

# TINY HUMAN LIFE

WHEN, WHETHER, AND WHERE

(ON ENSOULMENT, ABORTION, *AIH*, *AID*  
*IVF*, SURROGATE WOMBS, AND CLONING)



by

**Rev. Dr. Adv. Francis Nigel Lee**

**Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theological and Christian Ethics  
Queensland Presbyterian Theological College  
Australia**

Third Edition, 2001

Tiny Human Life – 2 –

## WHEN, WHETHER, AND WHERE ?

ON: HUMAN ENSOULMENT, ABORTION, NATURAL REPRODUCTION, ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION FROM DONOR, SURROGATE HUMAN WOMBS, ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION FROM HUSBAND, *IN VITRO* FERTILIZATION, NON-HUMAN WOMBS FOR HUMANS, HUMAN GENETIC ENGINEERING, HUMAN RECOMBINANT DIOXYRIBONUCLEIC ACID (*DNA*), & HUMAN CLONING

Academic Dissertation

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**Doctor of Humanities (D. Hum.)**

at

Whitefield Theological Seminary U.S.A.

by

Francis Nigel Lee

B.A., Dip.Th., C.Litt., L.Th., B.D., LL.B., M.A., M.A.T.S., M.Th., M.Soc.Sc., M.Div., LL.D. (*honoris causa*), D.Litt., D.Jur., D.Min., D.R.E., S.T.D., Ed.D., Th.D., Ph.D., D.C.L.

Professor of Systematic Theology & Christian Ethics  
and  
Caldwell-Morrow Lecturer in Church History

at the  
Queensland Presbyterian Theological Seminary  
Brisbane Australia

Revised: 2001

**Published by:** .

**Ligstryders**

✉ 74904 Lynnwoodrif 0040 South Africa

☎ Nat (012) 331-8121 Int (+27 12) 331-8121

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# TINY HUMAN LIFE

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	<b>THE BIBLE: WHEN DOES HUMAN LIFE BEGIN?</b> .....	27
	The origin and nature and tri-unity of man .....	27
	Man's origin in Job, Zechariah, and the New(er) Testament .....	28
	Human life begins at conception .....	29
	Tertullian on the <i>conceptus</i> as a human being.....	30
	Human personality from conception onward .....	31
	Augustine on deformities at conception .....	32
	<i>Westminster</i> : creation; covenant; sin; resurrection (commenced).....	33
	<i>Westminster</i> : creation; covenant; sin; resurrection (continued).....	33
	<i>Westminster</i> : creation; covenant; sin; resurrection (concluded).....	34
	1977 <i>Abortion Report</i> to Presbyterian Church in America.....	34
	Conclusion on when human life begins.....	35
B.	<b>MODERN MEDICINE AND SCIENCE ON THE START OF HUMAN LIFE</b> .....	37
	Drs. Patten, Gordon, Montagu & Fridhandler on the start of human life.....	37
	Drs. Potter, Craig, Shettles, & Heffernan on the start of human life .....	37
	Dr. Hellegers and the Abortion Congress on the start of human life .....	38
	Drs. Cooke, Bourne & Carles on the start of human life.....	38
	Dr. Vincent and Our Future Inheritance on the start of human life .....	39
	Conclusion of scientific data on the start of human life .....	39
C.	<b>SCRIPTURE: ARE PRENATAL HUMANS REALLY PERSONS?</b> .....	41
	Adam's personality created at his very inception .....	41
	Delitzsch on Adam's concreated personality.....	42
	Adam's concreated personality: Lange and Kurtz and Delitzsch.....	43
	Keil on Adam's concreated personality .....	43
	Adam's and Eve's concreated personalities according to Leupold.....	44
	The commencement of personality in Adam and Eve and their children.....	44
	The personalities of the twin unborn children of Isaac and Tamar .....	45
	Moses on the personalities of the unborn in Exodus.....	46
	Judges on Samson's personality from conception onward.....	46
	The inspired Job on prenatal personality and consciousness .....	47
	Delitzsch on Job's conscious prenatal personality .....	47
	Delitzsch on Job's prenatal personality (continued) .....	48
	Delitzsch on Job's prenatal personality (concluded) .....	49
	The children of Ruth from their conception onward.....	50
	The children of Hannah from their conception onward.....	50
	David's personality from conception onward in Psalm 51 .....	50
	David's prenatal personality according to Psalm 139.....	51
	Calvin on David's prenatal personality in Psalm 139.....	52
	Delitzsch on David's prenatal personality in Psalm 139 .....	52
	Calvin on "the virgin shall conceive" in Isaiah 7:14 .....	53
	Calvin and Habel on Jeremiah's prenatal sanctification .....	54
	Conception and miscarriage in Hosea 9:1 to 10:1 .....	54
	The implications of Hosea 9:1 to 10:1 for deliberate abortion .....	55
	The implications of Zechariah 12:1 for prenatal personality.....	55

	Matthew's testimony about the prenatal personality of Jesus .....	56
	Luke's account of the personality of Jesus at His conception .....	57
	Luke on John's prenatal recognition of the just-conceived Jesus.....	58
	How normative for us was Christ's unique conception within Mary? .....	59
	James slams bloodshed and implies the human soul is given at conception.....	60
	Paul on the personal nature of human fetushood .....	61
	Summary of Scriptures on the prenatal personality of fetuses .....	62
	Conclusion: prenatal human beings are really persons.....	62
D.	<b>ANTE-NICENE BIBLE COMMENTATORS ON TINY HUMAN LIFE .....</b>	<b>65</b>
	Tiny human life in the Samaritan Targum, Zohar, Mishnah, and the Talmud .....	65
	Philo and Josephus protect tiny human life.....	65
	Clement of Rome on man's prenatal personality.....	66
	Justin Martyr on the status of tiny babies.....	66
	Irenaeus: soul and body are concreated and comingled.....	67
	Clement of Alexandria and Theodotus on embryonic souls .....	67
	Tertullian of Carthage's <i>Treatise on the Soul</i> .....	68
	Tertullian vs. the Pagan Greeks: the embryo is ensouled prenatally.....	68
	Tertullian's insistence on the personhood of prenatal babies.....	68
	Tertullian: humans are ensouled from their very conception onward .....	69
	Tertullian on man's prenatal spirit and the resurrection.....	70
	Origen on the personhoods of the prenatal John and Jesus.....	71
	Dionysius's anti-materialistic human embryology .....	71
	The <i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> on prenatal human life .....	72
	Methodius on the status of the human embryo .....	72
	Lactantius: human life starts from conception also in the case of Christ.....	73
	Conclusion: The Ante-Nicene Bible Commentators uphold prenatal human life .....	74
E.	<b>POST-NICENE THEOLOGIAN ON TINY HUMAN LIFE .....</b>	<b>75</b>
	The impact of the <i>Nicene Creed</i> on human embryology .....	75
	Aphrahat the Persian on prenatal human death.....	75
	Conclusion: the Post-Nicaean Church upholds tiny human life.....	82
F.	<b>AUGUSTINE AND THE MEDIAEVALISTS ON TINY HUMAN LIFE .....</b>	<b>83</b>
	Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> : the human soul created at conception .....	83
	Augustine's A.D. 415 <i>Treatise on the Origin of the Soul</i> .....	84
	Augustine never retracted his conceptional creationism .....	85
	Augustine's <i>City of God</i> on the resurrection of those aborted .....	85
	Augustine on the prenatal personalities of John and Jesus .....	86
	Prenatal life in Augustine's <i>Treatise on...Forgiveness of Sins</i> .....	86
	The relevance of Augustine's work <i>On the Soul and its Origin</i> .....	87
	Augustine against the Pelagians and on the Psalms .....	87
	John Cassian on prenatal human life and personality.....	88
	Leo the Great and Fulgentius: human life begins at conception .....	88
	Gregory the Great on the conceptional origin of human life .....	88
	John of Damascus: body and soul both made at generation .....	89
	Anselm: infants exist from and inherit sin at their conception.....	89
	Odo of Tornay: the human embryo is an animated or ensouled egg.....	90
	Thomas Aquinas: prenatal soul created at the same time as the body.....	90
	Conclusions: Augustine and the mediaevalists on tiny human life .....	92
G.	<b>PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN ON THE FULL HUMANITY OF ALL CONCEIVED .....</b>	<b>93</b>
	Luther on the value of prenatal human life .....	93

Calvin: the teaching on the origin of human life (Adam and Eve).....	94
Calvin: the teaching on tiny human life of the Older Testament.....	94
Calvin: the bearing of the incarnation on tiny human life.....	95
The 1559 <i>French Confession of Faith</i> on tiny human life.....	95
The 1560 <i>Scots Confession of Faith</i> on tiny human life.....	95
The 1561 <i>Belgic Confession of Faith</i> on tiny human life.....	96
The 1562 <i>English Confession of Faith</i> on tiny human life.....	96
The 1562 <i>Heidelberg Catechism</i> on tiny human life.....	96
Ursinus: original sin imputed at prenatal ensoulment.....	97
The 1566 <i>Second Helvetic Confession</i> on tiny human life.....	97
Keckermann: the incarnation and our prenatal ensoulment.....	98
The 1618f <i>Decrees of Dordt</i> on tiny human life.....	98
Wollebius: prenatal ensoulment from conception onward.....	98
The 1645 <i>Declaration of Thorn</i> on original sin at conception.....	99
The 1647f <i>Westminster Standards</i> on original sin at conception.....	99
Owen: prenatal ensoulment from conception onward.....	100
Turretini: prenatal ensoulment and besmirchment at conception.....	100
Riissen: prenatal zygotes are persons even from conception.....	100
American Protestant Churches: ensoulment at start of human life.....	101
Edwards & Hopkins on human ensoulment already at conception.....	102
Charles Hodge: human embryos ensouled when conceived.....	102
A.A. Hodge: "nascent souls in infant bodies" even before birth.....	103
W.G.T. Shedd: bodies and souls are created together.....	103
W.G.T. Shedd: "the embryonic and foetal life...includes the mental".....	104
W.G.T. Shedd: soul not created after conception of the body.....	104
Delitzsch: embryo's body and soul are concreated simultaneously.....	105
Kuyper: "at conception itself...the soul takes over".....	106
Bavinck: "soul lives...germinally...in the psychological life of the fetus".....	106
Geesink: "the fruit [or ' <i>foetus</i> '] lives from the first moment of conception".....	106
Geesink: the embryo lives "from its own principle".....	107
J. Gresham Machen: the Spirit begets man at his conception.....	108
Machen: Christ's human personhood generated right at conception.....	108
Honig: "the soul is created...with the zygote at the moment of fertilization".....	109
Conclusion: Protestantism affirms the full personality of all conceived.....	110
H. THE LAW OF GOD (ESPECIALLY ANENT TINY HUMAN BEINGS).....	111
The Ten Commandments immediately prior to the fall of man.....	111
The Ten Commandments right after the fall of man.....	112
The Ten Commandments between the fall of man and the great flood.....	113
The Decalogical Ten Commandments and the Noachic Covenant.....	114
Comments on the Adamic/Noachic Commandments in the <i>Book of Enoch</i> .....	114
Noachic Law binds all persons and nations: thus also Abraham's household.....	116
God's Law bound also the non-Abrahamic yet pre-Mosaic Job and Shechem.....	116
The Mosaic Law at Sinai upholds the universal Pre-Mosaic Moral Law.....	117
The Post-Mosaic Prophets uphold the universal Pre-Mosaic Moral Law.....	118
The Decalogical Law of God during the Intertestamental Period (B.C. 400f).....	119
The B.C. 30f Philo's <i>Decalogue</i> on the universally-binding Ten Commandments.....	120
Philo's <i>Special Laws</i> on the family and sexual morality in the Decalogue.....	121
Philo's <i>Special Laws</i> on murder and abortion and infanticide in the Decalogue.....	122
God's Decalogue in the <i>Antiquities</i> of the A.D. 37f Judaist Josephus.....	123

Josephus's rejection of abortion and infanticide in his <i>Against Apion</i> .....	125
Josephus's vindication of God's Law in John and in Jesus .....	126
Josephus's vindication of the Law in the A.D. 70 Fall of Jerusalem .....	126
The Decalogical Law of God and Newer Testament Christianity .....	128
The Decalogical Law of God and the christianizing of all nations .....	129
The Decalogical Law of God at the A.D. 49 Synod of Jerusalem.....	129
The Decalogical Law of God in the <i>Epistle of James</i> .....	130
The Decalogical Law of God in the <i>Book of Revelation</i> .....	131
God's Decalogue and all the so-called 'monotheistic religions' .....	132
God's Decalogue in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (alias the Didache).....	132
The Decalogical Law of God in the <i>Epistle of Barnabas</i> .....	133
The Decalogical Law of God in Clement of Rome .....	133
The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Ignatius of Antioch.....	134
The Decalogical Law of God in the <i>Shepherd of Hermas</i> .....	134
The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Polycarp of Smyrna.....	136
The Decalogical Law of God in Aristides's <i>Apology to Hadrian</i> .....	136
The Decalogical Law of God in Justin Martyr's <i>First Apology</i> .....	137
Place of the Decalogue in Justin's various Christian Liturgies .....	138
Importance of the Decalogue in Theophilus's <i>Defence to Autolycus</i> .....	139
The Decalogical Law of God in the Christian Philosopher Athenagoras .....	140
The outspoken anti-antinomianism of Irenaeus Presbyter of Lyons.....	141
God's Law in Clement of Alexandria's <i>Exhortation</i> and in his <i>Instructor</i> .....	142
God's Law in Clement of Alexandria's <i>Miscellanies</i> and in his <i>Rich Man</i> .....	143
Early Christian Liturgy inherited the Decalogue from Old Testament Worship.....	144
The decalogical content of extant Early Christian Liturgies.....	146
The decalogical Law of God in the <i>Clementine Documents</i> .....	146
God's Law in the Early Writings of Carthage's Presbyter Tertullian .....	147
The Law of God in Tertullian's <i>Answer to the Jews</i> .....	148
The Decalogue in Tertullian's <i>Against Marcion</i> (the Antinomian) .....	149
Tertullian's other anti-antinomian writings on the Law of God .....	150
The Law of God in Alexandria's Chief Catechist Origen's <i>On the Principles</i> .....	152
The Law of God in Alexandria's Chief Catechist Origen's <i>Against Celsus</i> .....	153
Origen: same Providence punishing murder under the Law gave the Gospel .....	154
Origen: "no discrepancy between the God of the Gospel and the God of the Law" .....	155
The Law of God in Origen's <i>Commentary on Matthew</i> .....	155
The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Hippolytus of Pontus .....	156
The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Cyprian of Carthage .....	157
Diodorus: Christ came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it .....	158
Archelaus upholds the Law because the Older Testament agrees with the Newer.....	159
The Decalogical Law of God in the <i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> .....	159
The <i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> uphold the Noachitic Laws .....	160
The <i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> uphold the primordial Law of Nature .....	161
Specific Commandments of the Decalogue upheld by the <i>Constitutions</i> .....	162
The Clementine Office in the Apostolic Constitutions on the Decalogue.....	162
Lactantius: God's Adamic and Noachic Law binds all men everywhere.....	164
Constantine becomes the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire .....	165
Constantine's first moves to establish a Christian Commonwealth .....	166
Eusebius's 324 A.D. testimony about Constantine's earlier feats.....	167
Constantine upholds God's Moral Law throughout his Roman Empire .....	167

