

# What the Bible Says about Abortion

**D**id you know? Almost three times more unborn children lose their lives each year in America than the number of North American soldiers who died in the entire Second World War. Is such tragic slaughter of children justified? Let us appeal to a higher court of authority than human reasoning—God's Word. Many truths of God's Word speak directly or indirectly to this issue of abortion.

## 1. God created mankind in His own image.

Most people intuitively know that human beings are on a different level than animals. Even the theory of evolution cannot completely erase the sense most people have of how sacred human life is. Animals are beautiful and valuable, but we would kill a grizzly bear to save a child without any qualms of conscience. We know that people are special.

The Bible explains this sense of the sanctity of human life when it says in Genesis 1:27, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” Men and women, whatever their age, have a special value far above the birds and beasts (Mat 10:31) because they are God’s most special creation on earth. We should cherish and protect human beings, not just for their usefulness, but because they represent God’s glory in a unique manner.

## **2. God rules life and death, ability and disability, as the sovereign King.**

We also have a sense that it is not right to “play God” with other people’s lives. We realize that we do not have the right to treat people as if we owned them and could dispose of them as we see fit. The Bible explains this by telling us that God is the King who owns and rules all of His creation (Psa 95:3-5). He alone has the sovereign right to do what He pleases with people (Dan 4:35).

When God created the world there was no death or pain; all was “very good” (Gen 1:31). Death came through Adam’s disobedience to

God's law (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:12). But even so, God retained His sovereignty over human life and death. "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive" (1Sa 2:6). He rules over human ability and disability. "And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?" (Exo 4:11). So the Bible teaches us to receive each human life from God's hand, even if it is a child born with a handicap or into a difficult family situation. God has a wondrous way of bringing good out of evil (Gen 50:20). We are to bow before His authority as the King of the universe and not try to play God with other people's lives.

Abortion trespasses into divine territory by taking into the hands of man what belongs to the Lord alone. It insults His sovereignty, and foolishly grasps the authority to make decisions for which we don't have the necessary wisdom. Consider the following historical case. The father has syphilis, the mother has tuberculosis. They have already had four children—the first is blind, the second died, the third is deaf and dumb, and the fourth has tuberculosis. The mother is

pregnant with her fifth child. Will you perform an abortion for them? If so, then you just killed Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), a famous German composer and pianist! Playing God with human lives produces tragic results.

### **3. God forbids the killing of innocent human life.**

Even after the fall, though man's heart was totally corrupted by sin (Gen 6:5), God told us that remnants of the image of God remain (Jam 3:9); and therefore we must treat human life with great respect. God says in Genesis 9:6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." The sixth of the Ten Commandments says, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exo 20:13), which in context means we must not take innocent human life. To kill innocent people is to attack God, for they bear His sacred image.

### **4. God reveals the human personhood of the unborn child.**

God personally forms each child in the womb. Job said, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and

the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4). David exulted, “Thou hast...covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well” (Psa 139:13-14). What God makes in the womb is a “me”—a person who has a “soul.”

David also confessed, “Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa 51:5). From his conception in the womb, David was “in sin.” Objects and animals cannot be sinners; they have no moral accountability. Only a person can be a sinner. So the sad reality that we are in a state of sin from conception proves that conception creates a human person. Abortion is an attack upon a human person with the intent to kill. It is premeditated murder.

## **5. God declares His judgment against the killers of the unborn.**

The Lord has a special compassion for the weak when they are oppressed by those more powerful than they are, whether it is the foreigner, the widow, or the orphan. He

threatens deadly wrath against oppressors (Exo 22:21-27). No one is more vulnerable than an unborn child is.

For this reason, God included this law in His legislation for Israel: “If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman’s husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life” (Exo 21:22-23). “Her fruit depart” is literally “her offspring come out.” The law envisions the accidental injury of a pregnant woman with the result of a miscarriage, when two men are fighting. If God decreed the punishment of an *accidentally* induced abortion, how much more will He punish an *intentional* abortion? God abhors all crimes against women, but violence against pregnant women especially provokes Him to punish the offending nation (Amo 1:13).

This does not justify taking personal vengeance or acts of violence against abortion providers. But it does warn us that if our nation will not protect the innocent, then God will

deal severely with our nation. Senator Jesse Helms<sup>1</sup> wrote, “The highest level of moral culture is that at which the people of a nation recognize and protect the sanctity of innocent human life...Great nations die when they cease to live by the great principles which gave them vision and strength to rise above tyranny and human degradation...No nation can remain free or exercise moral leadership when it has embraced the doctrine of death.”

## 6. God calls sinners to repentance for forgiveness of sins.

When we declare God’s proclamations against abortion, we do so being painfully conscious that we all have sinned in many ways (Rom 3:23). We speak as sinners who have found mercy with God, inviting other sinners to find the same mercy. For this purpose, God sent Christ to die for sinners and to rise again: “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a

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<sup>1</sup> **Jesse Helms** (1921-2008) – five-term Republican United States Senator from North Carolina and a leading conservative. He served as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 1995 to 2001. The quotation is from a speech in the U.S. Senate on January 11, 1977.

Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Act 5:31).

In Christ Jesus, there is a promise of forgiveness to all who come to Him. But that promise is coupled with the command to repent (Luk 24:47). Repentance is God’s gift for the salvation of a sinner by which a sinner, out of a sense of the evil of his sin and the goodness of God’s mercy in Christ, turns from sin to God with grief for and hatred of his sin, and with full intent to obey God by His gracious help.

Perhaps you have been a party to abortion: a father who encouraged the death of your child, a mother who submitted herself to the deadly instruments, a doctor or nurse who performed the procedure, a vocal supporter of abortion in public policy, or just a silent citizen who has allowed millions of children to die without voicing your protest. If this is the case, then you are guilty of bloodshed against the image of God.

But the Lord Jesus Christ invites you, “Come now, let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isa 1:18).



He stretches out His nail-pierced hands to you, calling you to “come” to Him, and promising, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isa 55:1, 7).



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