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The Pro-Life position and the Bible

by J.W. Wartick

*We are currently in the time of the year known as “40 Days for Life.” During these 40 days (as well as the rest of the year), it is important to focus on issues related to the beginning of life. The Bible has much to say about the topic.*

J.W., you sure got that one right. The Bible does say a lot about the beginning of life. Here's a verse that describes what the beginning of life was like for a whole bunch of little fetuses:

2 Kings 15:16

"Then Menahem smote Tiphsah, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up."

If I were a god I would have prevented such a horror. But your god couldn't care less. Hey, maybe He was busy helping a football team win a championship?

No, that couldn't be it because they didn't have football back then. Hey maybe He was busy with Athena up on Olympus?

(I'm just trying to be helpful here, J.W.)

*A survey of the Bible can reveal many verses which can be used for the pro-life position.*

Hey J.W., I've got a challenge for you: you give a verse that can be used for the pro-life position and I'll reply with a verse that proves that your God is pro-death. We can alternate back and forth until one of us runs out of verses.

J.W., feel free to begin ... whenever you're ready.

*I will focus upon a few (verses in ESV).*

J.W., why do you use the English Standard Version? Why don't you use one of the other few dozen versions? Why don't you use one of the older versions that is closer to the original version? Since no two versions are the same - how do you know which one is the certified Word of God?

I'll bet even God Himself couldn't pick out His original Bible anymore.

*I will outline how they argue for the pro-life position, how a pro-choice Christian might respond to them, and a rebuttal or concession based upon their response.*

*Jeremiah 1:5*

*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,and before you were born I consecrated you;I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”*

*Here we see that God called Jeremiah to be a prophet before he was born.*

J.W., that kind of kills your whole "free will" spiel, doesn't it?

I mean it's not like God gave Jerry a choice, did He?

*In other words, even before his birth he was valuable to God,*

J.W., what about all those deformed babies? What about all those babies born with horrible diseases? And what about the 50 million babies that God murders every year through miscarriage? How come they aren't valuable to God? Couldn't God have found some purpose for them? Like maybe cleaning up all the Angel dung or something?

And one more thing J.W. - why does your God give all human babies a tail during the first month of pregnancy? Is that His idea of a joke?

*to the point of being called as a prophet. One interesting counter to a verse like this would be to hold that all it is saying is that God knew about Jeremiah from eternity, so the “before” is being used here as logical priority as opposed to temporal priority. I think this objection has some merit, so perhaps this verse isn’t as strong as it seems.*

J.W., it's a book of ancient, gruesome fairy tales. There are no strong verses ... only gullible minds that believe there are.

*I looked up the Hebrew in this verse and it seems to me that the first clause may be referencing pre-ordination, however the verb is not in the right form (Pual) to make this certain, and so the first clause may be referencing a process of forming not yet completed (which would mean the verse suggests God is interacting with a person before that person is born). The word “before” here, however, again could be said to note that the verse is talking about pre-ordination even though the verb doesn’t necessitate that reading. I tend to lean towards the pre-ordination meaning, but not as the only possibility. However, the second clause is even stronger because it talks about “consecrating,” and that word seems to entail the existence of something to be consecrated. Thus, it would mean that Jeremiah would have had to exist in order to be consecrated while in the womb, before being born.*

J.W., zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz

*There is a more powerful verse on this topic to be found:*

*Luke 1:15*

*“for he [John the Baptist] will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.”*

*Here there is no question of the verse just being God’s knowledge of John the Baptist’s prophetic call before his birth, rather, God will fill him with the Holy Spirit, even while John is in the womb. In other words, before he is born, John will be empowered by God. I don’t see how a pro-choice response could get around this.*

J.W., pro-choicers have to figure out how to get around the birth of one preacher - you guys still haven't figured out how to get around the murder of 50 million fetuses every year. Just guessin' here, but I would say you've got the harder road.

And thanks for providing more proof against the free will argument. You proved that God had already decided which path John's future would take ... and playing for the Yankees wasn't one of the options.

*That John will be filled with the Spirit before his birth is a powerful argument for the pro-life position from Scripture because it would mean John would have to be capable of being filled.*

J.W., your scriptures are pro-death. There is hardly a chapter to be found in the Bible where your God isn't murdering someone, or ordering others to do His killing for Him. Christianity is the exact opposite of Pro-life. It is a death cult. It worships death, not life.