Christian laws progressively enacted by Emperor Constantine .....	168
Eusebius's 335 A.D. <i>Oration</i> in praise of the laws of Constantine.....	170
Eusebius's A.D. 338 <i>Life of Constantine</i> on his godly legislation .....	171
God's Moral Law in Eusebius's A.D. 338 <i>Life of Constantine</i> .....	171
Chief Presbyter Athanasius of Alexandria on God's Moral Law .....	172
Basil the Great: breaches of the Decalogue need severe punishment.....	173
The Law in Cyril of Jerusalem's 375 A.D. <i>Catechetical Lectures</i> .....	175
Constantinople's Chrysostom on God's Law in his <i>Homilies on Matthew</i> .....	175
Chrysostom on God's Law in his Homilies on John & Acts & Romans .....	176
Presbyter Jerome of Bethlehem on the Decalogical Law of God .....	177
Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> and <i>Epistles</i> on the Decalogical Law of God.....	178
Augustine's <i>City of God</i> and <i>Enchiridion</i> on the Decalogical Law of God .....	179
Augustine's <i>Sermons on New-Testament Lessons</i> on the Decalogical Law of God .....	180
The Decalogical Law of God in Augustine's Anti-Pelagian Works.....	180
The Decalogical Law of God in Augustine's Anti-Manichaeon Works .....	182
Decalogical Law of God in Augustine's <i>On the Gospel of St. John</i> .....	182
The Decalogical Law of God according to John Cassian .....	183
The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Leo the Great of Rome.....	185
God's Law veiled from Pope Gregory the Great to Thomas Aquinas .....	185
Martin Luther's <i>Thesaurus</i> on the Decalogical Law of God .....	186
The Decalogical Law of God in Luther's early treatises .....	187
The Decalogical Law of God in Luther's later works .....	188
Calvin on the Decalogical Law of God before the Noachic Flood .....	189
Calvin on the Decalogical Law of God between the Flood and Sinai .....	190
Calvin on the Decalogical Law of God among Christians after Calvary .....	191
The Decalogue in Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion .....	192
The Exposition of the Moral Law in Calvin's <i>Institutes</i> .....	193
The Law of God according to the Calvinistic <i>Westminster Confession</i> .....	194
The Law of God according to the <i>Westminster Larger Catechism</i> .....	194
<i>Westminster Confession</i> : God's Law to be embraced by all nations.....	195
<i>Westminster Catechisms</i> : Christ's foes must all yield to His Law.....	197
Conclusion: God's Law also anent human life is for all ages.....	198
<b>I. THE OLDER TESTAMENT PROTECTS HUMAN FETUSES FROM ABORTION .....</b>	<b>201</b>
Overview of this chapter on abortion in the Older Testament .....	201
The nature of murder, miscarriage, and abortion .....	202
The testimony anent abortion of various encyclopaedias.....	203
Are IUDs alias Intra-Uterine Devices abortive?.....	203
Violating human life immediately prior to and right after the fall .....	204
Prohibitions of bloodshed and also abortion in the Noachic Covenant.....	205
The anti-abortive thrust of the Sixth Commandment for all humanity.....	206
Context of Exodus 21:22-25 as charter of the unborn's right to life .....	207
Rabbi Umberto Cassuto on Exodus 21:22-25.....	210
The meaning of the word "fighting" in Exodus 21:22.....	211
The meaning of the word "strike" in Exodus 21:22.....	211
The meaning of the words "pregnant woman" in Exodus 21:22 .....	212
The meaning of the word "child(ren)" in Exodus 21:22 .....	212
The "child" in Exodus 21:22 is a <i>yeled</i> and not a <i>gaalam</i> .....	212
The " <i>yeled</i> " in Exodus 21:22 - though unborn - is a "child" .....	213
The " <i>yeled</i> " in Exodus 21:22 is a prenatal child <i>in utero</i> .....	213

The meaning of the word "expelled" in Exodus 21:22 .....	213
Exodus 21:22 describes a <i>Fruehgeburt</i> and not a <i>Fehlgeburt</i> .....	214
What is the "mischief" or "serious harm" in Exodus 21:22f? .....	214
The litigability of the torts mentioned in Exodus 21:22f .....	214
The meaning of the word "punished" in Exodus 21:22f .....	215
Who imposes the fine or other punishment in Exodus 21:22f? .....	215
The "life for a life" and the "eye for an eye" in Exodus 21:23f .....	216
Significance of "mischief" or harm or wound in Exodus 21:22f .....	216
The retaliation in Exodus 21:22f was not physical but monetary .....	216
Judaism and the Hebraist Selden on retaliation in Exodus 21:22f .....	217
Calvin on retaliation in Exodus 21:22f .....	217
Absurdity of construing Exodus 21:22f's retaliation physically .....	218
Exodus 21:22f and intentional killing - "life for life" .....	219
General equity of Exodus 21:22f (and parallels) for all nations .....	219
1978 American Presbyterian <i>Abortion Report</i> on Exodus 21:22-25 .....	220
Intentional abortion graver than the torts mentioned in Exodus 21:22f .....	220
Light on Exodus 21:22-24 also from the parallel Leviticus 24:17-22 .....	220
Significance of Leviticus 18:21 and 20:2-5 for tiny human life .....	221
The significance of Leviticus 22:27f for tiny human life .....	221
The significance of Deuteronomy 22:6f for tiny human life .....	222
Vallentine's Jewish Encyclopaedia on the Hebrew <i>lex talionis</i> .....	222
Rev. Dr. Adam Clark on the Hebrew <i>lex talionis</i> .....	222
J.K. Mikliszanski on the Hebrew <i>lex talionis</i> .....	223
Julius Morgenstern on the Hebrew <i>lex talionis</i> .....	223
Rev. Dr. R.J. Rushdoony on the Hebrew <i>lex talionis</i> .....	224
Older Testament as a whole gives grave punishments for abortion .....	224
The Post-Mosaic Law of God always condemned abortion as heinous .....	225
Conclusion: the Older Testament protects the life of unborn humans .....	226
<b>J. ANCIENT-PAGAN, INTERTESTAMENTAL, &amp; NEWER TESTAMENT ABORTIONS .....</b>	<b>229</b>
Influence against abortion of the Adamic and Noachic Covenants .....	229
Memory of the sin of murderous abortion after the Tower of Babel .....	229
Anti-abortionism of the <i>Codex Hammurabi</i> and of Ancient Ireland and India .....	230
The contrast between the Assyrian and the Hebrew <i>lex talionis</i> .....	230
The anti-abortionistic stance of Buddhism .....	231
The anti-abortionistic stance of Zoroastrianism .....	231
The anti-abortionistic stance of Ancient Paganism .....	232
Anti-abortionistic influence of Judaic and Islamic Monotheism .....	232
Tiny humans in the Early Intertestamental Period (from B.C. 420 onward) .....	233
Hippocrates: "I not give a woman an abortive pessary!" .....	234
<i>Hermopolis Papyrus</i> : assaulter of a pregnant woman to be punished .....	234
Hebrew <i>Zohar</i> : "Spirit weeps" over the "abominations" of abortions .....	234
<i>Mishnah</i> : prenatal baby is human and undismemberable after 'halfborn' .....	235
The B.C. 30f Philo called for the punishment of abortionists .....	235
A.D. 37f Josephus: a deliberately-aborting woman is "a murderess" .....	236
Increasing apostasy of Ancient Greece had promoted abortions .....	236
The increase of abortions also in the Pagan Roman Empire .....	237
The Newer Testament expands the anti-abortionism of the Older Testament .....	238
The pro-life Lord Jesus Christ challenges the abortionism of Pagan Rome .....	238
Christ's disciples Paul and Luke agreed with His anti-abortionism .....	238



	'Aborted' Paul by grace survived his own spiritual miscarriage .....	239
	The traumatic <i>ektrooma</i> of Paul's delivery as a premature Christian .....	240
	Conclusion: abortions uncommon from Babel to the Newer Testament.....	241
K.	<b>PATRISTIC CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS STRONGLY OPPOSED ABORTION.....</b>	<b>243</b>
	The <i>Didachee</i> : "murder not a child by abortion nor kill those conceived!" .....	243
	Barnabas: "you shall not slay the child by procuring abortion!" .....	243
	Barnabas: don't "kill children" nor "destroy God's workmanship!" .....	244
	<i>Diognetus</i> : "the Christians...do not destroy their offspring" .....	244
	<i>Revelation of Peter</i> : cursed are aborters of babies in angels' care .....	245
	Justin Martyr: Pagans slaughter but Christians save theio babes .....	245
	Athenagoras: "women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder" .....	245
	Tertullian: "to hinder a birth is merely a speedier man-killing" .....	246
	Minucius Felix: women who abort "commit a parricide" .....	246
	Clement of Alexandria: shame on Pagans abandoning their babies! .....	246
	Clement of Alexandria: Pagans have no right to murder their infants .....	247
	Hippolytus condemns abortifacient drugs which "murder" babies .....	247
	<i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> : "You shall not slay the child by causing abortion!" .....	248
	Methodius: Abortees or "untimely births are delivered to caretaker angels" .....	248
	Basil starts first live-in hospital and stages protests against abortionists .....	248
	Basil: one "purposely destroying her child is guilty of murder" .....	249
	Basil: "Women who administer abortive drugs are murderesses" .....	249
	Basil: one who "purposely kills fetuses suffers the punishment of murder" .....	249
	Jerome: abortive women who kill babies are guilty of "child murder" .....	250
	<i>Vision of Paul</i> : unrepentant women who kill their babies go to hell .....	250
	Chrysostom: "Abortion...is murder before birth" in "a murder-chamber" womb .....	251
	Augustine: Abortion is "notorious iniquity" and "lustful cruelty" .....	251
	John Cassian: an eye-for-eye penalty is required for killing an unborn child.....	251
	Conclusion: Patristic Theologians strongly opposed abortion .....	252
L.	<b>THE EARLY CHURCH'S SYNODS FREQUENTLY CONDEMNED ABORTION.....</b>	<b>253</b>
	Council of Elvira excommunicated adulteresses who had aborted their babies .....	253
	Council of Ancyra denounces abortive women and abortifacient manufacturers .....	253
	Council of Nicaea: adulteresses who then abort are to be excommunicated .....	254
	First Council of Constantinople: the incarnation implicitly anti-abortionistic .....	254
	Council of Ephesus: the incarnation, from conception, implicitly anti-abortionive .....	254
	Council of Chalcedon: Christ's incarnation is implicitly anti-abortionistic.....	255
	Second Council of Constantinople: denial of the incarnation is anathematized .....	255
	The <i>Anathemas of the Emperor Justinian</i> : Christ human from conception onward.....	256
	Third Council of Contantinople uphold all five holy Ecumenical Councils .....	256
	Synod of Trullo: those poisoning the fetus are subject to penalty for murder .....	256
	Conclusion: Early Church's Synods frequently condemned abortion .....	257
M.	<b>THE POST-MEDIAEVAL CHURCH OPPOSES INDUCED ABORTION.....</b>	<b>259</b>
	Thomas Aquinas: lethal removal of non-dying prenatal babies is murder .....	259
	Martin Luther: murderers deserve death penalty at the hand of man.....	259
	Luther: "wicked" are "the girls...who...expel tender fetuses" .....	260
	Luther: Moses confirms the 'life for life' death penalty for murder .....	260
	Luther: death penalty for murder remains also in the New Testament.....	260
	John Calvin: "the fetus...in the womb of its mother is <i>already</i> a human being" .....	261
	Calvin: "to destroy a fetus in the womb" is " <i>more</i> horrible" than murder .....	261
	Calvin: "punish...with death" if in an "abortion...the infant...be killed" .....	261

	Calvin: accidental but negligent killing of fetus is punishable .....	261
	Counter-Reformation: Ignatius Loyola calls "abortion" a "murderous act" .....	262
	<i>Heidelberg Catechism</i> : do not "wound or kill" but rather "prevent murder" .....	262
	<i>Westminster Larger Catechism</i> bars "taking away the life...of others" .....	262
	Modern Roman Catholicism: deliberate abortion is "direct murder" .....	263
	Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "destruction of the embryo...is nothing but murder" .....	263
	Karl Barth: "he who destroys germinating life, kills a man" .....	264
	Helmut Thielicke: in abortion "the order of creation is infringed upon" .....	264
	Willem Geesink: abortions are "disgraceful practices" and murders .....	264
	Various other Protestants too all deplore the sin of abortion .....	265
	Orthodox Protestantism opposes abortion even more than does Romanism .....	265
	Agnostics, Atheists, Humanists, Jews & Moslems who condemn abortion .....	266
	Conclusion: the Post-Mediaeval Church and many others condemn abortion .....	266
N.	<b>THE SUGGESTED BIBLICAL PUNISHMENTS FOR ABORTIONISTS</b> .....	267
	The <i>lex talionis</i> in Holy Scripture according to the <i>Jewish Encyclopaedia</i> .....	267
	The <i>lex talionis</i> in Holy Scripture according to John Calvin .....	268
	Modern Popes: God avenges the blood of the unborn upon delinquent judges .....	268
	Geesink: magistrate must wreak vengeance retaliatorily against murderers .....	269
	Dr. A.C. Drogendijk: abortion "is equivalent to killing" and is "criminal" .....	270
	Penalties for abortion to save mother's health or in cases of rape and incest .....	270
	No criminal penalty if pregnancy ended solely to save the mother's life .....	270
	Remuneration for miscarriages through culpable or negligent accidents .....	271
	The civil magistrate's inescapable duty to punish unlawful abortions .....	271
	<i>Westminster Confession</i> : God arms Magistrates to punish the evildoers .....	272
	<i>Westminster Confession</i> : Judges must proceed against peace-destroyers .....	272
	Australian Presbyterianism: fallen man to comply with Moral Law .....	272
	<i>Westminster Catechism</i> : "Superiors" to protect the welfare of their "Inferiors" .....	273
	<i>Westminster Catechism</i> : abortive sin of "Superiors" against "Inferiors" .....	274
	Sixth Commandment: preserve life and avoid taking it unjustly! .....	274
	Sixth Commandment: protect especially little children! .....	275
	Sixth Commandment: do not take human life save in selfdefence! .....	275
	Ninth Commandment: "standing for the truth" on behalf of the dumb .....	276
	Ninth Commandment: don't plead for an evil cause like abortion! .....	276
	<i>Heidelberg Catechism</i> : honour parents and do not wound or murder! .....	277
	<i>Westminster Confession</i> : Church to petition State anent abortion .....	277
	A Christian <i>Anti-Abortion Report</i> to send to any Political Government .....	278
	Presbyterian protests vs. abortion to Political Governments (1978-94) .....	279
	Pope: abortions are "unspeakable crimes" needing "severe penalties" (1995) .....	279
	Conclusion: the suggested Biblical punishments for abortionists .....	280
O.	<b>ABORTION A PUNISHABLE CRIME IN EARLY CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION</b> .....	281
	The Older Testament: murderous abortion is a punishable capital crime .....	281
	The New Testament: murder, from fetushood onward, is a hideous offence .....	282
	God's people denounced abortion even when living in the Pagan Roman Empire .....	283
	God's Moral Law and all general equity abide everywhere even after 70 A.D. .....	283
	Clement of Alexandria: abortion equated with murder because of Exodus 21:24f .....	284
	Tertullian: Mosaic penalties for abortionists should govern also Christians .....	285
	Archelaus: Jesus at Matthew 10:34 upholds Exodus 22:22f's <i>lex talionis</i> .....	285
	<i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> : the aborted <i>concepti</i> shall be avenged .....	285
	Methodius: abortees will accuse their parents before God's judgment seat .....	286

	Lactantius: God views strangling of babies as "the greatest impiety" .....	287
	Conclusion: abortion was a punishable crime according to Early Christianity .....	287
P.	<b>PUNISHMENTS FOR ABORTION IN CHRISTIAN-WESTERN LEGAL SYSTEMS</b> .....	<b>289</b>
	Emperor Constantine the Great outlawed the abandonment of children .....	289
	Emperor Valentinian proclaimed infanticide to be a capital crime .....	290
	Emperor Theodosius I's contemporary Augustine denounced abortion as murder .....	290
	Emperor Theodosius II synthesized Law of Moses with christianized Roman Law .....	291
	Emperor Justinian: those who abort infants are subject to penalty for murder .....	291
	Influence of Christian laws throughout Europe from seventh century onward .....	293
	Ninth-century Basil the First's <i>Basilica</i> updates Justinian's legislation .....	293
	14th- & 15th-century European Law Codes maintained beyond the Reformation .....	294
	Roman-Dutch Law and Calvinism on the crime of aborting human fetuses .....	294
	Ancient British Common Law: abortion is homicide if not murder .....	295
	Blackstone: abortion is "homicide or manslaughter" and "very heinous" .....	296
	French Revolution challenges the Law of God and God-given right to life .....	296
	Especially the English-speaking World resisted revolutionary abortionism .....	297
	The English-speaking World opposed abortion till after World War II .....	297
	The tide turns toward abortion after the birth of thalidomide babies .....	298
	Cases during the early-1960s involving abortion or prenatal injuries .....	299
	Cases during the late-1960s involving abortion or prenatal injuries .....	299
	Cases during the epoch-making 1970s involving abortion or prenatal injuries .....	300
	The abortive 1789 French Revolution triumphs during the 1980s .....	301
	<i>Queensland Criminal Code</i> still upholds the Common Law against abortion .....	301
	Conclusion: Western legal systems have historically punished abortionists .....	302
Q.	<b>AFTER '1984': THE "NEW MORALITY"? - OR THE OLD IMMORALITY!</b> .....	<b>303</b>
	"Brave New World" of Red Russia & Nazi Germany legalizes abortion (1925-31) .....	303
	The collapse of civilization: increasing abortions in Free West (1938-59) .....	303
	The spread of abortion in English-speaking lands in the nineteen-sixties .....	304
	Nobel Prize-winner Dr. Crick's book <i>The Origin of the Genetic Code</i> (1968) .....	305
	Neo-Paganistic sacrifices of foetuses in the West during the nineteen-seventies .....	306
	The road to <i>Roe v. Wade</i> (1973): the cheapening of human life also in the West .....	307
	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> : the end of the right to life in the <i>U.S. Constitution</i> .....	307
	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> : the road to feminism's feticide (also of tiny little females) .....	308
	Interpretation of <i>Roe v. Wade</i> by jurisprudence Professor Dr. J.P. Witherspoon .....	309
	The increasing murder of babies: the homicidal results of <i>Roe v. Wade</i> .....	309
	Ex-socialist Muggeridge opposes abortion and human genetic engineering (1975) .....	310
	The pro-abortionistic <i>Situation Ethics</i> of Dr. Joseph Fletcher (1976) .....	310
	The abortive Dr. Crick <i>versus</i> the anti-abortionist Dr. Nathanson (1978f) .....	311
	Dr. Hartshorn's <i>Concerning Abortion: An Attempt at a Rational View</i> (1981) .....	311
	Dr. Schaeffer's vigorously anti-abortionistic <i>Christian Manifesto</i> (1981) .....	312
	Epoch-making prenatal breakthroughs in the year before '1984' .....	312
	Orwell's 1984 : prenatal human engineering and Huxley's <i>Brave New World</i> .....	313
	The ever-increasing prenatal nightmare throughout the year 1984 .....	314
	1984: conservative doctors react against both abortion and <i>IVF</i> .....	315
	The nightmare of prenatal experiments on humans deepens during 1987 .....	316
	The nightmare of prenatal experiments on humans continues in the 1990s .....	316
	1994 General Assembly, of Presbyterian Church of Australia on tiny human life .....	318
	1994 Monash Conference on the Termination of Pregnancy .....	318
	The 1994 American Southern Baptist Convention opposes Abortion .....	319

