



# A CALL FOR LIFE

## A Contemporary Issue on Abortion

A Mighty Arrow  
St Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church, Atlanta, GA

**“Let the little children come to Me and do  
not forbid them;  
For such is the Kingdom of Heaven”  
(Matthew 19:14)**

**“But I feel that the greatest destroyer of  
peace today is Abortion because it is a war  
against a child, a direct killing of the  
innocent child, murder by the mother  
herself.....any country that accepts Abortion  
is not teaching its people love, but to use  
violence to get what they want, this is why  
the greatest destroyer of life and peace is  
Abortion”  
—Mother Theresa**

### A QUESTION TO PONDER:

There is a woman who is pregnant for the 4<sup>th</sup> time. Out of the 3 previous births only one child survived whom was blind while the others died prematurely. Would you recommend this woman have an abortion sparing her the potential loss of another infant?

**A**bortion is an induced termination of pregnancy before the fetus is capable of survival as an individual. If a woman decides to terminate her pregnancy, is she committing murder? Murder according to Webster's Dictionary is defined as “the killing of one human being by another; to kill a human being; to kill brutally or inhumanly; to destroy or put an end to.” So the question that is posed : IS ABORTION MURDER? Let us first look at

abortion in terms of life and death.

### THE CIRCLE OF LIFE:

If we examine and search *The Holy Bible*, abortion is nowhere to be found. Although, *The Holy Bible* does not specifically mention abortion, one should not consider God silent to the issue. The word ‘life’ is found over 300 times in the Holy Scriptures indicating God's teaching of respect for life. The circle of life consists of birth, living, and then death as God states “for dust you are and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19).

**When does LIFE begin?** The English word ‘baby’ is derived from the Greek word ‘*brephos*’, which in the original dialect means an unborn child or fetus. Thus, the life of a fetus begins at conception or fertilization which according to *Tapes Medical Dictionary* is “the onset of developing a zygote (“yoked together”) after the union of a man's and woman's seeds.”

When we speak about union, we are often reminded of Our

Lord Jesus Christ teaching's of “a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Mark 10:7-9). Although, Our Lord is referring to marriage and divorce, further meditations and applications point to life and abortion. Logically, this means that life begins when uniting or fusing 2 seeds into one (as with marriage, 2 spirits and 2 bodies become one) and abortion (as with divorce) is separating or destroying this union. It is noteworthy to mention that Our Lord said “let not MAN separate” for abortion is performed by medical advances that were created by society (man). It is true that miscarriages occur which are



**Samuel Praying: “Speak Lord: Your  
Servant is Listening”**



referred to as 'spontaneous abortions', but these situations are not in our hands, but according to God's Will. It is the medical abortions (abortions induced by certain drugs or saline poisoning) and/or surgical abortions (via a vacuum suction) which are man's doing that dishonor the Lord's commandment.

#### **LIFE is not defined as "breath."**

Some abortionists misinterpret the verse "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7) thinking that life begins when the baby takes its first breath. It is very dangerous, as HH Pope Shenouda III cautioned us, to use the one verse method where we take a verse, ignoring the rest of the text, and build a founding principal on it. In the Holy Book of Genesis, The Holy Scriptures are speaking about Adam in a special case and circumstance. Adam was never conceived in a womb as he had no mother or father, but he was created from dust by God. Thus this verse may prove that life begins at breath, but it can only be applied to Adam. After the fall of Adam, babies were conceived naturally and God acknowledged that life begins in the womb as He told Jeremiah the Prophet, "before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I sanctified you." (Jeremiah 1:5).

**When does LIFE end?** By taking a life of a fetus, we are dictating an early death for that human being, and thus committing murder. Death is an inevitable event and can be portrayed as a train. We are all riding this train of life and we will all eventually arrive to our destination, which is Heaven, according to God's Will and Time. But is it appropriate for someone to step off the train when it isn't even time for his stop or is it right for someone to forcibly make another leave the train before his stop comes? This is the concept of death and murder. We step off the train according to God's natural timing, but for someone to force



**Sampson**

another to step off at a much earlier time is when murder happens. Mothers who are pregnant and decide to end their pregnancies are forcing their babies off the train before their time and thus committing murder.

#### **LIFE IN THE WOMB IS HUMAN:**

Many do not consider abortion to be murder

because of the belief that unborn babies are not living beings, even though in medical terms, life does begin at conception. Unborn children are as alive as any other human being because there are four elements needed by all, whether inside or outside the womb, to maintain life: oxygen, food, water, and shelter. The only difference between an unborn child and an adult is the location and living quarters meaning it should matter who a person is and not where they are that determines life. The unborn are not potential persons but persons with much potential.

There is no doubt that the zygote is biologically alive and is human for it fulfills four criteria needed to establish biological life: metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction. When the zygote is formed, it takes 23 chromosomes from the mother and 23 chromosomes from the father having a unique genetic code making it an individual human. We must understand that we did not come from a zygote, but we once were a zygote. We did not come from an embryo, but we once were an embryo. We did not come from a fetus, but we once were a fetus. We should also appreciate that there really is no difference between an adolescent and an adult for both are human beings, and thus there is no difference between a zygote and an adult because these are all various developmental stages of life. None of these stages, however, imparted to us our humanity!



