

Article of the Month
March, 2023

Abortion

THE STANDARD

The Biblical (and Judeo-Christian) standard for the question of abortion is found in Exodus 21:22-25. It is clear there that, under the Jewish Law, harm to an unborn child brought punishment according to the injury. If the child had an aborted delivery resulting in death, the injurer was subject to the death penalty. From this law, we can see that, in God's sight, a fetus is considered as a living human being. We, of course, are not under the Jewish Law, but it does define the life status of a fetus.

SOCIETAL CONSIDERATIONS

The arguments in society on this subject show that, until God sets up His peaceable Kingdom under Christ, there can be no uniformity of opinion or enforcement on such subjects. While a devoted Christian should feel responsible toward God about his or her own responsibility to Biblical standards, there is no Biblical injunction to force our views on others. Therefore, as strongly and as Scripturally as we might feel about the question of abortion, we must let others obey their own consciences on the matter. Any other course results in turmoil, hatred, religious wars, suppressions of rights, etc. We are not here to judge other people.

This brings us to the most important part of the question:

RESURRECTION OF THE UNBORN

It is undeniable that the Bible teaches that the aborted unborn will be awakened in the era of the resurrection of the dead. They are not lost nor destroyed forever. They will enjoy the same opportunities for the joys of eternal life as the rest of mankind.

Following is a list of texts which support this truth.

1. See Genesis, Chapter 5, as an example. God reckons life from begetting, not from birth.
2. Exodus 21:22-25 shows that the rights of an individual under the Jewish Law began while in the womb.

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3. Judges 13:1-7 shows that the Nazarite Vow of the Jewish Law applied to Samson from the time of his conception.
4. In Job 3, we find Job lamenting the pain of his existence. The book of Job is famous for his looking toward the resurrection day. (See 14:13-15 as one example.) Yet in Chapter 3, Job wishes he were never born alive (verse 11). Verse 16 uses the Hebrew term for abortion—"untimely birth." But we see in this context (verses 13-19) that, even if he had died in the womb, he considered that he would be in the same waiting state as "kings...princes...prisoners...the small and great." He clearly DID NOT think that he would have lost his chance for everlasting life!
5. Psalm 139:13-16 is a prophecy of the development of the mystical "body" of Christ during this Christian age. While this prophecy is about the spiritual development of Christians who will become the "body of Christ," it is here likened to the in-utero development of a human fetus. The context clearly shows the protection and recognition of the unborn individual.
6. Jeremiah 1:4, 5 shows God's overruling of Jeremiah's in-utero existence, knowing of Jeremiah's career while he was yet in his mother. Compare Isaiah 49:1, 5 and Psalm 71:6.
7. Matthew 10:28 shows that man can take away only temporarily the privilege of life — only until the resurrection. ONLY GOD can remove life permanently (in the second death). Therefore, if one kills a woman with child, neither the mother nor the fetus has its life taken away permanently. If a doctor's mistake kills an in-utero baby, the baby's life is taken away only temporarily.
8. I Corinthians 15:22 shows that the reason we all die is because of the original condemnation of our original parent. (See Genesis 2:17 — marginal translation is best. See also 3:17-19.) "Adamosis" is the killer of the race. If an expectant mother gets measles and her baby is stillborn, the baby's death is due to the death sentence given in Genesis. Its life hopes are as good as all else who have died — "even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
9. Take Mary's pregnancy with Jesus as an example. During the nine months of gestation, Jesus was considered to be IN EXISTENCE. Jesus, of course, (unlike the rest of us) had a pre-human existence. Thus, in John 8:58, Jesus could say, "Before Abraham was, I am." His existence was never interrupted —even while in Mary's womb. If it had been, he would have needed to say, "Before Abraham was, I was." When Jesus said, "I am," he was demonstrating his continuity of existence. When he did experience an interruption of his life for the three days in the tomb, he expressed it quite differently. See Revelation 1:18.
10. See Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-27; Revelation 20:6. These texts deal with fully consecrated and Spirit-begotten Christians. These are considered (in a spiritual sense) to be begotten, but not yet born, of the spirit. While in this condition, they are subject to the "second death" — extinction. If they do not fail their covenant with God in this life, they will be born of the spirit

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(John 3:8). While this concept is about the gestation and birth of the “New Creature,” it clearly draws on the picture of human embryo development and birth. Thus, as a Christian is considered alive (and subject to death) while in the flesh (its embryo condition), thus also a human fetus is considered alive while an embryo.

SUMMARY

The Bible does not condone abortion, but neither does it condone our forcing Biblical standards (as we see them) on those who see differently. Regardless of the standards of others, God intends to raise aborted humans along with all others who have died. All will hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth—some (faithful Christians) to a resurrection of life (a resurrection whose judgment was during this lifetime); and some to a resurrection by judgment (a resurrection based on a judgment of their actions in the next age). See John 5:28 & 29 in almost any translation other than the King James.

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