	The epic struggle for and against tiny human life during 1995 .....	320
	Conclusion: after '1984' no "new morality" but the old immorality ! .....	321
R.	<b>MAY HUMAN PREGNANCIES EVER JUSTIFIABLY BE TERMINATED?</b> .....	<b>325</b>
	Duty to save the threatened lives of both pregnant mothers and unborn babies .....	325
	<i>Samaritan Targum</i> gives death for abortion and <i>Zohar</i> says aborter "desecrates" .....	326
	Philo: once the fetal limbs have their proper qualities, an abortion is murder .....	326
	The <i>Mishnah</i> : abortion is forbidden but mother's life more valuable than baby's .....	326
	Flavius Josephus: deliberate abortion is murder and treason <i>versus</i> the family .....	327
	Mediaeval Judaism: abortion only to save the life of a dying mother .....	327
	Tertullian: remove an unborn infant which is killing the mother .....	328
	Did Thomas Aquinas refuse abortions to dying pregnant mothers? .....	328
	Does Roman Catholicism sacrifice life-threatened mothers to their fetuses? .....	329
	Roman Catholicism's commendable and very firm stand against abortion .....	330
	Modern Lutheranism's commendable and very firm stand against abortion.....	330
	Modern Anglicanism's commendable and very firm stand against abortion .....	331
	Modern Baptists' commendable and very firm stand against abortion .....	331
	Modern Presbyterians' commendable and very firm stand against abortion .....	331
	Queensland Presbyterians' ever-increasing condemnation of abortion .....	332
	Modern unbelief's uncommendable and very firm stand in favour of abortion.....	333
	1974 <i>Abortion Report</i> of 2500 Protestant Christian Medical Doctors .....	333
	The Roman Catholic Theologian Dr. Clifford on "therapeutic abortion".....	334
	The medical dangers accompanying the performance of abortions .....	335
	Drs. Willke and Cavanaugh on the terrible danger of abortion to the mother .....	335
	Greatest need to assess abortion not medically but ethically.....	336
	Abortion unacceptable as a means of birth control .....	336
	Abortion unacceptable as a means of disposing of unwanted children .....	337
	Many originally-unwanted children are later much loved by their parents .....	338
	Untrue that originally-unwanted children end up being battered by parents.....	339
	Untrue that mothers have a right to exterminate their own babies .....	339
	Abortion unacceptable as a way to be rid of a deformed baby.....	340
	<i>Gleitman v. Cosgrove</i> : doctor not to abort even if baby is deformed.....	341
	How much deformity is needed in order to 'justify' aborting a baby? .....	341
	Are limbless babies and inseparable Siamese twins abortable?.....	342
	Abortion unacceptable as a means of disposing of incestuous children .....	343
	Pregnancies from interracial intercourse not to be aborted .....	343
	Pregnancies resulting from rape not to be aborted .....	344
	Even rapes ultimately promote the humanly-unplanned enlargement of the Church .....	344
	Pregnancies in psychically-deranged women not to be aborted .....	345
	No known mental disease can be cured or alleviated by abortion .....	346
	Diseases and especially psychiatric malfunctions rather worsened by abortion .....	347
	Therapeutic abortion often harms the woman both physically and psychically .....	347
	Pregnancy termination as a means of preserving the life of the unborn baby.....	348
	Pregnancy termination to preserve the life of the bearing mother .....	348
	Pregnancy termination permissible only if pregnant woman's life in danger .....	349
	Scripture suggests mothers' lives even more precious than their young's' .....	349
	Selfdefense to preserve the life of an attacked mother .....	350
	The duty of self-defense even when attacked by one's next-of-kin .....	351
	Attacker's lack of intention irrelevant to the duty of self-defense.....	351
	The life of a mother-bird must be preferred to that of her eggs and young .....	352

Calvinistic comments on Deuteronomy 22:4-7 and Exodus 23:5 .....	353
<i>The Pulpit Commentary</i> on the application of Deut. 22:6f to motherhood .....	353
Dr. Craigie on motherhood and reproduction in Deuteronomy 22:6f .....	353
The possible bearing on abortion of Ex. 23:19 & 34:26 and Dt. 14:21 .....	354
Calvin on the significance to life of Ex. 23:19 & 34:26 and Dt. 14:21 .....	354
Lev. 22:27-28 significant to abortion for saving a mother's life .....	355
Bible analogies on abortability of human fetus where life threatened .....	356
Three doctors to agree pregnancy threatens life before abortion attempted .....	357
Australian Anglican Ethics and Social Questions Committee Report .....	357
Dr. P.R. Norris's Principles of Therapeutic Termination of Pregnancy .....	358
Conclusion: pregnancy termination justified only to save life .....	359
Rationale: injuries to others permitted if inflicted in selfdefense .....	360
<b>S. THE HOLY BIBLE ON THE METHODS OF HUMAN REPRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>361</b>
Various noncoital techniques of human reproduction .....	361
Questionable coital methods of reproducing also humans .....	362
Rare noncoital inseminations of human beings .....	362
Human Artificial Insemination - <i>AIH</i> (and <i>AAI</i> such as <i>AID</i> and <i>AIS</i> ) .....	363
<i>AID</i> and <i>SHW</i> and 'semen cocktails' (for payments given) are prostitudinal .....	363
The history of Human Artificial Insemination .....	364
The modern techniques of pre- <i>IVF</i> Human Artificial Insemination .....	365
Distinctions between natural and artificial human inseminations .....	366
Adam and Eve foundational and normative for methods of human reproduction .....	366
The bearing of the Decalogue upon the methods of human reproduction .....	367
The bearing of the First Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	368
The bearing of the Second Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	369
The bearing of the Third Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	369
The bearing of the Fourth Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	370
The bearing of the Fifth Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	370
The bearing of the Sixth Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	371
The bearing of the Seventh Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	371
The bearing of the Eighth Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	372
The bearing of the Ninth Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	372
The bearing of the Tenth Commandment on methods of human reproduction .....	373
Genesis 16:2f - Hagar's <i>NIA</i> by Abraham and her <i>SHW</i> for Sarai .....	373
Luther comments that Abraham and Sarah were tempted at Genesis 16:2f .....	374
Calvin: Sarah sinned in yielding her conjugal rights to Hagar .....	374
Genesis 29:23's sins of Laban and Leah in the sexual deceit of Jacob .....	375
Luther on Genesis 29:23f: "guilt clings to the faithless Laban" .....	375
God graciously gave fruitfulness to polygamists in Genesis 29:28f .....	376
Unfruitful Rachel's envy when she herself bore no children .....	376
The important comments of Luther and Calvin on Genesis 30:1 .....	376
Jacob told Rachel not he but God gives fruitfulness (Gen. 30:2) .....	377
Rachel wrongly urges her husband to sleep with her maid Bilhah (Genesis 30:3) .....	377
Keil on Genesis 30:1-4 - the childless Rachel should have prayed .....	378
Bilhah's <i>SHW</i> for Rachel produced yet more rivalry with Leah (Genesis 30:4-13) .....	379
Leupold on Genesis 30:4-13 - not God but expediency trusted in .....	379
For love-apples Rachel sells the sexual use of her husband to Leah .....	380
Calvin on Leah's purchase of Jacob from his wife for one night .....	381
Leupold on Rachel's purchase of fertility-promoting mandrakes .....	381

Genesis 30:17f's heartache caused by Jacob's 'children of rivalry' .....	382
The dangers of incest highlighted in Genesis 35:22f & 38:2f & 49:1f .....	382
Tamar's ungodly but fruitful incest after fruitless marriages .....	383
The non-reproductive sexual gluttony of the pagan Canaanites .....	383
Er: the sexually-dry copulator or sterile mingler of Genesis 38:3f .....	384
Onan: the strongly-wicked and erotically-vigorous sexual athlete .....	385
Shelah (the 'withdrawer') and Tamar ('the fruitful palm-tree') .....	385
"Er...was [sexually] wicked in the sight of the Lord" (Genesis 38:7f) .....	385
Onan displeased God by spilling his semen on ground (Genesis 38:9f) .....	386
Genesis 38:11f - Tamar's incestuous and meretricious behaviour .....	386
Genesis 38:26f - Judah's later repentance to right this wrong.....	387
Luther: Onan's Canaanite mother and wife and their abominations .....	387
Luther: Onan's sin was unnatural and more atrocious than incest .....	388
Calvin: Judah was perversely lustful; his son Er intolerably filthy.....	389
Calvin: Onan malignantly and outrageously transgressed the levirate.....	389
Calvin: the fornication of Judah and Tamar was a crime and a disgrace .....	391
Luther: executing a pregnant prostitute is "harsh" on the fetus .....	391
Leupold: Er's wickedness in his marriage caused his death .....	392
Leupold: Onan's sexual perversion within marriage was revolting .....	392
<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> : Onan's contraceptive <i>coitus interruptus</i> grieved God .....	393
<i>Judaica</i> says <i>coitus interruptus</i> is not the same as masturbation .....	393
Mayer: levirate <i>coitus interruptus</i> is sin because contraceptive .....	394
Gunkel, Driver, Skinner and Kidner all condemn contraceptive Onanism .....	394
Valuable teaching on sex clearly derivable from Genesis 38:7-10.....	395
Mosaic legislation on the normative method of human reproduction.....	396
Ruth: conception in the womb only of her who gives birth to that child .....	397
Proverbs 5:2-20 - semen is to be ejaculated only into one's own wife .....	398
Delitzsch: semen to be ejaculated only into one's own spouse.....	399
Delitzsch: seminal emissions not for the streets nor for strangers .....	399
Bridges: also the Church is the sole cistern of her husband Christ .....	400
Matthew Henry: keep to your own wife and beget numerous offspring!.....	400
Proverbs 23 and 20: whores are ditches who can't just wipe off semen .....	401
Delitzsch: ejaculated semen is not meet to be wiped off by whores.....	401
Proverbs 5:15f & 23:27 & 20:19f preclude <i>AID</i> , <i>AIH</i> , <i>IVF</i> and <i>SHW</i> .....	402
Isaiah 7:14 teaches it is she who conceives who must give birth.....	402
Jesus: a man cleaves to his wife so that both be[come] into one flesh .....	403
Calvin: "they two shall be <i>into</i> one flesh" (in Genesis 2 and Matthew 19) .....	403
Calvin's comments on I Cor. 6:9 to 7:14 are against <i>AID</i> , <i>AIH</i> & <i>SHW</i> .....	405
Ephesians 5:25 - man and wife joined together become one flesh .....	405
Calvinism's view of marital intercourse opposes <i>AID</i> and <i>AIH</i> .....	406
Summary of Scriptures on the normative method of human reproduction .....	406
Conclusion: Bible on the normative method of Biblical reproduction.....	407
<b>T. <i>ID</i> AND <i>SHW</i>: ALIEN HUMAN SEED AND SURROGATE HUMAN WOMBS.....</b>	<b>409</b>
Problems Common to all of the kinds of Human Artificial Insemination .....	409
Additional problems peculiar to <i>AID</i> (and also to <i>SHW</i> ) .....	410
Rev. R.T. Missenden's questions in connection with <i>AID</i> .....	410
Yet further questions often asked about <i>AID</i> .....	411
Still more problems surrounding the matter of <i>AID</i> .....	411
Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury's 1948 Commission condemned <i>AID</i> .....	412

1949: Roman Catholic Pope Pius XII's condemnation of <i>AID</i> .....	412
Calvinist Professor Wurth: <i>AID</i> later "smashes many marriages" (1950) .....	413
1964: Calvinist Dr. Drogendijk - <i>AID</i> falsifies the family .....	413
1970: Presbyterian Dr. Ramsay predicts <i>AID</i> Hatcheries before 2020.....	414
Jewish Ethicist Jakovits: <i>AID</i> is "hideousness" and "abomination" .....	414
1976: Presbyterian Dr. Schaeffer - <i>AID</i> -babies are illegitimate .....	414
Overwhelming religious consensus that <i>AID</i> is adultery.....	415
Is <i>AID</i> merely "intrusion into the marriage" or is it really adultery? .....	416
<i>AID</i> is indeed adultery and <i>AIS</i> is in fact prostitution.....	416
Some of the many legal problems created by <i>AID</i> and <i>SHW</i> .....	417
Should single women of whatever category ever receive <i>AID</i> ? .....	418
Inadequate checks by <i>AID</i> clinics on medical history of prospective donors.....	418
<i>AID</i> fearfully impersonalizes the whole process of reproduction .....	419
Is 'donating' semen (or eggs) properly comparable with donating blood? .....	419
<i>AID</i> is a long-term aggravation in the increase of incest .....	420
Unacceptability of masturbation as method of getting <i>AID</i> -semen .....	420
Offers to buy human semen made by certain hospital clinics .....	420
Doctor supplies 'do-it-yourself' <i>AID</i> -kit to professing lesbian.....	421
Interim summary of reasons why <i>AID</i> is morally wrong.....	421
Moral problems typical to <i>SHWs</i> (Surrogate Human Wombs) .....	422
Further miscellaneous moral problems often associated with <i>SHW</i> .....	423
Rent-a-womb is <i>contra bonos mores</i> in many countries .....	423
Rent-a-womb surrogacy breaks both the Seventh and the Eighth Commandments .....	424
<i>SHW</i> recently further complicated by the advent of embryo transfer .....	425
Position on <i>AID</i> and <i>SHW</i> of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland .....	425
1984 American newspaper advert: "will...pay \$10 000" for an <i>SHW</i> .....	426
1984: the <i>SHW</i> cases of Malahoff <i>v.</i> Stiver - and Stiver <i>v.</i> Malahoff .....	426
The 'Aryan' <i>AID</i> -clinic in 1984 Germany: racial compatibility guaranteed! .....	426
1987: Vatican again condemns <i>AID</i> and 'surrogate' motherhood .....	427
The 1987 surrogate human motherhood case of 'Baby M[elissa]' .....	427
The case of 'Baby M': a consistently Calvinistic evaluation .....	428
Awful <i>AID</i> 'virgin birth' developments in Britain during 1991 .....	429
1993: <i>A Child Too Many</i> - the Patty Nowakowski <i>AID</i> case .....	429
Many additional reasons why surrogate motherhood is morally wrong.....	430
Conclusion: <i>AID</i> and <i>SHW</i> are both morally indefensible .....	431
<b>U. AIH: ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION FROM HUSBAND .....</b>	<b>433</b>
History of <i>AIH</i> from its 1790f start till using eggs from the dead in 1994 .....	433
Differences between <i>AID</i> & <i>SHW</i> on the one hand and <i>AIH</i> on the other .....	433
Mechanical problems of <i>AIH</i> beyond those of other kinds of <i>HAI</i> .....	434
Moral problems sometimes encounterable in connection with <i>AIH</i> .....	435
Missenden's favourable assessment of <i>AIH</i> as an extreme option .....	436
Our own legal objections from various judicial systems to <i>AIH</i> .....	436
When would <i>AIH</i> for any reason be used too soon or too late? .....	437
The immorality of resorting to <i>AIH</i> after the death of a husband .....	437
Very limited technical utilizability of <i>AIH</i> in any scenario .....	438
German Evangelical Church's Bishop Dibelius opposes <i>AIH</i> .....	439
Calvinist Dr. Wurth: "artificial insemination is zootechnology" .....	439
Pius XII: <i>AIH</i> violates natural law and is contrary to morality .....	440
Thielicke: <i>AIH</i> removes the biological from the psychophysical .....	440