*Pro-choice Christians often have to fall back to saying the unborn aren’t “persons”,*

J.W., a double grammar lesson:

1) The comma goes inside the final parenthesis, and

2) The unborn are not "persons." They are in order:

 molecules in reproductive systems, then gametes, zygotes, morulas, blastocysts, and then fetuses until their birth.

*but that would be impossible here, for why would the Holy Spirit fill a being which is impersonal?*

J.W., who knows why imaginary beings do what they do?

I still haven't figured out how Christians can justify the Holy Ghost drilling His junk into Joseph's pretty young wife when she was still a virgin.

*Psalm 51:5 states: “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”*

J.W., that verse proves just how wacky your bizarre religion really is. A human is sinful at conception? Really?

You do realize that, at that point, they do not yet possess a nervous system or a brain, right? So exactly which part of the gamete are you claiming is the sinful part?

*It would seem to be quite absurd for someone who is not a person to be sinful.*

J.W., yet it's not absurd to believe that a gamete is sinful? Have you ever seen a picture of a gamete?

*Pro-choice Christians who argue that the unborn is not a human person are placed in a very difficult position by this verse.*

Actually J.W., the only people who are placed in a very difficult position by that verse are those who think that it makes any sense whatsoever. Oh, I'm sorry J.W. - that would be you, wouldn't it?

*It quite clearly states that from conception a person is sinful.*

J.W., you would have been better off going with the "God works in mysterious ways" or "If you check the original Hebrew scriptures" or the always reliable "This should be interpreted as a parable for ...."

Anything would have been better than admitting that, that verse means exactly what it says. That is some real batshit crazy stuff, Dude.

*Without personhood, one cannot sin. One must have the capacity to be sinful in order to sin. It would seem very odd for the pro-choice Christian to have to say an impersonal ‘blob of cells’ is capable of sinning.*

J.W., yet you have no problem claiming that an "impersonal blob of cells" is a human being. Nice contradiction J.W.

Hey J.W., remember that verse about removing the log from your own eye before criticizing your fellow Christians about the tiny little specks in their eyes?

*There are many verses which point to God forming us in the womb (i.e. Job 31:15; Isaiah 44:2; and Psalm 139:13-16).*

J.W., and here are many verses which point to God killing us in the womb: Numbers 5:11-21, Numbers 31:17, and Hosea 13:16.

J.W., are you cherry-picking? Or did you just forget about the verses that screw up your little essay?

*These verses could be seen as supporting the pro-life position. However, the pro-choice Christian may respond by saying that it does not follow that just because God makes us in our wombs, we exist as persons in the womb or that we are inherently valuable in the womb. The counter to this argument is that the verses do not make sense otherwise.*

J.W., what sense do you make out of the verses I provided?

You know, the ones where your God has mothers and their fetuses murdered.

*For if it were true that all the verses were pointing out, were God’s creative activity, then much of the sense of the verse would be lost. In the Isaiah passage, for example, God is talking about His interaction with the nation of Israel, the implication is that because he formed them in the wombs, they are loved by Him–His creative act was an act of love to His people. So it would seem these verses must be understood as pointing towards the value of the baby in the womb, as opposed to a mere observation of God’s action.*

J.W., fantastic argument, Dude. Unfortunately, the only thing you accomplished was to dig your own hole even deeper, because God's murderous behavior towards fetuses in the verses you carefully avoided, become even harder to explain; and His 50 million yearly murders of fetuses also becomes harder to explain.

In fact, the only explanation that is left standing, is that your ghost has the worst case of bi-polar disorder in recorded history.

*But there are more sophisticated arguments against abortion that can be drawn from the Bible.*

J.W., for the sake of this essay, you had better hope so.

*I wrote elsewhere on Exodus 21:22-25, which has interestingly been used by pro-choice Christians to say their position is correct:*

*“If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.”*

*Some believers use this passage to state that it shows the unborn fetus has a lesser status of personhood. They state that verse 22 shows that though the woman loses the child, she sustains no injury, and the penalty is but a fine. They say that this, then, shows that the fetus does not demand the same repercussions as hurting a fellow human. There are several problems with this interpretation, however.*

J.W., I see one problem right off the bat - it doesn't fit your view.

*First, it must be stated that even if one is to concede this interpretation [which is incorrect], it does not authorize abortion.*

J.W., it doesn't need to, the Bible is full of verses that authorize abortion - provided that you are following orders from the spirit world.

