

What About... Abortion and the Bible

By Dave DeWitt



The Bible does not specifically address the subject of abortion. So, to get God's mind on the matter we need to consider some passages that discuss the nature of life in the womb. Murder is "the unlawful killing of one human being by another" (New Oxford American Dictionary). Since it is clear biblically that murder is sin (Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; Luke 18:20), the basic question concerning abortion is, "When does a person come into existence as a human being?"

The most basic questions about life are, "Who am I?" "Where did I come from?" "Am I significant?" and "Where am I going?" Here we shall only discuss the question, "Where did I come from, spiritually speaking?" Where did the real me, my spirit/soul (henceforth I shall simply call it our spirit), come from?" Since evolution is completely contrary to the Bible, we are left with two options:

One, each person's spirit is individually created by God.

If number one is correct, then we must ask when that spirit is created. Suggestions include: at the time of conception, when brain waves are observable, when the blood system is formed, when breath is possible, and birth.

Two, our spiritual substance comes from our parents just as our bodies do.

If this is the case, then conception is the only possibility for the beginning of human life.

Thesis: I will be defending proposition number two, our spiritual substance comes from our parents.

Some Basic Passages

Hebrews 7:9-10 *And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.*

We must begin with the observation that there is only one time that the Bible records God creating a human being. *Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being* (Genesis 2:7). There is nothing in the Bible that states, suggests, or implies that God creates

individual spiritual people after Adam and Eve. But Hebrews 7 gives us a strong indication of where we come from, spiritually. In Hebrews 7, the author is making the point that Christ is of the Melchizedek priesthood, which is superior to the Levitical priesthood. The proof is that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek. But when did he do that? Actually, Abraham did that, years before Levi was ever conceived. Abraham-Isaac-Jacob-Levi. Levi was the great grandson of Abraham. But the author of Hebrews says, *through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father*, referring to Abraham (the Hebrews had no words for grandfather or great grandfather). Apparently, the spiritual substance that makes us into a spiritual being, not just a physical one, comes from Adam through our parents. We don't actually exist until the physical and spiritual makeup come together through the sperm and egg at conception. But everything that makes us a human being comes through our parents.

Jeremiah 1:4-5 *Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.*

The call of Jeremiah reveals that God planned his existence before his conception. Notice God said, *"I formed you in the womb."* The word *formed* is the word used "to mold into a form, especially as a potter" (Hebrew Strong's Dictionary). The passage does not teach that Jeremiah was created at some point in the process of his formation. The idea is that he existed at the time he was being formed in the womb. Some suggest this was only true of Jeremiah because he was

a prophet. But David expresses the same idea in Psalm 139:16, *And in your book were all written the days that were ordained for me when as yet there were not one of them*, and Paul used this idea to describe everyone. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?* (Romans 9:21 KJV). It seems that all people, whether honorable or dishonorable, are formed in the womb, not created at some point during that formation.

Psalm 139:13-14 *For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ...*

Here David says God wove him together in his mother's womb. *Wove* means to *entwine as a screen* (Hebrew Strong's Dictionary). David sees himself as one God wove together like the fine wires woven together make a screen. There is no idea here that David's spirit was created by God, somewhere in the weaving process.

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

In Psalm 51 David is confessing his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah. Included in that, he talks about his conception. Notice *brought forth* is paralleled with *conceived* which is paralleled with *me*. His conception equals his existence. His existence did not come from a special creation of God, but from his conception. Also notice that David sees himself as *conceived in iniquity*. This is not about any sin of David's mother. The context of the whole Psalm is about David's sin. David's observation is that he was conceived with a sin nature, which means he was a spiritual human being at the time of his conception.

Some Common Questions

1. If aborted babies go to heaven, isn't abortion good, since it puts more people in heaven?

Answer: (a) There is nothing in the Bible that says all babies who die go to heaven or that God wants to populate heaven. People exist to praise God, not to populate heaven. (b) Killing pre-born babies to populate heaven is absurd. It means it would be good to kill all babies, before some undeterminable age of accountability, and for that matter all believers.

2. If abortion is murder, why does God allow a miscarriage?

Answer: A naturally occurring physical problem leading to death, like an unplanned miscarriage, is not the same as an intentional murder.

3. Can a person be a Christian and "Pro-choice"?

Answer: The question sounds like Christianity is assumed to be some religion you join. Biblically, being a Christian is a matter of receiving the gift of Christ's finished work of paying for our sin on the cross. A person can be a Christian in the sense of being born again unto salvation in Christ and believe all sorts of wrong things. But believers are also filled with the Holy Spirit who will convict them of the sin of wrong belief. Inconsistency is always possible. But understand, being a believer in Christ is inconsistent with the teaching of the "Pro-choice" movement.

4. Should the life of the mother be a priority over the life of the pre-born baby.

Answer: This is actually a more difficult question than it would seem, because there are two human lives involved. This is a rare situation because it assumes either one will likely survive if the life of the other is terminated. (a) Pragmatically, the life of the mother is usually the priority. The mother may be the mother of other children, a wife, a friend, and involved in the lives of many others. Her death may impact the lives of many others and should therefore be a priority. (b) This agonizing decision is made to save a life not to end a life. Abortion on demand is a decision to end a seemingly healthy life. At no time should ending a life be the objective.

5. Is abortion permissible in the case of rape or incest.

Answer: Life is full of tragic events caused by human sin. But the answer is never to add more sin. An unwanted pregnancy caused by sin must be dealt with as all situations where sin causes suffering. Adding murder to rape or incest is never advisable.