1971f: Vatican reiterates her opposition to masturbatory <i>AIH</i> .....	441
1984 widow Parpalaix: <i>AIH</i> with semen of her deceased husband.....	441
1987: Vatican's definitive statement against all cases of <i>AIH</i> .....	442
<i>Instruction's</i> prohibition of <i>AIH</i> into either widows or spouses.....	443
1982: Overduin & Fleming - serious ethical objections to <i>AIH</i> .....	444
The problem of direct masturbation in <i>AIH</i> techniques.....	444
Randolph: sexual intercourse necessary in human reproduction.....	445
Missenden on the [im]permissibility of masturbation for <i>AIH</i> .....	446
Calvinist Dr. Delleman: <i>AIH</i> is an intolerable intrusion in marriage.....	447
Rome's Dr. Clifford: even medical masturbation is immoral.....	448
Conclusion: Artificial Insemination from Husband is illicit.....	448
V. <i>IVF</i> (TEST-TUBE BABIES) AND <i>ET</i> (EMBRYO-TRANSFER).....	451
Definition and brief history of <i>in vitro</i> fertilization.....	451
The recent devolution of man in prenatal research (A.D. 1940 to 1972).....	452
Humanism's triumph: dehumanizing prenatal babies (1972-74).....	452
1973f: Roe <i>v.</i> Wade and the destruction of Mrs. Del Zio's <i>IVF</i> embryo.....	453
1974f: World Federation of Doctors Who Respect Human Life shield the unborn.....	454
1974f: steady opposition to the increasing practice of human <i>IVF</i> .....	454
1976: Dr. Fletcher calls reproduction by <i>IVF</i> even more 'human'.....	455
1978: the World's first full-term <i>IVF</i> -baby born (in England).....	455
General description of what is involved in the <i>IVF</i> technique as such.....	455
Why not the U.S. but England and specially Australia soon led in <i>IVF</i> .....	456
<i>HEW</i> recommends lifting the ban against <i>IVF</i> procedures in America.....	457
The <i>EAB Report</i> to <i>HEW</i> countered by the FCREF's <i>FPD Review</i> .....	457
The Anti- <i>IVF</i> and anti- <i>EAB Report</i> FCREF's <i>FPD Review</i> (continued).....	458
The Anti- <i>IVF</i> and anti- <i>EAB Report</i> FCREF's <i>FPD Review</i> (resumed).....	460
<i>FPD Review</i> on <i>IVF</i> problems resulting from multiple ovulations.....	460
<i>FPD Review</i> refutes 'natural embryo wastage' as excuse for <i>IVF</i> .....	461
FCREF's <i>FPD Review</i> opposes experimentation in <i>EAB Report</i> .....	462
<i>FPD Review</i> attacks downplaying of embryonic life in <i>EAB Report</i> .....	463
Rev. William Randolph's 1979 article <i>God Is Pro Life</i> .....	464
1980 Queensland Presbyterian Church: Bible shows right to life.....	465
Dr. Smit: technical regression if natural reproduction changed.....	465
1981f: Australia leads the World downhill further into <i>IVF</i> .....	465
Drs. Edwards & Steptoe's pro- <i>IVF</i> 1981 book <i>A Matter of Life</i> .....	466
Wood <i>vs.</i> Edwards & Lejeune: is <i>conceptus</i> a human being?.....	466
Dr. Singer: <i>IUDs</i> have same effect as destroying frozen embryos.....	468
Webster's <i>Dictionary</i> implies embryo freezing is abortive.....	468
Australian experiments with aborted fetuses admitted in 1981.....	469
1982 belated call for public debate on human <i>IVF</i> programme.....	470
Wood calls for debate only after he starts his <i>IVF</i> programme.....	471
Monash's players were both rule-makers and umpires of their game.....	471
The Monash Team's pro- <i>IVF</i> 1982 book <i>Test Tube Babies</i> .....	472
Dr. Snowdon: Australia bought human embryos for experiments.....	472
Fleming says Medical Ethics Committee OKs embryo adoption.....	473
Overduin & Fleming's 1982 book <i>Life in a Test Tube</i> .....	474
1982 anti- <i>IVF</i> statement by Roman Catholic Bishops of Victoria.....	475
Leeton's reply to Snowdon's charge of Australian experiments.....	475
1982 technique: human <i>in vitro</i> fertilization and embryo transfer.....	476



Five huge limitations of the entire <i>IVF</i> programme.....	477
<i>IVF</i> experiments with thawed human embryos during 1982 and 1983.....	478
Huxley's <i>Brave New World</i> of <i>IVF</i> in Orwell's year of 1984.....	479
1984 Queensland Presbyterian Public Questions Committee opposes <i>IVF</i> .....	480
March 1984: World's first thawed-out frozen-embryo baby born.....	480
1984f: Vatican condemns and Uniting Church OKs embryo freezing.....	481
May 1984: the beginning of the feminist reaction to <i>IVF</i> .....	482
June 1984 Rios case: what to do with orphaned frozen embryos.....	483
Transsexuals desiring to join the Melbourne <i>IVF</i> programme.....	484
NSW Presbyterians request legislation banning <i>IVF</i> experimentation.....	484
September 1984: American assessments of the status of <i>IVF</i> .....	485
1984 Australian <i>Waller Report</i> : embryo freezing "not inimical".....	485
1984 British <i>Warnock Report</i> recommends embryos be used for research.....	486
Beyond <i>IVF</i> : 1984's new techniques - <i>TUDOR</i> , <i>GIFT</i> , <i>ZIFT</i> and <i>TOT</i> .....	486
1985: Anglican ambivalence and harmful fertility drugs in <i>IVF</i> .....	487
The 1985 controversy surrounding embryo freezing in Queensland.....	487
1986-87: male humans and animals would soon carry human embryos.....	488
1987: Vatican's <i>Instruction</i> against embryo freezing, <i>IVF</i> and <i>SHW</i> .....	489
1987: Waller Committee approves illegal procedures for <i>IVF</i> .....	490
1987: a whole host of new procedures for <i>IVF</i> and <i>GIFT</i> .....	490
1987: South African grandmother pregnant with daughter's baby.....	491
1987: Dutch FINNRAGE feminists vehemently attack <i>IVF</i> .....	491
1988: international feminists in Montreal attack <i>IVF</i> .....	492
December 1987: Pioneer French <i>IVF</i> -Practitioner condemns <i>IVF</i> .....	492
May 1989: controversy about success rate of <i>IVF</i> in Spain.....	493
Queensland Presbyterian Public Questions Committee & Dr. Hennessey.....	493
September 1989: Prof. Vandelac's article <i>The Hidden Side of IVF</i> .....	494
The September 1989 U.S.A. <i>IVF</i> case of Mr. & Mrs Junior Davis.....	494
Dr. Crawford advises the Presbyterian Church of Queensland on <i>IVF</i> .....	495
1990: John Fleming's article <i>The Cost of IVF</i> .....	496
1990: Dr. Philippe Schepens (M.D.)'s <i>In Vitro Fertilization</i> .....	496
1990-91: growing opposition to abortion and <i>IVF</i> in Queensland.....	498
1991f: <i>IVF</i> consequences of legalizing sodomy within Australia.....	498
1992: Australians increasingly polarized for or against <i>IVF</i> .....	498
1993: generationally and racially and experimentally bizarre <i>IVFs</i> .....	499
1994: postmodern slide into <i>IVF</i> 's increasing moral relativism.....	500
1994: risks with dead women's eggs and dying frozen sperms in <i>IVF</i> .....	500
Dr. Dumble: drugged <i>IVF</i> -women are "technologically ravaged".....	501
Debate over transplanting ova(ries) of dead into living women.....	501
Signs of some Roman Catholic Theologians weakening on <i>IVF</i> .....	503
1995: Presbyterian Church of Queensland opposes abortifacient RU486.....	504
1995 legalizing of euthanasia implies slaughtering embryos too.....	504
1995 fiasco: White mother unbeknown given Coloured <i>IVF</i> embryo.....	504
November 27th 1995 Phil Donahue Show on recent embryo thefts.....	505
The many moral problems with nearly all versions of human <i>IVF</i> .....	505
The many dangers created by the hyperovulation of human eggs.....	505
Problems inherent in <i>IVF</i> even where no hyperovulation.....	506
The moral problem of masturbation inherent in human <i>IVF</i> .....	506
The moral problems of ejaculated semen treatment in <i>IVF</i> .....	507

Most moral arguments against <i>SHW</i> apply also against <i>IVF</i> .....	508
The rationale behind hyperovulation in many <i>IVF</i> procedures .....	509
The fertilization of the human egg <i>in vitro</i> .....	509
Trying to gauge what number of eggs to fertilize and implant .....	510
Quick use of donor's if husband's sperms fail to produce <i>IVF</i> .....	511
What if mother does not want all her hyperovulated embryos? .....	512
Unacceptability of 1989 policy of Queensland Fertility Group .....	513
Queensland Fertility Group misrepresented <i>Demack Report</i> .....	513
Status of <i>IVF</i> embryos if mother dies and if spouse remarries .....	514
Should also abnormal embryos be transferred into the womb? .....	514
Should there ever be corrective surgery on embryos? .....	515
Gender changes to or rejecting human embryos of undesired sex .....	515
Various other vexing or weird problems posed by <i>IVF</i> .....	516
Should any <i>IVF</i> -zygote be left untransferred to the human mother? .....	517
How to decide which <i>IVF</i> -embryos to transfer into the mother .....	517
Any real mother will want even her abnormal offspring .....	518
Should an abnormal <i>IVF</i> -zygote first be treated before transfer? .....	518
What to do with <i>IVF</i> -zygotes not transferred to the mother? .....	519
Killing human <i>IVF</i> embryos by commission and by omission .....	519
Giving 'redundant' <i>IVF</i> -embryos to other child-hungry women .....	520
Poor viability of all <i>IVF</i> -embryos before and after transfer .....	520
Possible use of animal-wombs for needy human <i>IVF</i> -embryos .....	521
Possible use of synthetic 'wombs' for needy human <i>IVF</i> -embryos .....	521
Ethics of freezing and keeping human embryos in liquid nitrogen .....	521
Giving 'redundant' human embryos to science for experimentation .....	522
Grave sin of mistreating human embryos and other babies .....	523
Religious dedicatability of human embryos even before transfer .....	523
The documentary <i>IVF</i> movies <i>Julie's Baby</i> and <i>Tomorrow's Child</i> .....	524
Motives for and results of <i>IVF</i> need to be distinguished .....	524
Questionable motives for and procedures in and abuses of <i>IVF</i> .....	525
Evaluation of practices admitted in Monash's <i>Test-Tube Babies</i> .....	525
Impact of the Rios case on the disposal of frozen embryos .....	526
Abortion alias compulsory cacoathanasia and <i>IVF</i> embryo disposal .....	526
The denial of basic human rights to disposable human embryos .....	527
Devaluation of human embryos akin to racial discrimination .....	527
Some Nazi experiments tame compared to some <i>IVF</i> laboratories .....	528
The icy and frigid limbo of the frozen human embryo .....	529
Deliberate disposal of human embryos - without tears? .....	530
<i>IVF</i> embryo disposal quite irreconcilable with Christian Ethics .....	531
Some of the very thorny legal problems connected with <i>IVF</i> .....	531
Final ethical and legal considerations condemn <i>IVF</i> .....	532
Conclusion: all varieties of <i>IVF</i> are morally unacceptable .....	533
<b>W. NWH: NONHUMAN WOMBS FOR HUMANS (ANIMAL AND MECHANICAL WOMBS) .....</b>	<b>535</b>
Ancient pagan attempts to cross-breed man and various animals .....	535
The Bible's strong reaction against these ungodly practices .....	535
The anti-bestial testimony of the Hebrew Philo Judaeus .....	536
The rise of modern speculation about nonhuman wombs for humans .....	537
'Man-beast' experiments developed parallel to <i>IVF</i> and clonings .....	538
1978: the looming prospect of complete human ectogenesis .....	538

1978f: success of human <i>IVF</i> gives push to cognate experiments .....	539
1981: ethicizing about the approaching human ectogenesis.....	540
1982: the filming of the Australian movie <i>Tomorrow's Child</i> .....	540
1983: Presbyterians vs. human ectogenesis in animals/machines .....	541
1984: Dr. Wood advises attempted man-monkey mix is possible .....	541
1984: Dr. White says 'man-monkeys' and 'amphibi-men' possible .....	542
1984-85f: ongoing protests against artificial womb experiments.....	543
1987: Shocking developments towards ectogenesis and manbeasts .....	543
1987: Dr. Fletcher favours human ectogenesis and manbeasts .....	544
1989: 'manbeastification' through truly terrifying technology .....	545
1989: Dr. Crawford warns Christians to prepare for ectogenesis.....	546
1993: cloning humans suggests possible to clone manbeasts too.....	547
December 1995: Humans at 'wedding' of a monkey in Thailand.....	547
Definitions and nature of Nonhuman Wombs for Humans .....	547
The kinds of fallopian tubes usable for human conception.....	548
The use of heterologous ovary transplants from other women .....	549
Big theological objections to extra-uxorial human conceptions .....	549
Distinguishing full-term <i>NWHs</i> from short-term incubators.....	550
Legitimate use of <i>LMUs</i> (Long-term Mechanical Uteruses) .....	550
Best environment for needed (re-)implantation of human embryo .....	551
Analogy of the 'wet-nurse' where mother's womb unavailable .....	551
Grave warnings against inter-species genetic miscegenation.....	552
Mechanical uterus always preferable to animal-womb for humans.....	552
Best kind of foster-wombs for survival of needy human embryos .....	553
The most pleasing kind of foster-womb for needy human embryos .....	553
Dr. William Walters on the usefulness of human ectogenesis.....	554
Biblical unacceptability of any complete human ectogenesis.....	554
Conclusion: nonhuman wombs for humans altogether unacceptable .....	555
<b>X. HUMAN GENETIC ENGINEERING: CLONING AND RECOMBINANT <i>DNA</i>.....</b>	<b>557</b>
Human genetic engineering, cloning, and genetic recombination .....	557
The course of genetic engineering from 1952 until 1970 .....	558
1970-71: both opposition to and support of plans to clone humans .....	558
1973: Dr. Kass firmly opposes all attempts to clone humans.....	559
1974: Dr. Fletcher's support of attempts to clone humans .....	559
1975: the trans-species fusion of human and plant cells.....	560
1976f: a spate of novels about the cloning of humans .....	560
Dr. Schaeffer on Dr. Watson's <i>Moving Towards the Clonal Man</i> .....	561
Corea's 1979 <i>Mother Machine: Reproductive Technologies</i> .....	561
Dr. McKinnell's two 1979 books on cloning frogs and men .....	561
1980: Lester & Hefley's book <i>Cloning: Miracle or Menace?</i> .....	562
1981: genetic engineering questions raised by R.T. Missenden .....	562
Turner on ethics and legality of artificial human procreation .....	562
Dr. J.H. Smit's 1981 article: <i>Cloning - Demonic Technique?</i> .....	564
1982: Judge Kirby says naive to think cloning will not happen.....	564
Editors Walters & Singer's 1982 book <i>Test-Tube Babies</i> .....	564
Dr. William Walters himself on the subject of cloning.....	565
Walters's refutation of objections to cloning humans .....	565
Refutation of Walters's rationale in favour of human clones.....	566
Walters's final pro-cloning pleas weighed and found wanting .....	566