No one can dictate how another should live his life and no one should take the rights of a woman, but the rights of a woman are not valid when it concerns the rights of another human being. It is true that a woman has a right over her own body, but when her body is carrying another human being, she must take consent from that human being if she decides to terminate him/her. Our choices end when others' rights begin. A practical example of this is driving. This is a legal privilege and no one can take this right from us, but when we speed or drive while intoxicated and demolish another car committing homicide, our rights are irrelevant for our actions violated another's rights and consequences must be paid



**King David**

### **GOD IS THE CREATOR OF ALL LIFE (before, during, or after birth):**

Although, we have examined how viable the baby is while residing in the mother's womb, life is not merely human existence at birth or conception, but is ordained by God Himself before gestation or conception. As HG Bishop Youssef said "many Biblical personalities were ordained by God Himself even before their birth...this speaks of a great respect for life."

If God consecrated some for His service, it justifies how no one born or conceived is in error and how God has a Divine Plan for all. Particularly, we observe this with Samuel the High Priest. Samuel had been established as a prophet of the Lord before his birth for Hannah, his mother, promised God saying "if You give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life" (1 Samuel 1:11). God heard Hannah's vow answering her prayer and reserving Samuel for His service. We also find Samson, the strong man of God, was ordained before his birth to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines for the Angel of God told his mother "the child shall be a

Nazirite to God from the womb." (Judges 13:5).

Saint Mary, the mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, was also foreordained by God for St. Mary's parents were barren and prayed earnestly for a child. The Angel of the Lord, Gabriel, appeared to St. Mary's father, Joachim, and told him that he and his wife would conceive and bear a child that the world would rejoice and be glad (The Coptic Synaxairium 7 Misra). God allowed St. Mary's parents to give birth to a child knowing that she would play a role in man's salvation. Also, in the Holy Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we find a significant example of how God consecrates holy men for His service. St. John the Baptist, the kinsman to the Lord, was ordained to be His forerunner for he was "filled with the

Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15). Even Our Lord Jesus Christ's name, birth, and ministry were announced to St. Mary by Angel Gabriel before His birth (Luke 1:26-35) as Prophet Isaiah prophesied saying "The Lord has called Me from the womb; from the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name...who formed Me from the womb to be His servant" (Isaiah 49:1,5)

Other examples that include God's foreknowledge of their birth include St. Paul for he says "but when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace" (Galatians 1:15). Also, David the Prophet speaks about God knowing him before his birth for he says "for You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:13). King David indicates that God knew who he was and how long he would live while he was still in his mother's womb. David implies that it is God, and not simply some act of nature, that "formed" and "covered" his physical body. Isaiah the Prophet agrees with King David for he speaks of God's incorruptible knowledge and creation for he says "thus says



the Lord who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you" (Isaiah 44:2) and "your Redeemer and He who formed you from the womb; (for) I am the Lord who makes all things" (Isaiah 44:24). Job the Righteous also agrees with King David and Prophet Isaiah in saying "did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb?" (Job 31:15).

Some of our contemporary saints that we ask for their prayers are prominent examples of God's foreknowledge of allowing them to become His servants. We read about the story of St. Mena the Miracle Worker whose mother prayed continually for a child and God answered her prayers; also we know the very famous life story of our beloved saint, Anba Bishoy, the Beloved of Christ, who God chose in spite of his weakness and young age.

### **IS THERE AN ANSWER TO ABORTION?:**

Regarding the PONDERING QUESTION asked at the beginning of the article, if we recommended that the woman have an abortion, we would have killed the holy and blessed St. Syncletica who was a remarkable and honorable woman that lived during the fifth century. Even though her two brothers died in their infancy and she was pressured to prolong the family tree, she and her blind sister fled to the deserts of Egypt to live as anchorites. Her strong will made her overcome the desires of the world and live a life of chastity and virginity in the traditions of St. Thecla. Abortion is not the solution to our problems for we never know what God has planned for His little ones for they could be the saints of tomorrow. Children are a blessing, and they are "a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward" (Psalm 127:3).

There are many alternatives to abortion, and there are thousands of couples who are waiting at this moment eagerly and willingly to adopt a baby. Abortion is not the answer for it grows out of a rebellious and disobedient heart. Abortion happens because of selfishness, but we should "let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2:3).

The answer to abortion is God's guidance and a call for

life for Our Lord Jesus Christ said "I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10).

**\*\*\* For more information on abortion visit :  
[www. prolife.com](http://www.prolife.com)**

### **THIS IS GOD'S WILL, HE PLANNED IT ALL AND YOU ARE IN HIS CARE.**

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**He sees you as a precious gem  
That with some slight correction;  
Some polishing and grinding too,  
Can almost reach perfection**

**He wants to burn the dross away  
To prune the unfruitful vine;  
To mold you as the potters clay,  
To be a vessel fine.**

**Do not despair! Look up! Fight on!  
The way will someday show,  
And later on, when life is past,  
You will the purpose know.**

**The Lord will test and strengthen you  
and fit you for His task;  
You cannot serve Him fully whole  
In easy life you bask.**

**You know not what tomorrow holds  
You know who holds tomorrow  
So live in faith just for today  
Though is is filled with sorrow**

**God loves you still, He holds your hand,  
Just cling to Him secure  
And fully, sweetly trust Him and  
E'en this you shall endure.**

~ ANON