

1 & 2 Samuel Series

Lesson #195

December 3, 2019

Dean Bible Ministries

www.deanbibleministries.org

© 2019, Dr. Robert L. Dean, Jr.



THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S

EXCURSUS: THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

2 SAMUEL 12:15–23

- 1. What is the defining issue?**
- 2. What is the historical background in orthodox or Talmudic Judaism?**
- 3. What is the historical background in Christianity?**

“It is interesting that some of the medical and legal discussion about abortion is now turning to speculation concerning the time of ‘ensoulment,’ even though neither academic medicine nor law has hitherto had much to say about the nature of the human soul, or even whether such a thing as a soul actually exists.”

~Harold O. J. Brown



“It is precisely because ensoulment on the one hand—from the purely scientific point of view—cannot be brought into the relationship with life or vivification, however defined, but on the other hand is precisely associated in folk thought and popular culture with quickening and thus with life, that the concept of ensoulment is creeping back into the discussion, despite its self-evident ‘religious’ or ‘theological’ nature.”

~Harold O. J. Brown



“Factually the government is not prepared to take the question of the presence or absence of the human soul into count. Indeed, it is neither prepared nor equipped so much as to consider whether such a thing as a human soul exists. Thus the discussion of ensoulment, for all practical purposes, is necessarily confined to those religious circles, especially but not only Christian ones, who do believe that man has a soul.”

~Harold O. J. Brown

“However one understands ensoulment, it is not possible to assume that the fetus remains without a soul until live birth, the point at which the law finally forbids killing it. A few—very few—evangelical thinkers have proposed that the baby becomes a ‘living person’ only with its first breath, basing this on the account of the special creation of Adam in Genesis 2:7.”

~Harold O. J. Brown



“The question of ‘ensoulment’ cannot be answered scripturally, as the Scripture makes no reference to the process at all. But even if we could answer it, naming, in contrast to the prevailing views, a late point in pregnancy, our answer would not be relevant to the current legal discussion, inasmuch as it would move on a theological plane and deal with issues of which the legislatures and the courts are supposed to take no notice.”

~Harold O. J. Brown

What is he saying:

- 1. Whatever is in the womb is human. That is true, whether it is ensouled or not.**
- 2. Scripture cannot answer the question as to the timing of ensoulment. This is false.**
- 3. We do not want the government or the courts attempting to decide the time of ensoulment apart from revelation. That is true.**

Conclusion

- 1. Only Christians have access to revelation, 1 Cor. 2:14.**
- 2. Christians do not agree as to the time of ensoulment.**
- 3. Therefore, legal statute should not be based on information not available to the majority of people due to their unsaved status.**

What is the historical background in Judaism?

In Jewish law, an unborn fetus is not considered to be a person (Hebrew: *nefesh*, literally: soul) until it is born. The fetus is regarded as part of its mother's body and not a separate being until it begins to egress from the womb during parturition. Until forty days after conception, the fertilized egg is considered "mere fluid."

**The major talmudic source for abortion rulings in Judaism discusses a case of danger to the mother (M. Oh. 7:6):
If a woman is having difficulty in giving birth [and her life is in danger], one cuts up the fetus within her womb and extracts it limb by limb, because her life takes precedence over that of the fetus. But if the greater part was already born, one may not touch it, for one may not set aside one person's life [*nefesh*] for that of another.**

There are many other talmudic sources which support the non-person status of the unborn fetus. In fact, during the first forty days of conception, the Talmud (B. Yeb. 69b, B. Nid. 30b, and M. Ker. 1:3) considers the fertilized zygote to be nothing more than “mere fluid.” However, after forty days have elapsed, the fetus is deemed to have been fashioned or formed. Laws of ritual uncleanness must be observed for abortuses older than forty days, implying that the unborn fetus, although not considered to be a living person, still has considerable status. In fact, Jewish law allows one to desecrate the Sabbath to save the life or preserve the health of an unborn fetus so that “the child may observe many Sabbaths later.”