	1983: Presbyterians plead that human clonings be outlawed .....	567
	Dr. White's 1984 openness genetically to engineer amphi-men .....	568
	Dr. Morris expects cloning to change human nature .....	568
	1985: Dr. Higuchi achieves stage in resurrection of quagga .....	569
	1985: recent cases of artificial parthogenesis already known .....	569
	1987: Rome condemns human cloning and embryo experimentation .....	570
	Dr. Fletcher's 1987 Ethics of Genetic Control: Some Answers .....	570
	1988: Rev. John Otis's article <i>God's Law and Medical Ethics</i> .....	571
	1989: freezing clones of sheep-embryos for later gestation.....	571
	1989: breeding mice for purpose of using their blood in humans.....	571
	1991: clones replacing humans; and cannibalizing for spare-parts.....	572
	1991: anti-abortion Presbyterians ask death penalty for murder.....	572
	Ducharme's 1991 <i>Vatican's Dilemma</i> implicitly discounts cloning.....	572
	Neither Adam nor Eve nor Jesus nor the Church are clones .....	573
	1992: Presbyterians state human personhood is from conception.....	573
	1993: manufacture and destruction of human clones in the U.S.A.....	574
	Pro-cloners' absurd allegations that God cloned Eve from Adam .....	575
	Is true cloning of viable human beings really possible? .....	576
	Differences in human personality protest the cloning of humans .....	576
	The horrors of pro-conceptional genetic recombination in man .....	577
	Genetic unpredictability of the future dissuades human cloning .....	578
	Post-conceptional non-genetic improvement is not human cloning.....	578
	The ominous advances in cloning from 1997 to 2001 .....	579
	Conclusion: human cloning and genetic engineering unacceptable.....	581
Y.	<b>HILD-INVOLVING ALTERNATIVES TO AID, SHW, AIH, IVF, &amp; NWH</b> .....	<b>583</b>
	The realization that all have some or other cross to bear.....	583
	Avoidance of sterilization as a method of birth control .....	584
	Sterilization for birth control unacceptable to Calvinism .....	585
	1968 Papal Encyclical of Pope Paul VI against sterilization.....	586
	Advisability of making attempts to reverse sterilization .....	586
	Abandonment of all birth control in childless marriages .....	587
	Need for sustained prayers by spouses for human fertilization.....	587
	Luther's comments on the Bible's prayers for pregnancy.....	588
	Calvin's comments on the Older Testament's pregnancy prayers.....	589
	Keil & Leupold & Delitzsch comment on the pregnancy prayers.....	589
	Calvin on the pregnancy prayers of the parents of John.....	590
	Four methods of assisting impregnation within marriage .....	591
	Calvinistic comments on assisted impregnation within marriage .....	591
	Also Romish approval of assisted impregnation within marriage .....	592
	Adopting children when a marriage proves to be unfruitful .....	593
	Sublimative alternatives to generating or adopting children.....	594
	Calvinism accepts unchangeable childlessness in marriages.....	595
	Personal testimony of Professor Nigel Lee anent childlessness .....	595
	Better childless and blessed than prolific and perverse .....	595
	Conclusion: alternatives to AID, SHW, AIH, IVF & NWH .....	596
Z.	<b>EPILOGUE ON 'TINY HUMAN LIFE'</b> .....	<b>597</b>
	Review of the last fifty years regarding human reproduction.....	597
	God's normative steps for human reproduction.....	598
	Biblical affirmations about human reproduction .....	599

	Avoidance of unauthorized methods of human reproduction .....	600
	Child-involving and other alternatives for the childless.....	600
	<i>IVF</i> -Pioneer Dr. Robert Edwards's warning against surrogate- <i>IVF</i> .....	601
	Law Reform Commission: do <i>AID</i> & <i>IVF</i> transgress child's rights? .....	601
	Dr. Schaeffer's critique of Humanistic artificial conceptions .....	602
	General theistic critique of Humanism's perspective on <i>IVF</i> .....	603
	Twenty-six ways humans can be born (but only one permissible) .....	603
	Pushing the 26 birth-ways of 1982 toward 57 varieties by 2000 .....	604
	1994: Dorothy Rushdoony reflects on post-menopause motherhood .....	605
	Events during 1994 damn artificial human conception.....	606
	Events during 1995 further damn artificial human conception.....	606
	Artificial human conceptions have no real long-term future.....	607
	Conclusion: past and future belong to natural human conception.....	608
AA.	INDEX OF ALL HEADINGS OF SECTIONS IN THE ABOVE CHAPTERS.....	611
BB.	LISTS OF PERSONS, SCRIPTURES AND SUBJECTS CITED .....	631
	A) LIST OF PERSONS .....	631
	B) LIST OF EXTRA-BIBLICAL PERSONS CITED .....	632
	c) LIST OF SCRIPTURES CITED.....	641
	D) LIST OF SUBJECTS CITED .....	652

## FRONTISPIECE

Around 315 A.D., Lactantius Firmianus - the tutor of Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire - made two rather important observations in his work *The Divine Institutes*. First, in the *Institutes* IV:12, he made some remarks about the truly unique conception of the Lord Jesus Christ:

"The Holy Spirit of God, descending from heaven, chose the holy virgin - so that He might enter into her womb. Then she, after having been filled by the possession of the Divine Spirit, conceived.... Her virgin womb was suddenly impregnated.... The womb of a virgin was strengthened, and conceived. Thus a virgin was made fruitful - and became a mother.... Likewise the prophet Isaiah (7:14), whose words are these: 'Therefore God Himself shall give you a sign - behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and you shall call His name "Emmanuel!"'

Secondly, Lactantius Firmianus recoiled in horror against both abortion and infanticide. Thus, in his *Institutes* VI:20, he insisted: "God forbids us to kill.... Let no one imagine that it is allowed to strangle even newly-born children - which is the greatest impiety! For God breathes into their souls for life, and not for death! But men - so that there may be no crime with which they may not pollute their hands - deprive souls as yet innocent and simple of the light which they themselves have not given....

"Parricides" - or slayers of their own relatives, such as their own prenatal or postnatal infants - "complain about the scantiness of their means, and allege that they have not enough for bringing up more children. As though, in truth, their means were in the power of those who possess them - and as if God did not daily make the rich poor, and the poor rich! Therefore, if any one on account of poverty shall be unable to bring up children - it is better to abstain from marriage, than with wicked hands to mar God's workmanship."

Thus the mentor of Constantine. His famous pupil responded well. After becoming Emperor, he set the legislative stage for making abortion and infanticide serious crimes subject to severe punishments. This would then remain the case throughout christianized Europe, for almost 1500 years, till the hellish holocaust of the French Revolution and its ungodly aftermath.

Today, that holocaust is beginning to run toward the end of its course. Like primitive Paganism as its predecessor, also the neo-heathen Revolution contains the seeds of its own destruction - and generates its own gravediggers. Abortionists are aborting themselves out of existence. The future belongs to consistent Christianity.

Let us then arise and build in the power of the Holy Spirit of the risen Christ! For greater is He that is in Christians, than the demons which are in the World.

## PREFACE

America, Australia, and most other English-speaking countries have all received the godly inheritance of British Common Law. Various European lands have inherited other versions of the christianized codes of Later Roman Law. In both cases, however - throughout Western civilization - "tiny human life" has historically been protected by wise regulations largely derived from the Christian Bible as their ultimate source.<sup>1</sup>

For abortion, the penalty has always - until just yesterday and only in certain places - been very severe, throughout the civilized world. In Queensland, the penalty is fourteen years hard labour. In South Australia it used to be life imprisonment. For Augustine (430 A.D.) abortion was "murder" - and "punishable by death."

John Calvin (1560 A.D.), commenting on Exodus 21:22 (*q.v.*), declared: "It ought surely to be deemed more atrocious to destroy a foetus in the womb before he or she has come to light... It would be a crime punishable with death - not only when the mother died from the effects of the abortion, but also if the infant should be killed."<sup>2</sup>

Throughout almost the entire world, babies conceived within married women by Artificial Insemination from Donor (*AID*) - are regarded as illegitimate. This is also the case with babies conceived by way of *In Vitro* Fertilization by Donor Sperm (*IVF-BDS*). *In Vitro* means "in a glass flask." The form *in vitro* means "in a little glass flask" (such as a test-tube). *IVF* thus means "fertilization in a (little) glass flask" - hence, outside the mother's body, whether in a glass flask of whatever size or (more usually) in a petri dish.

This means that, in the absence of specific statutory enactment to the contrary - children conceived through *AID* or *IVF-BDS* have no legal claims for maintenance or for education. Nor could they claim, by way of intestate succession, against their own mothers' husbands. Only legal adoption by the husband of the mother - could make such latter claims entertainable.

Nor would such a husband be entitled to receive those minor children's earnings; nor to administer any parental discipline to them; nor to exercise custody of their persons; nor to be held responsible for their delicts. So the only adult male who **could** be held legally responsible for satisfying the above-mentioned rights of a child conceived through *AID* or *IVF-BDS*, is the generally-anonymous semen donor.<sup>3</sup>

An illegitimate child has always **had** a 'father' - a male parent who actually "begot" that child (*cf.* James 1:17,18,27). But an illegitimate child sometimes lacks an **identified** 'father.' For that illegitimate child may have been **conceived** through noncoital *AID* or *IVF-BDS*. Indeed, even if coitally conceived, the child may still be illegitimate if actually brought forth at birth (alias **born**) of unmarried or adulterous parents.

In all cases where the father is unidentified, an illegitimate child has enforceable legal rights solely in respect

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1. See chapters H to P, below. Compare too our own *Christocracy and the Divine Saviour's Law for All Mankind* (Tallahassee: Jesus Lives, 1979). See too especially H.B. Clark's *Biblical Law* (Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1944); J.W. Ehrlich's *The Holy Bible and the Law* (New York: Ocean Pub., 1962); P. Goard's *The Law of the Lord or the Common Law* (London: Covenant, 1943); R.J. Rushdoony's *Law and Liberty* (Nutley, N.J.: Craig, 1973); and especially *Digest of the Divine Law* (Birmingham, England: Destiny, 1943), by Howard Rand (LL.B.).

2. See paragraphs 1498f & 1708f & 1786f.

3. See the arguments of Stephen Mason, Legislative Draftsman for the Australian Law Reform Commission, in his July 1982 article *Abnormal Conception* (in the *Australian Law Journal*, 56, pp. 348f)

of his or her **mother**. If there is no subsequent legal adoption of the child by somebody else, the 'father' is the one who physically 'begot' that child and the 'mother' is the person who actually carried or **bore** him/her within her very own womb.<sup>4</sup>

Biblically too, the 'mother' is the person whose "inward parts were stirred up" by the pregnancy, and whose "bowels yearned upon her child." See First Kings 3:16-28 (and especially verse 26). This means that even a woman who, in defiance of good morals alias *contra bonos mores* "rents out" her womb to bear a child for another woman and/or for the latter's husband, is nevertheless herself still the true 'mother.'

This is so even when that "surrogate **mother**" bears the child by *IVF-SHW* - where she bears the child by way of *in vitro* fertilization alias *IVF* from another woman's egg-cell followed by embryo transfer into her own "**surrogate** human womb."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, she is also the 'mother' when she bears the child in her own *SHW-FCO* - in her own Surrogate Human Womb From Conception Onward (for some other woman and/or the latter's husband). Genesis 16:1-11 & 21:10.

The possessor of the *SHW* (or Surrogate Human Womb) would still be the 'mother' - even if she were to carry the child within herself (whether from conception or thereafter) only to fulfil an agreement to bear that child for somebody else and not for herself.<sup>6</sup> So, the barren Rachel wanted the children (Dan and Naphtali) who were being carried within the 'womb' of Bilhah - to be born upon Rachel's own knees. Yet those children were really Bilhah's and not Rachel's offspring. See: Genesis 30:3-8 & 35:22 & 46:25-35 (*q.v.*).

Some would remove such children from the true parent-mother who carried them within her own womb, and give them even to the sterile wife of the very man who actually fathered them. Others would insist even homosexuals should be allowed to adopt and perhaps also to demand alien embryo transplants into their own bodies or into those of others they may care to nominate. **But such procedures (even if "contracted into" prior to conception) - except by way of mutually-agreeable legal adoption thereafter - are morally appalling and also juridically illegal (in most parts of the world).**<sup>7</sup>

Others would argue that a sterile husband who freely consents to his wife getting pregnant by *AID*, thereby himself legitimizes her child. Indeed, some would even assert that such a consenting husband has himself *ipso facto* tacitly yet legally 'adopted' that child to be his own. Some would extend this consideration to *de facto* couples, and yet others to homosexual liaisons.

All this, however, should not be - any more than a man, permitting his wife to commit adultery, would thereby legally be adopting whatever adulterous child she might subsequently conceive. Even the very notion of children conceived through *AID* or *IVF-BDS* automatically being 'adopted' by a sterile husband's tacit or even explicit consent to that *AID* or *IVF-BDS* - is an affront to the seriousness of the adopting process itself.<sup>8</sup>

On the legal issues of *AID*, *IVF* and *SHW* - we find ourselves in very general agreement with the Australian

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4. Mason: *op. cit.*, p. 351.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 355f.

6. *Id.*

7. *Id.*, and *cf.* paras. 3955f

8. See Mason: *op. cit.*, pp. 352f



Law Reform Commission's Legislative Draftsman Stephen Mason. He declares:<sup>9</sup>

"The issue for public policy in general is whether to encourage the use of these techniques - for example by funding research into them and [also] allocating scarce medical, clinical and hospital resources to them. Likewise, the issue for legal policy is whether to encourage them - by altering the law to treat more favourably the children conceived by them [than the way in which naturally-conceived adulterous children are treated]. There are strong arguments against public policy in general, and legal policy in particular, encouraging the use of these techniques."

Throughout our dissertation, the quotations from Scripture are frequently our own translations straight from the Hebrew or the Greek. Similarly, our quotations from the Early Church Fathers (and ancient jurists and medicos) are often our own translations from the Greek or the Latin. Indeed, our various quotations from later Theologians and Jurists and Medicos are often our own translations from the original German or French or Dutch *etc.*

In this way, we have tried to present the impact of the infallible Word of God (and also of significant but fallible Theologians and Jurists and Medicos) in a contemporary and easily-understandable idiom. Yet, at crucial points, we sometimes (in the accompanying footnotes) explain our rationale for the given translation - for the benefit of all those readers who would delve more deeply.

- (Rev. Dr.) Francis Nigel Lee,  
Professor of Christian Ethics,  
Queensland Presbyterian Theological Seminary,  
Emmanuel College, Brisbane, AUSTRALIA

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<sup>9</sup>. *p. cit.*, p. 357

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Among many others, the following friends, acquaintances or contacts - some for only a few months, but others for many years - have been preparing the author to write this dissertation. He wishes, with much gratitude, to acknowledge all those (some now deceased) who have made significant contributions toward his own ongoing education in the genetical, legal and medical aspects of bio-ethics. In alphabetical order, these include:

'Anonymous acquaintances' (most of whom would prefer not to be mentioned by name); Rev. Dr. G.L. Bahnsen (California, U.S.A.); Rev. Atty. Peter Barson (Camp Hill, Australia); Rev. Dr. Carl Bogue (Akron, Ohio); Rev. Professor Dr. Harold O.J. Brown (Deerfield, Illinois); Nurse Miriam Cain (Cape Town, South Africa); Rev. Dr. Oliver Claassen (Atlanta, Georgia); Rev. Chris Colburn (Victoria, Australia); Dr. Truman Davis, M.D. (Mesa, Arizona); Dr. John Dique, M.D. (Chermside, Australia); Dr. Regis Mary Dunne (Brisbane, Australia); and Rev. Professor Dr. A.B. Du Preez (Pretoria, South Africa).

Also: Rev. Dr. Edwin P. Elliott Jr. (Manassas, Virginia); Rev. R. Flinn (Auckland, New Zealand); Dr. H. Francis, M.D. (Memphis, Tennessee); Rev. Dr. Ken Gentry (Conestee, South Carolina); Dr. Peter Goodwin, M.D. (Springwood, Australia); Dr. Steve Gustafson, J.D. (Gold Coast, Australia); Dr. John Hennessey, M.D. (Brisbane, Australia); Dr. Liz Hepburn (Brisbane, Australia); Dr. Claude Jackson, M.D. (Kosciusko, Mississippi); Professor Dr. Rod Hewitson, M.D. (Cape Town, South Africa); Dr. Dan Jordan, M.D. (Atlanta, Georgia); Judge the Hon. Rev. Dr. P.B. Kenny (Wavell Heights, Australia); Rev. G.K. Kettniss (Ascot, Australia); & Rev. Professor Dr. Synesio Lyra (Coral Ridge, Florida).

Further: Rev. Professor Michael McClure (Banyo, Australia); Dr. Clem McMahon, M.D. (Wavell Heights, Australia); Dr. Lesley Madden, Ph.D. (Kingaroy, Australia); Dr. Alex Mayes, M.D. (Brisbane, Australia); Rev. Robert Missenden (Wilston, Australia); Rev. Dr. Attorney-General Emeritus David Mitchell, LL.M. & Ph.D. (Hobart, Tasmania); Rev. Dr. Joseph Morecraft III (Atlanta, Georgia); Rev. Dr. John Morgan (St. Lucia, Australia); Rev. Dr. Joel Nederhood (Chicago, Illinois); Dr. George A. Nitshe Jr., M.D. (Monroeville, New Jersey); Rev. Dr. Edward J. Norton (Dunedin, New Zealand); Rev. Professor Dr. F.J.M. Potgieter, Ph.D. & Th.D. (Stellenbosch, South Africa); Judge the Hon. Edward Prysock (Louisville, Mississippi); Professor Dr. John Rendle-Short, M.D. (Queensland, Australia); Rev. Professor Dr. Robert Reymond (St. Louis, Missouri); Dr. Pat Roos, M.D. (Cape Town, South Africa); and Rev. Dr. R.J. & Mrs. D. Rushdoony (Vallecito, California).

Finally: Rev. Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer (Grand Rapids, Michigan); Dr. R.S. John Simpson, M.D. (Burbank, Australia); Dr. Donald P. Skinner, M.D. (Natal, South Africa); Congressman Rev. Robert L. Thoburn (Fairfax, Virginia); Dr. John Thompson, Ph.D. (Kingsport, Tennessee); Dr. Ivan Thomas, M.D. (Ashgrove, Australia); Dr. Marjorie van der Pyl, M.D. (Auckland, New Zealand); Dr. Carl Wieland, M.D. (Sunnybank, Australia); Rev. Professor Wrex Woolnough (Banyo, Australia); and Dr. Paul Wright, M.D. (Kansas City, Kansas, U.S.A.).

