

1 & 2 Samuel Series

Lesson #196

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Dean Bible Ministries

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THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S
EXCURSUS PART 2:

THE PARAMETERS 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?**

“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.**

What is the historical background in Judaism?

... an embryo is not considered a person (*nefesh*) until it is born

What is the historical background in Christianity?

Three views:

From Platonism: all souls pre-exist. This is pure paganism.

Traducianism

Creationism

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.

William G. T. Shedd (1820–1894): “Creationism has been the most common view during the last two centuries.”

Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225–1274):

“Moreover, since it is an immaterial substance it cannot be caused through generation, but only through creation by God. Therefore, to hold that the intellectual soul is caused by the begetter is nothing else than to hold the soul to be non-subsistent, and consequently to perish with the body. It is therefore heretical to say that the intellectual soul is transmitted with the semen.””

**~See Thomas Aquinas,
Summa Theologiae I. 118, 2.**



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.”

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masc sing
to form, plan, make
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נשמה *neshamah*

**comm fem sing
constr
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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

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

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

נִשְׁמָה *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*].”**

נְשָׁמָה *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 *soul* life.

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?

4. When does God impart the soul?
At conception?
During gestation??
At birth??

Birth (noun) usually used with a preposition, i.e., “from birth” preposition + noun.

There is no noun for birth in Hebrew. Thus when you have to express the prepositional phrase, you use מִבֶּטֶן *mibeten*, from the womb, or מִרַחֵם *miracham*, used in Psa. 22:10; 58:4.

Job 1:21, “He said,

‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb,

And naked I shall return there.

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

Blessed be the name of the LORD.’ ”

**Job 3:11, “Why did I not die at birth,
[*mirecham*]**

Come forth from the womb and expire?”

**Job 10:19, “I should have been as though I
had not been,
Carried from womb to tomb.”**

**Psa. 22:9, “Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb;
You made me trust when upon my mother’s breasts.”**

**Psa. 22:10, “Upon You I was cast from
birth; [mirecham]”**

**You have been my God from my
mother’s womb. [mibeten]”**

Psa. 58:3, “The wicked are estranged from the womb;

These who speak lies go astray from birth.”

**Isa. 44:2, “Thus says the LORD who made
you**

**And formed you from the womb, who will
help you,**

‘Do not fear, O Jacob My servant;

And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen.’ ”

Isa. 44:24, “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb,

‘I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, Stretching out the heavens by Myself And spreading out the earth all alone,’ ”

Birth (verb)

יָלַד (*yālad*) bear, beget, bring forth, gender, travail

There is no noun for “birth”
yeled, means “child, son, youth”

A noun for birth,

לִדְהָ comm fem sing abs childbirth

Like a woman in childbirth; Jer. 13:21;
**is not used in any passage related to time, i.e., from x to y.

Conceive

**הָרָה (*hārâ*) verb. bear, be with child,
conceive, progenitor, be conceived,
conceive**

**הֵרָיוֹן (*hērāyôn*) noun. conception,
pregnancy**

**To say, “from birth” there should be a noun
for “birth.” Hebrew has no such noun. So
“from the womb” is the idiom for “from
birth.”**

Neither of these words for *conceive* is used of the parameters of life.

****The Septuagint (LXX) translates the adjective of this word with the phrase ἐν γαστρὶ, note the preposition, it is EN, not EK, which is what we find with the noun *beten*.**

5. Biblical verses for the parameters of life.

Eccl. 3:2, “A time to give birth and a time to die;

A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted.”

Isa. 9:6, “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;

And the government will rest on His shoulders;

And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”

**Job 14:1, “Man, who is born of woman,
Is short-lived and full of turmoil.”**

**Job 15:14, “What is man, that he should be
pure,**

**Or he who is born of a woman, that he
should be righteous?”**

**Job 38:21, “You know, for you were born
then,**

And the number of your days is great!”

Job 1:21, “He said,

**‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb,
And naked I shall return there.**

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

Blessed be the name of the LORD.’ ”

Job 3:11, “Why did I not die at birth,

Come forth from the womb and expire?”

Job 10:18, ‘Why then have You brought me out of the womb?’

Would that I had died and no eye had seen me!

Job 10:19, “ ‘I should have been as though I had not been,

Carried from womb to tomb.’ ”

Matt. 11:11, “Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

6. Other important Scriptures:

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

**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”**

7. No verse anywhere gives the parameters of life as conception to death, especially when there are available words in the language for that concept.

8. New Testament, *ek koilia* and *ek gastras*, are Semitic idioms indicating from the time of birth.

**9. You must be “born” again, not
“conceived” again.**

John 3

10. The value of human biological life within the womb.

Psa. 139:13, “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb.

Psa. 139:14, “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.”

Jer. 1:5, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”