleep beside her. 21 And in the morning when I tried to nurse my son, he was dead! But when I looked more closely in the morning light, I saw that it wasn’t my son at all.”

22 Then the other woman interrupted, “It certainly was your son, and the living child is mine.”

“No,” the first woman said, “the living child is mine, and the dead one is yours.” And so they argued back and forth before the king.

23 Then the king said, “Let’s get the facts straight. Both of you claim the living child is yours, and each says that the dead one belongs to the other. 24 All right, bring me a sword.” So a sword was brought to the king.

25 Then he said, “Cut the living child in two, and give half to one woman and half to the other!”

26 Then the woman who was the real mother of the living child, and who loved him very much, cried out, “Oh no, my lord! Give her the child—please do not kill him!”

But the other woman said, “All right, he will be neither yours nor mine; divide him between us!”

27 Then the king said, “Do not kill the child, but give him to the woman who wants him to live, for she is his mother!”

28 When all Israel heard the king’s decision, the people were in awe of the king, for they saw the wisdom God had given him for rendering justice.

http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?book_id=11&chapter=3&version=51

Appendix #21