# TINY HUMAN LIFE

## A. THE BIBLE: WHEN DOES HUMAN LIFE BEGIN?

"Adam had sexual intercourse with his wife Eve. Then she conceived, and bore a son.... Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren..... Rebekah his wife conceived...and the children tussled together within her..... There were twins in her womb.... In sin did my mother conceive me.... I was shaped in iniquity!" - Genesis 4:1; 25:21-24; Psalm 51:5.

1. In this dissertation, we are concerned only with **human** conception and human abortion and human reproduction. There is indeed a place for man to apply artificial techniques of inducing animal conceptions and animal abortions and animal reproductions. For man is, progressively, to subjugate the animals and the rest of the sub human creation to the glory of God.<sup>1</sup>
2. However, man himself, also as regards his prenatal development - is body and soul quite unlike even the highest primate. Existentially, man is further from a monkey than the latter is from a mushroom. For man (and man alone) is the very image of God Himself.<sup>2</sup> As such, man is a unique kind of creature. From the womb to the tomb, man and man alone is deserving of that very great degree of respect which should be shown solely to the unique and triune image of the Almighty - the Triune God Himself.<sup>3</sup>

### The origin and nature and tri-unity of man

3. After creating the pre-human animals by putting the breath of life into their nostrils,<sup>4</sup> God uniquely created man (and man alone) as His very own image (both in body and in soul-spirit).<sup>5</sup> Man's soul-spirit (or living principle) is quite distinct from the many different kinds of soul-spirits of the various sorts of animals created before man.<sup>6</sup> Yet man's soul-spirit - or the driving "force" which vitalizes his uniquely-human body in a uniquely-human way - is not compounded, but simple.<sup>7</sup>
4. For man does not consist of different "parts" combined - whether two or whether three "parts" - held together in an uneasy tension, in spite of their essential dissimilarity. Indeed, the human "spirit and soul and body" mentioned in First Thessalonians 5:23 does not imply that man is a compound of three different substances temporarily glued together. Neither do the human "soul" and "spirit" and "joints" and "marrow" and "thoughts" and "intents" and "heart" mentioned in Hebrews 4:12, imply that man is compounded together from seven distinct ingredients.
5. Though man's personality kernel resides especially in his unique soul-spirit, human beings (at least from their conception till their death) are neither dichotomic nor trichotomic (which respectively have bitheistic and tritheistic implications). Nor is man essentially "monotomic" (which would have unitarian implications).
6. As the very **image** of the **Triune God**, man does in fact seem to be trini-structured (which has trinitarian implications). For the Triune "God shaped Adam, soil from the ground - by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life (or *nishmath chayyim*) - so that man became a conscious living being (or *nephesh*

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1. Gen. 1:26-28; 2:20; 9:2-4; 31:38; I Cor. 15:39; Jas. 3:3-7

2. Gen. 1:26-28; 5:1-f; 9:6.

3. Gen. 1:1-3; 1:26; Matth. 28:19; Eph. 4:24-26; Col. 3:8-10; Jas. 3:17-19.

4. Gen. 1:21f; 6:17; 7:21f.

5. Gen. 1:26f; 2:5-7; Job 31:33; 32:8; 33:4-6; 34:14f.

6. Eccl. 3:21 *cf.* I Cor. 15:39.

7. See F. Delitzsch's *Biblical Psychology*, Edinburgh: Clark, 1825, p. 114.

*chayyah*).<sup>8</sup> Thus **man**, imaging God, is himself a **tri-unity**.

7. So the Lord shaped some earthy clay, and formed it into the first human being - precisely by breathing the breath of life into that particular matter. In this way, exactly as the Triune God had intended, that formerly- lifeless matter thus became a living human triune creature.<sup>9</sup> The very moment God enlivened that human being (the man called Adam) - He gave him a simultaneously-increated human personality,<sup>10</sup> human consciousness,<sup>11</sup> and human sexuality.<sup>12</sup> Yet all of that, of course, would undergo considerable further growth and expansion in the future.<sup>13</sup>

### Man's origin in Job, Zechariah, and the New(er) Testament

8. Centuries later, also the mature Job referred back to the date of his own **conception**. He claimed, by revelation from God, that he was even at that latter time (nine months prior to his own birth) already a conscious human being. Indeed, he was right then already ensouled, male, and personal.
9. For Job himself said when suffering as an ailing adult: "Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said that a male child had been conceived! ... Why did I not die from the womb? ... For then I would have...been at rest.... As a hidden untimely birth, I would not have been - like infants which never saw light."<sup>14</sup> Elsewhere, the same Job also said: "The Spirit of God has made me, and the Breath of the Almighty has given me life.... I too have been formed out of the clay."<sup>15</sup>
10. Indeed, later still, also Zechariah apparently referred to the way in which all descendants of the first human couple are brought into being - yes, into **human** being; and precisely as human **beings**. For the prophet Zechariah stated that "the Lord...stretches forth the Heavens; lays down the foundation of the Earth; and forms the spirit of man within him."<sup>16</sup> So the Tri-une God makes a fully-human being (with a vast human potential) - whenever He begins to fashion a (furtherly-developable) human body, precisely by simultaneously infusing it with a just-created (and indeed furtherly-developable) human soul.<sup>17</sup>
11. Since the very beginning of history, God has commanded man - male and female - to be fruitful and to multiply and to subjugate the earth to His glory.<sup>18</sup> This multiplication of the human race was to be initiated solely inside the female human body. That is one of the mid-term purposes (and an occasional short-term result) of sexual intercourse, solely between married spouses,<sup>19</sup> as part of their long-term range of human activities to the glory of God.

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8. Gen. 1:1-3; 1:26; 2:7; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14.

9. *Idem*.

10. Note that the Hebrew Massoretic Text's *b<sup>e</sup>apayv* in Gen. 2:7 is rendered *pros-ooon* or "person" in the 3rd-century B.C.'s.

11. Greek Septuagint translation

12. Gen. 1:27 & 2:7,18,20,23.

13. See F.N. Lee: *Creation and Commission*, Tallahassee: Jesus Saves, 1979, pp. 19f. See too Origen's *Against Celsus* 4:23-30 (in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*).

14. Job 3:3,11,13,16.

15. Job 33:4-6.

16. Zech. 12:1.

17. Gen. 2:7; 7:22; Job 3:3-16; 12:10; 31:15,33; 33:4-6; 34:14f; Zech. 12:1; Luke 1:33-44; I Cor. 15:37-39,45-47.

18. Gen. 1:26-28; 9:1-7; I Cor. 7:1-5,14.

19. Gen. 2:23f; 4:1f; 5:2f; 17:17f; 21:1f; I Cor. 1-7,14; Eph. 5:5 to 6:4 *etc*.

## Human life begins at conception

12. On some occasions, human sexual intercourse (alias a husband's physical "cleaving" to his wife and lovingly "knowing" her) - results in conception just a few hours later. Then, "conception" is God's post-coital bringing into living existence of a new human being or ensouled person.
13. This latter is never an impersonal or a genderless *conceptum*, but always a person - namely either a male *conceptus*, or a female *concepta*.<sup>20</sup> Yet always hereinafter, purely for the sake of descriptive convenience, we shall refer to both as *concepti* (alias 'conceived persons') - and use the word *conceptus* to refer to either a male *conceptus* or a female *concepta*.
14. This *conceptus* (or newly-conceived human being) is produced by God's ensouling - by His fertilization of an ovum or female human egg through the agency of a penetrating human sperm. Before that fertilization, the living human sperm and the living human ovum are no more living human **persons** (alias living human beings) - any more than are living human white and red blood corpuscles in the human bloodstream.
15. Between the time of conception of a new fully-human male or female descendant in one of the woman's fallopian tubes and the subsequent time of that *conceptus's* implantation or nidation in the woman's womb some four days later, the human *conceptus* is also called a (human) zygote. Now this tiny zygote, at the time of his or her conception, is just one-tenth the size of a pin-head.<sup>21</sup> Yet the zygote is even then a new human being (with an unannihilatable human soul which exists from the very moment of conception onward).<sup>22</sup>
16. Significantly, out of the very mouth of one of the World's first successful pair of Practitioners who helped pioneer the *IVF* programme of *in vitro* fertilization, we have the statement that the zygote is indeed 'a microscopic human being.'<sup>23</sup> The zygote usually develops in one of the mother's fallopian tubes, prior to a possible<sup>24</sup> later implantation or "nidation" (or nestling) in her uterus.
17. Even where the *conceptus* rapidly turns into a malignant tumour and soon dies, that zygote has still been a living human being (with a human soul or soul-spirit incapable of annihilation). Here, there is such a very rapid deterioration of the *conceptus* - so as very soon to be no longer humanly-recognizable even as a zygote. For here the body-mass deforms even more rapidly than (but analogously to) the body of a mature adult human being who contracts some kind of highly-malignant disease.<sup>25</sup>
18. Even the Lord Jesus became so disfigured under the burden of our sins imputed to Him especially as He was dying, that God calls Him "a 'worm' and no man." Psalm 22:6. Indeed, the 'King of Prophets' calls Him: unbeautiful; undesirable; despicable; rejected by man; unesteemed; stricken; afflicted; and even

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<sup>20.</sup> Gen. 4:1; 25:20f; Judg. 13:2-7; Ruth 4:13; I Sam. 1:5,19f; 2:21 *etc.*

<sup>21.</sup> *Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 2nd Nov. 1981, under five photomicrographs of a just-conceived human zygote, has this caption: "The Miracle Is Just One-Tenth The Size Of A Pin-Head!"

<sup>22.</sup> Gen. 4:1; Job 3:3-17; 10:8-12; Ps. 51:5; Lk. 1:34-44.

<sup>23.</sup> See para. 2992.

<sup>24.</sup> Many human zygotes are never implanted, and soon die. If regenerated before their deaths, these ensouled human beings are justified by Christ's imputed righteousness and go straight to glory as soon as they die. See: *Westminster Confession of Faith* 10:3 (in *Subordinate Standards*, Edinburgh, Free Church Offices, 1933); and *Decrees of Dordt* 1:15-17 (in *Doctrinal Standards and Liturgy of the Reformed Dutch Church* (Cape Town: Rose, 1876).

<sup>25.</sup> Num. 12:12 & I Cor. 15:8 *cf.* Job 3:3-16.

smitten by God. Isaiah 53:2-7. Yet He still remained fully human, in spite of His hideous appearance.

19. In the case of the soon-death of a grossly-deformed human zygote, the zygotic human soul-spirit immediately returns to God Who gave it.<sup>26</sup> The highly-deformed bodymass of the *conceptus*, once dead, then decomposes. So too does even a mature adult's corpse, after death. In both cases, such corpses then await their later resurrection as incorruptible human bodies.<sup>27</sup>
20. Even the very matter of the gender-determination of the new zygote - as to his maleness or her femaleness - is initiated quite together with his or her personality (already at conception itself). For we now know that, within twelve hours after the sperm penetrates the egg, the nucleus within the fused sperm-egg or zygote already contains all the genetic information for the new human being. Indeed, in those cases where a zygote dies shortly after his or her conception, Specialists are now able to verify<sup>28</sup> either the maleness or the femaleness of that zygote - even if he or she had lived for less than a day after the commencement of conception itself.<sup>29</sup>

### Tertullian on the *conceptus* as a human being

21. Significantly, the great Theologian Tertullian - the father of Western or Latin Christianity - already seemed to be referring to this as early as around 200 A.D. Wrote Tertullian:<sup>30</sup> "The soul, being sown in the womb at the same time as the body, likewise simultaneously receives its sex along with it... The insertions [or 'seminations' alias the implantings] of the two substances" (*viz.* the soul and the body) - and the time of their combination (into the new zygote) - "are inseparable...."
22. "A community of gender is secured to them.... We have an attestation of the method, in the first two formations.... The male was moulded and tempered...when Adam was first formed. And then the woman came.... For Eve was later formed." Thus Tertullian on the origin of gender-differentiation.
23. In the case of identical twins and identical triplets and identical quadruplets *etc.*, it seems that both or all of the new souls are increated by God at conception itself. It is true that this cannot easily be verified before the time of cell-differentiation within the zygote. Yet the Bible itself implies that twins exist as twins even from the time of conception.<sup>31</sup>
24. As the modern Lutheran Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. John Warwick Montgomery states in his careful study titled *Christian View of the Fetus*: "Perhaps the soul is divisible, as is the fertilized egg. If the resultant identical twins show remarkable affinities in appearance, temperaments, habits, *etc.*, and if (as we have seen) Scripture sets forth a soul-body relationship - perhaps one can as legitimately speak of 'twin souls' as of 'twin bodies.'"<sup>32</sup> (See too Tertullian's helpful comment on what we shall call 'the twinnification of the *conceptus*' - in paragraphs 25 and 26.)
25. Tertullian of Carthage gives an important theological comment on the prenatal formation of twins. There

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<sup>26.</sup> Job 3:3-19; Eccl. 3:21; 11:5; 12:7.

<sup>27.</sup> Job 3:16 & 19:25-27; I Cor. 15:8,35-54 and esp. vv. 37 & 42. See too especially paragraphs 31-37.

<sup>28.</sup> Once the fertilized egg is outside the mother's own body.

<sup>29.</sup> See Overduin, D.C., and Fleming, J.I.: *Life in a Test-Tube - Medical and Ethical Issues Facing Society Today*, Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide, 1982, p. 63.

<sup>30.</sup> Tertullian: *On the Soul*, ch. 36 (in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*).

<sup>31.</sup> Gen. 25:21-24; 38:3-5,9,18,27-30; Eccl. 11:5; Hos. 12:3; Rom. 9:10-12; *etc.*

<sup>32.</sup> J.W. Montgomery: *Christian View of the Fetus* (in eds. Spitzer & Saylor's *Birth Control and the Christian*, Wheaton Illinois, Tyndale, 1969, p. 78).

may indeed, he says, be somebody "who - like Plato - supposes that two souls cannot...co-exist [with]in the same individual. I, on the contrary, could show him...the co-existence of two souls in one person!" Compare, for example, the soul of a pregnant mother and the altogether-different soul of her unborn child. For both of these two different souls reside within the body and within the person of the pregnant mother herself.

26. Indeed, adds Tertullian, one could also "show him...two bodies in the same womb." Consider, for example, a pregnant woman carrying twins, each of which has his or her own tiny body and his or her own tiny soul - however difficult it may be even for the mother or her Doctor to recognize this during the earliest stages of growth. "Now," continues Tertullian, "one soul is naturally more susceptible of conjunction with another soul - by reason of the identity of their substance."<sup>33</sup> Such is indeed the situation in the case of a zygote before his or her possible 'twinning' (or even before their later possible reunification).

### Human personality from conception onward

27. After conception and before implantation, the soul of the *conceptus* (or the souls of the *concepti* if later detected to be twins or triplets *etc.*) already has an incipient *ego* or "I-ness" (and also already has gender and an unfoldable and to-be-developed genetic template). Consequently, the tiny *conceptus* already possesses a discrete personality quite distinct from that of his or her father. Indeed, the zygote's personality differs even from that of his or her mother - also **prior** to the organic flesh-in-flesh connection between mother and zygote commencing only at the latter's implantation into the wall of the uterus some four days after conception.<sup>34</sup>
28. This is somewhat similar to the way in which the first man Adam exercised his personality quite distinctly from that of the first woman Eve after her subsequent creation yet before her coming into intimate physico-sexual contact with him.<sup>35</sup> For a human being is already a person, simply because he or she is human - even before intimately contacting another human person or persons. Then that latter contact can enrich the first-mentioned human being<sup>36</sup> - who already existed prior to that contact.
29. At the implantation of the **zygote**, the interpersonal relationship thus established between the mother and her **blastocyst** (alias her own multi-cellular zygotic offspring) only confirms and enriches and promotes the further development of the personalities which both the mother and her zygote already had even prior to implantation. Indeed, though this zygote possesses his or her very own personality even before implantation - it is especially after he or she roots and nestles in the mother's uterus, that the unfolding human personality of this new human being is more and more clearly seen.
30. Thus about four weeks after the conception of the **zygote**, and some three weeks after the implantation of the **blastocyst**, the zygote has become an **embryo** (when the various human body parts develop). Thereafter, from about the seventh week since conception, the tiny human being is called a **fetus** (alias an easily-recognizable unborn baby).<sup>37</sup>
31. The soul-possessing *conceptus* is, of course, already a human person - even before the development of the embryonic brain (only some days after implantation). Similarly, even postmortally, the conscious

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<sup>33.</sup> *On the Soul*, ch. 25.

