

Abortion and God

The Bible is clear in its testimony regarding murder. The sixth commandment states: “Thou shalt do no murder” (Exodus 20:13). When writing the book of Proverbs, King Solomon revealed that God hates “hands that shed innocent blood” (6:16). Therefore, if a fetus is a living human being, and it is terminated deliberately, then that constitutes the willful destruction of an innocent human life—i.e., murder. And there can be no doubt that the fetus is “innocent” in the truest sense of that word. And although man can argue about when life begins and when something becomes human, God’s word does not struggle with such things. How, then, does the Bible regard the unborn child? The following biblical facts can help provide an answer to that question.

(1) Jeremiah the prophet was told by God: “Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou comest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee” (Jeremiah 1:5). God knew the prophet even as he was in utero (still in the womb). Furthermore, God had already “sanctified” Jeremiah. If Jeremiah’s mother had aborted him, she would have killed one whom God recognized as a living soul—one whom God had already purposed for His service.

(2) The same implication appears in scripture regarding Isaiah, who said: “Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from afar; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant...” (Isaiah 49:1,5). Clearly, Isaiah was already a “person” prior to his birth; he was even called by name.

(3) Psalm 139:13-16 is one of the clearest biblical passages on this matter. David said: “For thou didst form my inward parts: thou didst cover me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks unto thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well. My frame was not hidden from thee, When I was made in secret, And curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance; And in thy book they were all written, Even the days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was none of them.”

Notice that David used the pronouns “me,” “my,” and “I” throughout this passage in reference to his own prenatal state. The phrases “I was made in secret,” and “curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth” refer to the psalmist’s development in the womb (cf. Young, 1965, p. 76). The pronouns used in the passage show clearly that David was referring to himself, and one cannot talk about himself without having reference to a human being. David therefore, speaking through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, spoke of himself in the womb as a human being. It likewise is interesting to note that in Psalm 51:5, David even acknowledged that he was a human being FROM CONCEPTION!

(4) Job, who was undergoing a terrible life crisis, cursed the day he was born when he said: “Why did I not die from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when my mother bore me?” (3:11). It certainly is clear that if the fetus had died in the womb, it would have been a person (in this case, Job). It also is of interest to observe that in Job 3:13-16, Job gave a list of people with whom he would have been counted if he had died at birth. Included in the list of kings, princes, and stillborn infants was a “hidden untimely birth,” which is a reference to a miscarriage (i.e., spontaneous abortion). Job put a miscarriage in the same category with other people who had died. Why? Obviously Job considered a fetus as much a human being as a king, a prince, or a stillborn infant.

(5) In the Old Testament, even the accidental termination of a pregnancy was a punishable crime. Consider Exodus 21:22—“If men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart, and yet no harm follows; he shall be surely fined,

according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him...but if any harm follows, then thou shalt give life for life." The meaning of the passage is simply this. If the child is born prematurely as the result of this accident, but "no harm follows" (i.e. the child lives), then a fine is to be exacted. However, if "harm follows" (i.e., either mother or child die), then the guilty party is to be put to death. Look at it this way. If God exacts such a punishment for the accidental death of an unborn child, what would He think today of the premeditated murder of millions of unborn infants?

Furthermore, think about this. If a woman were taken by force and an abortion were performed on her against her will, could the perpetrators of the crime be tried for murder? Of course they could. They killed the unborn child growing in the woman's womb. Recently, in a highly publicised trial, Scott Peterson was convicted of murdering his wife AND his unborn child. With this in mind, If a woman consents to her unborn child being killed, does that somehow make it any less of a crime? Is it any less murder? Is an unwanted baby any less human simply because it is not wanted?

(6) The same understanding of the fetus as a child is found in the New Testament. The angel Gabriel told Mary: "Elisabeth thy kinswoman, she also hath 'conceived' a son in her old age" (Luke 1:36). Note that the conception resulted not in an "it" or a "thing," but rather in a "son." In Luke 1:41,44, the Bible states (in speaking of Elisabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist) that when Mary spoke to Elisabeth, "the babe leaped in her womb." The word for "babe" in these passages is the Greek word *brephos*, and is used here for an unborn fetus. The very same word is used in Luke 18:15 and Acts 17:19 for young or newborn children. It also is used in Luke 2:12 and Luke 2:16 for the newborn Christ-child. The word *brephos* therefore can refer to a young child, a newborn infant, or an unborn fetus (cf. Thayer, 1962, p. 105). In all cases, a human being must be under consideration, because the same exact word is used to describe all three.

(7) James observed: "The body apart from the spirit is dead" (2:26). Consider the corollary to such a statement. If the body is alive, then the spirit must be present. The babe in the womb is unquestionably alive. Thus, the spirit must be present. Destruction of the baby is the destruction of that which is living as a result of having been given a spirit by God.

Consider other scriptures that cry out that the pre-born are in fact very human and even more important than that, they are very relevant to God Almighty.

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"For you did form my inward parts: you did knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139 vv. 13,14)

"Why then have you brought me out of the womb?" (Job 10:18)

"Did not He who made me in the mother's womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb?" (Job 31:15)

Genesis 25:22 describes Jacob and Esau in Rebecca's womb, "But the children struggled within her".

"Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren 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. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb'. But why is this granted unto me,

that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy" (Luke 1 vv 36, 41-44).

"For he will be great and distinguished in the sight of the Lord. And he must drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit, even in and from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15). (re John the Baptist.)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places with Christ. Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ in Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Ephesians 1:3,4).

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. Before you were born I sanctified you. I ordained you as a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).