**What is the historical background in
Christianity?**

1. Is the soul passed from one generation to another by procreation or does God create each soul directly and immediately?

Traducianism, from L. “*traducere*” meaning to transfer. This view teaches that both the material body and the immaterial soul are transmitted through physical procreation. This position was first developed by Tertullian, AD 155–220, who held that the soul was material, not immaterial.

Creationism:

Teaches that only the body is generated through physical generation, the soul is directly created by God.

Hence, for Creationists, the body is created by God INDIRECTLY through intermediate means of sexual procreation and the soul is created DIRECTLY by God through immediate means.

2. The starting point is in Gen. 2:7.

Gen 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

Gen 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

יצר *yatzar*

qal wawConsec 3

masc sing

**to form, plan, make
pottery**

Gen 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

יצר *yatzar*

**qal wawConsec 3
masc sing
to form, plan, make
pottery**

נפח *naphach* qal

**wawConsec 3
masc sing
to breathe**

Gen 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

יצר *yatzar*

**qal wawConsec 3
masc sing
to form, plan, make
pottery**

נפח *naphach* qal

**wawConsec 3
masc sing
to breathe**

נשמה *neshamah*

**comm fem sing
constr
breath**

Gen 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

(nephesh) חַיָּה: **חַיָּה** *chay*
feminine noun meaning a living thing, an animal, a beast, a living thing. The basic meaning is living things, but its most common translation is animals or beasts. The word refers to all kinds of animals and beasts of the field or earth (Gen. 1:24, 25; 1 Sam. 17:46).

נֶפֶשׁ *nephesh*

wind, breath,
soul, animating
principle,
emotion, a
person, passion,
desire

Gen 2:7, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

(nephesh) ḥayyāh: **חַיָּה** *chay*
feminine noun meaning a living thing, an animal, a beast, a living thing. The basic meaning is living things, but its most common translation is animals or beasts. The word refers to all kinds of animals and beasts of the field or earth (Gen. 1:24, 25; 1 Sam. 17:46).

נֶפֶשׁ *nephesh*

wind, breath,
soul, animating
principle,
emotion, a
person, passion,
desire

**Human biological
life plus human
soul life = full
human life**

Gen. 7:22, “of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died.”

נְשָׁמָה *neshamah*

comm fem sing

constr

breath

Deut. 20:16, “Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes.”

נִשְׁמָה *neshamah*

comm fem sing

constr

breath

Josh. 10:40, “Thus Joshua struck all the land, the hill country and the Negev and the lowland and the slopes and all their kings. He left no survivor, but he utterly destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded.”

נִשְׁחַמָּה *neshamah*

comm fem sing

constr

breath

**Isa. 2:22, “Stop regarding man, whose
breath of life is in his nostrils;
For why should he be esteemed?”**

נְשָׁמָה *neshamah*

comm fem sing

constr

breath

**Isa. 42:5, “Thus says God the LORD,
Who created the heavens and stretched
them out,
Who spread out the earth and its
offspring,
Who gives breath to the people on it
And spirit [*ruach*] to those who walk in
it,”**

נְשָׁמָה *neshamah*

comm fem sing

constr

breath

**Isa. 57:16, “For I will not contend forever,
Nor will I always be angry;
For the spirit would grow faint before
Me,
And the breath of those whom I have
made [*asah*].”**

נִשְׁחַמָּה *neshamah*

comm fem sing

constr

breath

Eccl. 12:7, “then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit [רוּחַ *ruach*] will return to God who gave it.”

3. Some passages suggest God uses an indirect means to create physical life, but a direct means for physical life.

Job 1:21, “He said,

**‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb,
[from birth]**

And naked I shall return there.

**The LORD gave and the LORD has taken
away.**

Blessed be the name of the LORD.’ ”

Job 33:4,

**“The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty gives me
life.”**

Eccl. 12:7, “then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit [רוּחַ *ruach*] will return to God who gave it.”

Does God continue the same pattern of creation of life?

Does God still have one process for generating the material part of man and another process for generating the immaterial part of man?