<sup>34.</sup> See Ps. 51:5, and our paras. 115-22 & 140-56.

<sup>35.</sup> Gen. 2:20-22 *cf.* I Cor. 11:8,9,11,12.

<sup>36.</sup> Gen. 2:7-25; I Cor. 11:8f; I Tim. 2:13-15. *Cf.* too paras. 140 & 177f.

<sup>37.</sup> Job 3:3-17; Ps. 139:13-16; Isa. 44:2,24f; 49:5; Hos. 12:3.

bodyless soul still embraces a (truncated) human personality - and goes either to Heaven or otherwise to Hell. There, that person continues his or her conscious soulish existence even until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes back to our planet at the Last Judgment<sup>38</sup> - and of course also for ever thereafter.

32. Indeed, a conscious postmortal soul necessarily continues to embrace personality - even without a body and a brain. On this, see Dr. John Calvin's great work *Psychopannychia* - against the error alleging postmortal soulsleep (which is still not annihilation). For it is only when World History ends,<sup>39</sup> that the disembodied soul-spirit of man again receives back its (then-reconstituted) brain - at the time of the resurrection of the body (including its brain). And it is only thereafter that man (with his then re-embodied soul-spirit) is finally judged and driven into the lake of everlasting fire - or (otherwise) installed in a heavenly way on the renewed Earth at the perfecting of everlasting human life in body-and-soul.<sup>40</sup>
33. Consequently, if the soul-possessing *conceptus* should die before birth - and even before implantation in the womb - the soul itself continues to exist in a state of consciousness (in Heaven or in Hell), for ever there-after.<sup>41</sup> Until the resurrection, it does so without a body (and therefore even without a brain)<sup>42</sup> - but not without indwelling personality.

### Augustine on deformities at conception

34. Perhaps better than any other Patristic Theologian, Augustine the great Presbyter-Bishop of Hippo-Regius masterly summarizes the Early Church's understanding of the Bible's teachings about the above affairs. In his work *Enchiridion*,<sup>43</sup> Augustine deals with "abortive conceptions which have indeed been conceived in the mother's womb."
35. Before being miscarried or even aborted (also when the pregnant mother's life is in danger), explains Augustine, "the infant begins to live in the womb.... Life exists in a latent form before it manifests itself in the ['quickenings'] motions of the living being. It seems too audacious to deny that the young have ever been alive - the young who are cut out from the womb limb by limb [after dying prenatally in the womb] lest, if they were left there dead, the mother should die too. Now - from the time that a human being begins to live - from that time, it is possible for him to die."
36. Moreover, continues Augustine on the subject of a prenatally-dying human embryo, "wherever death may overtake him - I cannot discover on what principle he can be denied an interest in the resurrection of the dead. We are not justified in affirming even of monstrosities which are born and live - however quickly they may die [thereafter] - that they shall not rise again." Nor [should we think] that they shall rise again in their deformity - and not rather with an amended and perfected body."
37. Conceptions and "births which...have either a superfluity or a defect...shall at the resurrection be restored to the normal shape of man. And so, each single soul shall [then] possess its own body [again] - and no bodies shall cohere together [like 'Siamese twins'] - even though they were [previously] born in cohesion. But each, separately, shall [then] possess all the members which constitute a complete human body." (On the copious Early-Patristic teaching as to the salvation of aborted or miscarried human embryos and

38. Lk. 16:20-31; I Cor. 15:42-54; II Cor. 5:6f; Phil. 1:21-23; I Tim. 4:13-16; Rev. 6:6f; 20:4-6.

39. Job 19:25-27; I Cor. 15:35-44; I Jh. 3:2.

40. Dan. 12:2-13 I Jh. 5:21-29; Rev. 20:4 to 21:8.

41. Job 3:3-17; Ps. 58:8; I Cor. 15:8.

42. Eccl. 3:19-21; 12:7,14; Dan. 12:1f; Jh. 5:28f; II Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 1:20-23; Jas. 2:26; Rev. 20:4-13.

43. Augustine: *Enchiridion*, chs. 85-87, in *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers* (1st Series).



fetuses, see paragraphs 1411 & 1428 & 1435 & 1451.)

### ***Westminster: creation; covenant; sin; resurrection (commenced)***

38. The historic *Westminster Standards* constitute quite the greatest systematic exhibition of the teachings of Holy Scripture ever constructed in the history of ecclesiastical symbols. They were adopted by both the British Parliament and the British Churches during the seventeenth century. Let us now consult them about some of these matters.
39. The *Larger Catechism* states<sup>44</sup> that God blessed the first man, "ordaining marriage for his help" (Genesis 2:18), and thus "entering into a covenant of life with him" and his wife (Malachi 2:14f) - and also with "his posterity" (Hosea 6:7) or "all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation" (Acts 17:26). Sadly, that *Catechism* goes on,<sup>45</sup> the result was that "all mankind descending from him...fell with him" in his "first transgression." Genesis 2:16f; Romans 5:12-20; First Corinthians 15:21.
40. Now, this "original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation" - the *Catechism* continues<sup>46</sup> - "so as all that proceed from them, in this way, are conceived and born in sin. Psalm 51:5 and Job 14:4 & 15:14."
41. Consequently, the *Catechism* concludes,<sup>47</sup> "the fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God." As a result, from our conception onward, now "we are by nature children of wrath. Ephesians 2:2f." Nay more - at some point between their conception and their decease, all human beings also become subject even to physical "death itself. Romans 6:21-23."

### ***Westminster: creation; covenant; sin; resurrection (continued)***

42. The one and only exception to this loss of communion with God, is the unstained and sinless man Jesus Christ. It is indeed so, as Westminster affirms,<sup>48</sup> that He humbled Himself at His "conception and birth (John 1:14-18 & Galatians 4:4)" - and certainly did this with far "more than ordinary abasement. Luke 2:7." Indeed, there were then also "infirmities in His flesh, whether common to the nature of man or particularly accompanying that His low condition. Hebrews 2:17; 4:15; Isaiah 53:13f."
43. It is also altogether true that He "became man, by taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul (John 1:14 & Matthew 26:28) - being conceived...in the womb of the virgin Mary of her substance, and born of her (Luke 1:27,31,35,42 & Galatians 4:4)." Nevertheless, He was still "without sin (Hebrews 4:15 & 7:26)." Though taking on all the "common infirmities" of fallen man's human nature, such as the ability to die, Jesus Christ Himself was both unfallen and infallible<sup>49</sup> - nay more, absolutely impeccable.
44. Expanding on this, the *Westminster Confession of Faith* states<sup>50</sup> that God "created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls. Genesis 2:7; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:43; Matthew 20:28." Indeed, "life was promised to Adam and, in him, to his posterity (Romans 10:5 & 5:12-20) - upon condition of

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44. *Westminster Larger Catechism*, QQ. 20 & 22 (in *Sub. Stand.*).

45. *Ib.*, Q. 20.

46. *Ib.*, Q. 26.

47. Q. 37.

48. *W.L.C.*, QQ. 47f.

49. *Ib.*, Q. 37, & *Westminster Confession of Faith* 8:1.

50. *W.C.F.*, 4:2.

perfect and personal obedience."<sup>51</sup> However, once they "fell from their original righteousness" - they "became dead in sin and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. Genesis 2:17; 3:6-8; 6:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18,23; Ephesians 2:1; Titus 1:15."<sup>52</sup>

45. Nevertheless, "elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word. Luke 18:15-16; John 3:5-8; Acts 2:38-39; 4:12; Romans 8:9; First John 5:12."<sup>53</sup>
46. Yet such salvation is possible (and indeed certain) only through the human work of the Son of God. He came to "take upon Him[self] man's nature (John 1:1 & 1:14 & First John 5:20 & Philippians 2:6 & Galatians 4:4), with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin (Hebrews 2:14-17 & 4:15), being conceived...in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance. Luke 1:27,31,35 and Galatians 4:4."<sup>54</sup>

### ***Westminster: creation; covenant; sin; resurrection (concluded)***

47. The *Westminster Confession* adds<sup>55</sup> that "the bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption (Genesis 3:19 & Acts 13:36); but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God Who gave them. Luke 23:43 & Ecclesiastes 12:7.
48. "The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest Heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. Hebrews 12:23; Second Corinthians 5:1,6,8; Philippians 1:23; Acts 3:21; Ephesians 4:10. And the souls of the wicked are cast into Hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness reserved to the judgment of the Great Day. Luke 16:23-24; Acts 1:25; Jude 6 & 7; First Peter 3:19."
49. "At the Last Day," concludes the *Confession*,<sup>56</sup> "all the dead shall be raised up with the selfsame bodies and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls for ever. Job 19:26-27 & First Corinthians 15:42-44. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just, by His Spirit, unto honour, and be made conformable to His own glorious body. Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29; First Corinthians 15:43; Philippians 3:21."
50. Seeing that this is so, it is not too difficult to see how the soul and the personality were brought into existence even at conception (and then remained in existence both before and after fetalization). For it is not the later fetal development which initiated the new human being's life. Oh no! That already-alive new human being had pre-embryonically been fashioned continually - from previously-existing raw material (such as the sperm and the ovum *etc.*) ever since his or her conception some weeks earlier. Job 3:2f; Psalm 51:5 & 139:13-16; Zechariah 12:1; Luke 1:35-43f.

### ***1977 Abortion Report to Presbyterian Church in America***

51. The 1977 *Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Abortion to the National General Assembly of the*

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51. *Ib.*, 7:2.

52. *Ib.*, 6:2.

53. *Ib.*, 10:3.

54. *Ib.*, 8:2.

55. *Ib.*, 32:1.

56. *Ib.*, 32:2f

*Presbyterian Church in America*, was drawn up by a panel of nine Churchmen (including three Medical Doctors). In the section titled 'Medical Understanding of Abortion' it states<sup>57</sup> the following as to the prenatal development of a human being:

52. "The development of this unique being begins at the moment of conception.... The intra-uterine development, however, is usually separated into three stages - **zygote**, **embryonic**, and **fetal**.
53. "In the **zygote** stage rapid division of cells occurs as the development and the formation of this human being proceeds. In a few days, the zygote moves down the fallopian tube - and in about five to six days implants itself into the mother's uterus which has been prepared for this...by hormonal influences within the mother herself. The zygote stage lasts through the fourth week after conception. After implantation into the mother's uterus the placenta through which the developing baby is nourished, is rapidly formed. Within four weeks, a precursor to the fully-developed heart has formed and is actually pumping blood<sup>58</sup> through the baby's developing body.
54. "The next stage is called the **embryonic**, and exists from the fourth to the seventh week after conception.... During the embryonic stage, all major internal and external structures are developed.... At the end of the embryonic stage the head, ears, eyes, nose, mouth, legs, fingers, and toes are recognizable - though small. The baby at this point is only about one-half inch long....
55. "The next and last stage of intra-uterine development is the **fetal** - which occurs from the eighth week.... At eighteen to twenty weeks the mother perceives fetal movement, and this is defined as 'quickening.' From then on, the child develops and adds weight and length - to the time of birth." Thus the 1977 *Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Abortion to the National General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America*.

### Conclusion on when human life begins

56. Conclusion. Man, and man alone, is the unique image of God. Human life, involving the creation of a (furtherly-developable) soul and a (furtherly-developable) body, comes into being at conception. So too does personality, and sex differentiation. This new human being is alive, and is called a zygote. Normally, he or she is later implanted into his or her own mother's womb - quite naturally - when less than a week old. At or after that time, it then becomes humanly-possible to establish whether only one child or whether more than one child has (or have) been conceived. Four weeks after conception, an implanted zygote becomes an embryo. Then, from eight weeks after conception until birth, that embryo becomes a fetus (alias an easily-recognizable unborn baby).
57. As the celebrated South African Writer Dr. J.H. Smit (Professor of Theology at the Orange Free State University) rightly remarked<sup>59</sup> in a 1981 article: "God made man 'human' not just **down**...to the **last** cell" - but even **from** the very **first** cell. "A sperm-cell and an egg-cell merged into a zygote (which then divides and develops into an embryo) is in all cases an expression of man's total existence - spiritually and bodily. Man's 'soulness' cannot be **divorced** [though it is indeed **distinguishable**] from his 'cellness'!"

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<sup>57.</sup> See *Minutes of the Sixth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America*, Committee for Christian Education and Publications, Suite F, 4319 Memorial Drive, Decatur Ga., 1978, pp. 272f.

<sup>58.</sup> Compare Genesis 1:26-28 & 2:21-25 & 9:6 with Ex. 21:12-14,22f & Lev. 24:17 & Ps. 139:13-16 & Hos. 9:11-16 & Acts 17:26-28 & I Cor. 15:39. Note, however, that Lev. 17:11 & Dt. 12:23-24 are referring to animal and not to human flesh and blood (which are qualitatively different). Again, see I Cor. 15:39.

<sup>59.</sup> See J.H. Smit: *Cloning - Demonic Technique?* In: *Vocation and Guidelines*, Sacum, Bloemfontien, September 1981, p. 7.

58. Also the Roman Catholic Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith stated respectively in its November 1974 *Declaration on Procured Abortion* and in its February 1987 *Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation*: "From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun which is neither that of the father nor the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth.... How could a human individual not be a human person? ... The human being is to be respected and treated as a person from the moment of conception."

## B. MODERN MEDICINE AND SCIENCE ON THE START OF HUMAN LIFE

"You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You. While I was being fashioned in secret, my substance was not hidden from You.... Your eyes saw my embryo before it developed.... When none of my bodyparts yet existed, You predetermined that all of them should be fashioned." - Psalm 139:13-16.

59. Today, there are ever-increasing attacks - though only by certain Scientists, and not by others - against the Biblical view of the origin of prenatal human life. Yet it is also very encouraging to note that very large numbers of Medical Scientists (including many who are not Christians) continue to uphold the traditional Christian view as to when human life begins.

### Drs. Patten, Gordon, Montagu & Fridhandler on the start of human life

60. In his 1968 book *Human Embryology*,<sup>1</sup> for example, Medical Textbook Writer Dr. Bradley M. Patten clearly states that "fertilization...marks the initiation of the life of a new individual." Moreover, such fertilization indeed "can be said to have occurred when the chromosomes from the male and female *pronuclei* become aggregated together."
61. Again, Dr. Hymie Gordon (while Chief Geneticist at the Mayo Clinic in the United States) wrote a paper on *Genetical, Social and Medical Aspects of Abortion* - in the July 1968 issue of the *South African Medical Journal*.<sup>2</sup> Says Dr. Gordon: "From the moment of fertilization, when the Deoxyribose Nucleic Acids [DNA] from the spermatozoon and the ovum come together to form the zygote, the pattern of the individual's constitutional development is irrevocably determined."
62. Dr. Ashly Montagu, the Harvard and Rutgers Geneticist, agrees. In his 1977 study *Life Before Birth*,<sup>3</sup> he wrote that "life begins not at birth but at conception." And Dr. Louis Fridhandler, in his chapter 'Gametogenesis to Implantation' (in the 1968 medical textbook *Biology of Gestation*), boldly describes fertilization as "that wondrous moment that marks the beginning of life for a new unique individual."<sup>4</sup>

### Drs. Potter, Craig, Shettles, & Heffernan on the start of human life

63. Drs. E.L. Potter and J.M. Craig wrote their book *Pathology of the Fetus and the Infant*<sup>5</sup> in 1975. There they insisted that "every time a sperm cell and ovum unite, a new being is created which is alive and will continue to live - unless its death is brought about by some specific condition."
64. Dr. Landrum B. Shettles of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons - himself one of the Pioneers of human *IVF* research<sup>6</sup> - made a similar statement. Indeed, he wrote in the December

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1. B.M. Patten: *Human Embryology*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1968, pp. 43f.

2. H. Gordon: *Genetical, Social and Medical Aspects of Abortion* (in the *South African Medical Journal*, July 1968. Cited in T.W. Hilgers & D.J. Horan: *Abortion and Social Justice*, Sheed & Ward, New York, 1972, p. 5.

3. A. Montagu: *Life Before Birth*, Signet, New York, 1977, p. vi.

4. N.S. Assau (ed.): *Biology of Gestation*, Academic Press, New York, 1968, I p. 76

5. Potter, E.L., & Craig, J.M.: *Pathology of the Fetus and the Infant*, Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers, 1975, p. vii.

6. See para. 2896.

7th 1970 *Journal of the American Medical Association* that "life begins [when] a particular aggregate of hereditary tendencies (genes and chromosomes) is first assembled. This occurs at the moment of fertilization.... A new, composite individual is started at the moment of fertilization."<sup>7</sup>

65. Dr. Bart T. Heffernan is Head of the Department of Medicine at St. Francis' Hospital (and also Director of its Calvin Heart Centre). Heffernan writes<sup>8</sup> that "from conception the child is a complex, dynamic, rapidly-growing individual.... At fertilization, a new and unique individual is created which - although receiving one-half of its chromosomes from each parent - is really unlike either."