*The baby is not intentionally harmed in any manner, but only unintentionally hurt.*

*Second, just the fact that there is a penalty shows that there is wrongdoing here. If the fetus is something that may be discarded at will, why is there even a fine for its destruction?*

J.W., how do you know the fine is for its destruction? How do you know the fine isn't to compensate the mother for her pain and loss?

J.W., you were assuming facts ... not in evidence.

*Third, the reason the fetus’ death does not require the death penalty is in keeping with the Mosaic exception to the death penalty in cases of accidental death (Exodus 21:13-14, 20-21, Numbers 35:10-34, Deuteronomy 19:1-13).*

J.W., it is also in keeping with modern law in most advanced nations - even though the death IS intentional. Killing fetuses is allowed under certain circumstances. The Mosaic Law you were referencing, allowed killing people ... who worked on the weekend.

That's called progress, J.W.

*Therefore, the fact that there is “merely” a fine does not show that the fetus is less valued.*

J.W., it is now. It's taken thousands of years but we finally seem to be getting our priorities straight; at least, those of us who aren't infected with an ancient, gruesome morality.

*Finally, it absolutely must be noted that Exodus 21 states various penalties for the killing of individuals that cannot be explained away with personhood. For example, verses 20-21 show that one who kills a slave unintentionally has no penalty. No one could argue that the slave is not a “person.”*

Major fail J.W. The Confederacy argued just that and they were backed up by the Supreme Court (see the Dred Scott decision). Slaves were often killed; and I recall no mention of anyone facing charges for murdering their "property." In the 20th century Bible Belt, blacks (who were no longer slaves) were often "lynched." I don't recall any stories of mass incarcerations for those killings either. Perhaps you could enlighten me with some links proving that people were held accountable?

I didn't think so.

*Further, the correct interpretation of this passage must be seen as the woman giving premature live birth, not a miscarriage.*

Why J.W.? Because that interpretation works out better ... for you?

*The implication is quite clear. If the mother gives a premature live birth because of the fight, there is merely a fine (despite no serious injury to anyone), but if either the mother or the fetus is injured, the law of retaliation (eye for an eye) is invoked. Thus, if the fetus is killed, the man causing harm is to be killed. This is remarkable, because it is the only place in Scripture where death is required for accidental homicide.*

J.W., thanks for finding another one of those contradictions that don't exist: you just found another contradiction to "Thou shalt not kill."

Also, you just contradicted your own third premise above. Remember that premise J.W.? The one in which you said that the killing "is in keeping with the Mosaic exception to the death penalty in cases of accidental death."

Based on this essay J.W., I think you missed your true calling - as an anti-apologist. You're doing a better job of crushing Christian arguments than most Atheists.

*It shows the extreme value placed on the life of the fetus.*

J.W., do I need to repeat those earlier verses? The ones you carefully omitted?

*Given these passages (and there are more where those came from), it seems as though the pro-life position has very solid grounding in the Bible.*

J.W., there has never been a book in the history of the planet Earth that is more pro-death ... than your Bible.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

Stunning images of a 305-million-year-old harvestman fossil reveal that ancestors of the modern-day arachnids

had two sets of eyes rather than one

The primitive fossilized harvestman was found in eastern France and had not only median eyes -- those found near the centre of the body -- but lateral eyes on the side of the body as well.

Although they have eight legs, harvestmen are not spiders; they are more closely related to another arachnid, the scorpion. Arachnids can have both median and lateral eyes, but modern harvestmen only possess a single set of median eyes -- and no lateral ones.

Researchers supported their results by examining the expression of an 'eye stalk' gene in living harvestmen and found that in a modern harvestman embryo this gene shows hints of a now-lost lateral eye.

Terrestrial arthropods like harvestmen have a sparse fossil record because their exoskeletons don't preserve well. As a result, some fundamental questions in the evolutionary history of these organisms remain unsolved. This exceptional fossil has given researchers a rare and detailed look at the anatomy of harvestmen that lived hundreds of millions of years ago. They were also able to establish is that developing modern harvestmen embryos retain vestiges of eye-growth structures seen only in the fossil.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

ANONYMOUS

"If you have a Bible on your bookshelf, you may be a Christian.

If you have a Koran on your bookshelf, you may be a Muslim.

If you have a Torah on your bookshelf, you may be Jewish.

If you have all three, you are probably an atheist."