

# Responding to Theological Arguments for Abortion



Some pro-choice advocates will try to use scripture to say the Bible supports abortion. Below are some common arguments and responses.

**"The Bible does not say anything about abortion. The word 'abortion' is found nowhere in the Bible."**

A false assumption is being made that whatever the Bible does not expressly condemn it must therefore condone. The Bible doesn't say not to torture kittens or pour toxins in our rivers. But we know these things are wrong. We don't need a bible verse to tell us they are wrong because the entire Bible enjoins us to steward all that God created. We know by inference these things are wrong. The Bible is not silent on the subject of abortion any more than it is silent on the subject of drive-by shootings. Unfortunately, humanity has found many creative ways of ending and dehumanizing life. The Bible does not provide a list condemning each specific method. Instead, the Bible condemns the unjust taking of an innocent human life. We know through the science of human embryology what a human life is. The biblical prohibitions in the Old AND New Testaments protect life.<sup>2</sup>

**"Exodus 21: 22-25 reads, 'And if men struggle with each other and**

**strike a woman with child so that she has a miscarriage, yet there is no [further] injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him; and he shall pay as the judges demand of him. But if there is any [further] injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.' This scripture proves the unborn are not fully human because the penalty for accidentally killing a fetus is less than that for killing its mother."**

First, assuming the pro-abortion interpretation of this passage is correct, i.e., that the preborn's death is treated differently than the mother's, it does not follow that the preborn are not fully human.

Second, this passage cannot be used to support abortion on demand. Pro-choice advocates argue that any woman should be able to kill any baby at any point in the pregnancy for any reason. This passage, however, does not even remotely suggest that a woman can willfully kill her preborn child without justification.

When read in the original Hebrew, the passage seems to convey that both the mother and the child are covered by the *lex talionis* – the law of retribution. The Hebrew term *ason* (harm/injury) is clearly

indefinite in its reference, and the expression *lah* (to her), which would restrict the word "injury" only to the mother, is missing. Hence, the phrase "no serious injury" seems to apply equally to both mother and child, and if either is harmed, the penalty is "life for life, tooth for tooth, hand for hand," etc. According to Hebrew scholar Dr. Gleason Archer, "There is no second class status attached to the fetus under this rule. The fetus is just as valuable as the mother."

Furthermore, we should not presume that the miscarriage of Exodus 21 produces a dead child, as does abortion. Greg Koukl makes an excellent point: the Hebrew word for "miscarriage" in this context is *yasa* – which almost always refers to the emergence of a living thing. So it could mean a premature birth.

If the miscarried child is not injured, the penalty is merely a fine. But if it is harmed, the penalty is life for life, tooth for tooth, etc. Read this way, the passage treats the preborn with the same value it does the mother. The penalty for harming either is the same. (Note also the text calls the expelled fetus a "child" – a fact abortion advocates cannot easily get around.)<sup>5</sup>

2. Spencer, Mike. (2018). *Case for Life [Workshop]*. Retrieved from <https://prolifetraining.com/resources/media-library/>

5. Klusendorf, Scott. (n.d). *Answering the Theological Case for Abortion Rights*. Retrieved from [http://inplainsite.org/html/abortion\\_and\\_theology.html](http://inplainsite.org/html/abortion_and_theology.html)