### **Dr. Hellegers and the Abortion Congress on the start of human life**

66. Dr. Andre' E. Hellegers, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology (and Professor of Physiology and Biophysics) at Georgetown University, gave an address titled *Abortion* to the 1974 United Nations World Population Conference in Budapest. There, Hellegers declared:<sup>9</sup> "In abortion, human life is indeed killed... Each life, biologically, begins at conception... The fetus is human from conception. In brief - it is a biological, human being.... The human, including the fetus, should be assessed genetically - rather than sociologically, economically, or relationally."
67. Already earlier, in Autumn 1967, the First International Congress on Abortion had been held in Washington D.C. Attended by sixty prominent medical authorities, that Congress had adopted the following statement: "We can find no point in time between the union of sperm and egg, and the birth of an infant, at which point we can say that this is not a human life."<sup>10</sup>

### **Drs. Cooke, Bourne & Carles on the start of human life**

68. Compare too the book of Dr. Robert Cooke (and others) titled *The Terrible Choice - The Abortion Dilemma*. The name of the book tells it all. Very significantly, it is based on the proceedings of the 1967 International Conference on Abortion.<sup>11</sup>
69. The choice, maintains Dr. Cooke, is terrible indeed. For it is a choice between the rights to life of two different human beings (the mother and her embryo) - purporting that the one should die, for the sake of the convenience or the desire of the other.
70. There is also Dr. Gordon Bourne's book, *Pregnancy*. There, he writes<sup>12</sup> that a "newly-fertilized [human] egg has twenty-three pairs of chromosomes - thus creating a new individual with its own particular blueprint." This means that the *conceptus* himself or herself, from the very beginning of his or her existence, possesses an individuality quite distinct from that of his or her mother (and father).
71. French Medical Researcher Dr. Jules Carles makes some important observations - in his 1967 book

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7. Shettles, L.B.: *Questions and Answers - When Does Life Begin?* In *Journal of the American Medical Association*. December 7, 1970, p. 1895.

8. Heffernan, B.T. (M.D.): *The Early Biography of Everyman*. In Hilgers, T.W., & Horan, D.J.: *Abortion and Social Justice*. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1972. p. 4.

9. Hellegers, A.E. (M.D.): *Abortion - Another Form of Birth Control?* In *Human Life Review*, pp. 23f.

10. See K. Gentry: *The Christian Case Against Abortion*, in *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, Vallecito Ca., II:2, 1982 p. 127.

11. R.E. Cooke (M.D.) & Others: *The Terrible Choice - The Abortion Dilemma*, New York: Bantam, 1968.

12. G. Bourne (M.D.): *Pregnancy*, New York: Harper & Row, 1972, p. 55.

on fertilization entitled *La Fecondation*. Writes Carles:<sup>13</sup> "The first cell (formed by sperm-and-egg union) is already the embryo of an autonomous living being.... In that first cell, the profound dynamism and the precise direction of life appears....

72. "In spite of its fragility and its immense needs, an autonomous and genuinely-living being has come into existence.... It is rather surprising to see certain Physicians speak here [only] of 'potential life' - as if the fertilized egg began its real life [only] when it nests in the uterus.
73. "Modern biology does not deny the importance of nidation [or implantation]. But it sees it only as a condition - indispensable, to be sure - for the development of the embryo and the continuation of a life already in existence."

### **Dr. Vincent and Our Future Inheritance on the start of human life**

74. Dr. Merville Vincent (M.D., C.M., F.R.C.P.), Assistant Medical Superintendent of Canada's largest private and psychiatric institution (Homewood Sanatorium in Guelph), wrote a paper on *Psychiatric Indications for Therapeutic Abortion* - in 1969. There, he rightly states<sup>14</sup> that "conception is the great divide between non-life and life. Implantation, placentation and birth change the form of nutrition - but not the character of the embryo.
75. "The Church of England stated at the Lambeth Conference of 1930 that 'abortion aims at the destruction of life which has already come into being. This is contrary to the law of God and of man'.... I know of no scientific evidence that has been developed since...that proves that a life is not being destroyed" by abortion.
76. Last, even the Non-Christian 1974 British book *Our Future Inheritance* rightly admits that "a biologist might say that human life started at the moment of fertilization when the sperm and the ovum merge." For clearly: "At what [other] stage of development could the status of 'patient' be attributed to the embryo or foetus?"<sup>15</sup>

### **Conclusion of scientific data on the start of human life**

77. Conclusion. In the opinion of many modern Medical and Genetical Scientists - in the professional judgment of many topnotch Scientific Textbook Writers - the human life of the *conceptus* begins even prior to his or her nidation (and, in fact, at his or her conception itself). For such are the judicious convictions of the sixty prominent Medical Specialists who attended the First International Congress on Abortion.
78. Such too is the considered opinion of Doctors Patten, Gordon, Potter, Craig, Heffernan, Hellegers, Bourne, and Vincent (all cited above) - as well as of many other prominent Specialists too. Significantly, even *Newsweek* admitted on January 11th 1982 - in a six-page article (unusually long for that magazine) - that human life begins at conception.

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13. J. Carles (M.D.): *La Fecondation*, Paris: University Press, 1967, pp. 81f.

14. In Spitzer & Saylor, pp. 191 & 198.

15. In F.A. Schaeffer: *How Should We Then Live?*, Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1976, pp. 220f.

79. The crux of the matter, however, is not: What do scientists say? To the Bible-believing Christian, the crux can only be: "What does the Scripture say?" Romans 4:3. It is to Holy Scripture, then, that we must now turn.



## C. SCRIPTURE: ARE PRENATAL HUMANS REALLY PERSONS?

When Elisabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby [John] jumped up in Elisabeth's womb [three months before he was born].... Then Elisabeth said [to Mary]: 'You have been blessed among women, and the Fruit of your womb [the only-just-conceived Lord Jesus] has also **been** blessed! But why should the mother of my Lord come to me? For look, as soon as the sound of your greeting came into my ears, the baby jumped up for joy within my womb!' - Luke 1:30-44.

80. Let us now carefully hear God's Word - about the 'conception' and the 'birth' of the very first man. Before He created Adam, God first made the prehuman living-and-breeding creatures. He gave them 'seed' with which to reproduce and to yield fruit, each according to its kind.<sup>1</sup>

### Adam's personality created at his very inception

81. Then God also made man, with the intention that he too should multiply. The Lord God caused an enveloping moisture to rise up from out of the earth. He irrigated the surface of the ground, and He then formed man from the saturated soil. God did this - apparently through His life-giving Holy Spirit. He breathed the breath of life into the man He was forming as a living creature - and indeed also as His very own image.<sup>2</sup>
82. Here, we note the following. First: there is a resemblance (see Genesis 2:7 and Psalm 139:13-16) between the first man Adam's own coming-into-existence (within and from the 'womb' of 'mother earth'), and the later coming-into-existence of human zygotes (within and from the wombs of human mothers descended from Adam). Second: Calvin comments on Adam's creation that "the peculiar dignity of man is shown in that he was gradually formed"<sup>3</sup> - even as prenatal babies are now 'gradually formed' (over nine months). See too the comment of Delitzsch in paragraph 86.
83. Third: "Adam's body was formed with a view to the incarnation of the Second Adam Jesus Christ" (thus Atkinson),<sup>4</sup> and He was conceived within a woman and later born from her womb.<sup>5</sup> Fourth, comparing Genesis 1:2 & 1:26 with 2:6, we note "the waters of the deep...went up from the earth" -

1. Gen. 1:11,12,21,24,25.

2. Gen. 1:26f (*na'a:seh ·aadaam b<sup>e</sup>-tsalmenuu kidmuutheenuu...way-yibraa ·E:lohiym ·eth-haa-<sup>a</sup>adaam b<sup>e</sup>-tsalmoo...zaakaar uu-n<sup>e</sup>qeebaah..., way-yo mer laahem...p<sup>e</sup>ruu uu-r<sup>e</sup>buu*); 2:6f (*w<sup>e</sup>-eed ya'a:leh min-haa-<sup>a</sup>arets w<sup>e</sup>-hishqaah ·eth-kaal-p<sup>e</sup>neey haa-a:daamaah, way-yiytser J<sup>e</sup>hovaah ·E:lohiym ·eth-haa-aadaam 'aafaar min-haa-a:daamaah, way-yippach b<sup>e</sup>-aappaayvnishmath chayyiy, way-hiy haa-aadaam P-nefesh chayyaah*); and 2:21-25 (*way-yafel J<sup>e</sup>hovaah ·E:lohiym thardeemaah 'al-haa-aadaam, way-yiyshan, way-yiqach ·achath mitsal'oothaayv, way-yisgor boṣaar thachthennaah. Way-yiben J<sup>e</sup>hovaah ·E:lohiym ·eth-haats-tseela' a:sher-laaqach min-haa-aadam P-ishshaah, way-bi ehaa ·el-haa-aadaam. Way-yo mer haa-aadaam zo th hap-pa'am 'eetsem mee-'a:tsamai, uu-boṣaar mi-bṣariy. L<sup>e</sup>zo th yiq-qaree ·ishshaah, kiy mee-iysh luuqa:chaah-zo th. 'Al-ken ya'a:zaab ·iysh ·eth-aabiyv we-eth-immoo, w<sup>e</sup>-daabaq b<sup>e</sup>-ishshthoo, w<sup>e</sup>-hayuu P-boṣaar ·echaad. Way-yihyuu sh<sup>e</sup>neeyhem 'a:ruumiym haa-aadaam w<sup>e</sup>-ishshthoo w<sup>e</sup>-lo yithboshashuu*). See too: Gen. 1:1,26-28; Job 27:3; 31:33; 32:8; 33:4-6; 34:14f; Ps. 104:29f; and Eccl. 3:19 & 12:7.

3. J. Calvin: *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis* in his *Commentary on the Bible*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948, I p. 111.

4. B.F.C. Atkinson: *The Book of Genesis*, in *The Pocket Commentary of the Bible*, London: Walters, 1954, I. p. 31.

5. Lk. 1:31 to 2:7f.

and through an implied act of the Spirit of God Himself (Cassuto).<sup>6</sup>

84. Note fifth, that man (or *·aadaam*) was made from the 'liquefied' *·a:daamaah* or 'clay of the ground' - as Dr. G. von Rad remarks, "*·aadaam-a:daamaah* (man-earth)."<sup>7</sup> Note sixth, that "the Lord God blew the breath of life into the nostrils of the man He was shaping out of the clay from the surface of the earth" (Gispén).<sup>8</sup> And note seventh, that "the first man Adam was made a living soul"<sup>9</sup> alias a conscious living creature - from the very moment God dug up a lump of clay and started shaping it precisely by breathing His own life-giving breath into it so that it thus became a human being.<sup>10</sup>

### Delitzsch on Adam's concreated personality

85. The great Lutheran scholar Rev. Professor Dr. Franz Delitzsch makes an important comment on Genesis 2:7, in his book *Genesis Expounded*. He explains: "A misty cloud arose...from the earth, and saturated...the whole surface of the earthy ground.... Jehovah Elohim [the Triune God] shaped man from the clay of the earth...so that he came into existence 'dug out and heaped up from the earth.' First Corinthians 15:47 [The first man is from the earth - earthy]."
86. Expounding Genesis 2:7, Delitzsch goes on:<sup>11</sup> "The Latin translates: 'out of the muddy earth.' And Luther translates: 'out of an earthy clod' (or a claylike mass all rolled up together)." See Psalm 139:16's *golem* or 'rolledup embryo' or 'substance.' "Without doubt, man was called 'Adam' [or *·Aadaam*] because shaped from the earth (*·a:daamaah*).... *·Jhovaah ·E:lohiym* breathed a *nishmath chayyiyim* or a living and lifegiving breath into that matter. As a result, 'man' became a *nefesh chayyaah* or a 'living soul' alias an ensouled (and therefore a living) being" - indeed, a human being.'
87. "The account" in Genesis 2:7, continues Delitzsch, "gives us the composition, time of commencement, and condition of man (from the history of his origin).... Man is a *nefesh chayyaah* - that is, a living being whose earthy matter has become corporeal flesh by the living breath which entered into him, and whose life-principle has penetrated throughout that earthy matter to enliven him into a living creature. The *nefesh* [or the 'living soul'] is not something substantially different from the *nishmath chayyiyim* [or the 'breath of life']. It is not a 'third thing' which came into being through the union of the living breath with the earthy matter. Nor did it arise as a *tertium quid* from the potential contents of what had been called forth. No! Instead, the *nefesh* is the life-principle itself. As the life in the body, it establishes the singular connection which has been entered into with the earthy matter."<sup>12</sup>
88. Delitzsch goes on: "God Himself breathes the *nishmath chayyiyim* into man's nostrils. So he becomes a *nefesh chayyaah* in a way which explicitly depicts God's own personal life.... Elihu spoke the truth, when he said to Job (33:4) - 'The Spirit of God has made me, and the Breath of the Almighty has given me life.' For "the human spirit (in a creaturely way) comes into being from the Divine Spirit - although the former is just as little the same as the Latter, as breath is identical to the one who breathes.
89. "For this reason, the human spirit needs the Absolute Spirit to carry it throughout its own continual

6. Cited in W.H. Gispén's *Creation and Paradise*, Kampen: Kok, 1966, p. 120.

7. G. von Rad: *Genesis*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961, p. 74.

8. *Op. cit.*, pp. 122f.

9. I Cor. 15:45-47

10. Gen. 2:7.

11. F. Delitzsch: *Genesis Expounded*, Leipzig, Doerffling & Francke, 1853, pp. 130-35.

12. *Ib.*, pp. 133-36

existence - and to bring back holiness within man, when he became alienated from his Origin. For this reason, after the fall, man needs a second 'inbreathing' - like the one when Jesus breathed into His disciples while saying to them: 'Receive the Holy Ghost!' (John 20:22). The absolute Spirit of God must carry us. And the Holy Ghost of the One declared to be the Son of God, restores us." Thus: "God, in the whole fullness of His personality, breathes the breath of life directly into the nostrils of one man - so that, in a manner corresponding to the personality of God, man may become a living soul."<sup>13</sup>

90. Delitzsch discusses Genesis 2:7 not only in his above-mentioned book *Genesis Expounded*. He also analyzes it in his great work *Biblical Psychology*. There, he derives the later *in corpore* conceptions of all of Adam's descendants - from the original 'conception' of Adam himself.

### Adam's concreated personality: Lange and Kurtz and Delitzsch

91. Some time before Delitzsch, Rev. Dr. J.P. Lange had maintained that the soul was created at the same moment as the body - claiming that it was by one act of creation that God formed the body and originated the soul even of the very first man (by breathing His own Breath into him).<sup>14</sup> Schoeberlein too had opposed the idea of a two-stage creation of Adam's body and soul "subsequent to one another in time."<sup>15</sup>
92. Also Rev. Professor J.H. Kurtz insisted<sup>16</sup> that Adam's body and soul, though they differ "*toto coelo*" (or 'by the whole of Heaven'), were nevertheless both brought together *uno momento* (or 'in one moment'). The human soul and the human body, he stated, both originated at the same time.
93. Stated Delitzsch:<sup>17</sup> "The significant word [in Genesis 2:7] for the creative act of inbreathing, is *way-yippach* (LXX = *enephuseesen*). It is not said that God, externally to Himself, created a breath and conveyed it into man.... No! **God** breathes. **He** breathes forth **into** the bodily form.... [**He**] comprises it into an individual life. And [it is **He Who**] thus creates the human spirit....
94. "The 'inbreathing'...therefore can only be meant to affirm that God - by means of His Breath - brought forth and united with the bodily form that same principle of life which became the source of all the life of man." Indeed, even in the book of Ezekiel the 'Breath of life' or "'Wind' is a figure of the Spirit. For in [Ezekiel] 37 verse 14, Jehovah says, in interpretation of the vision - 'I will put My Spirit into you!'"

### Keil on Adam's concreated personality

95. Delitzsch's close associate, Rev. Professor Dr. C.F. Keil, himself gives us further important insights into the meaning of Genesis 2:7. Keil tells us<sup>18</sup> that "Jehovah God formed man (*wa-y-yitser*)." God formed man "from the dust of the ground." God formed man "by breathing (*wa-y-yippach*) into him." God breathed into man "the Breath of life." And, as a result, man "became (*wa-y-hi*) a living creature."
96. Now, explains Keil, these three '*wa-s*' or "waw-consecutive imperfects - "*wa-y-yitser*" and "*wa-y-yippach*" and "*wa-y-hi*" - do **not** indicate three **successive** happenings. They only indicate three

13. Delitzsch, as cited by Keil, in C.F. Keil & F. Delitzsch's *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. I, *The Pentateuch*, Edinburgh: Clark, 1885, p. 80.

14. *Bib. Psych.*, p. 153

15. *Studies and Criticism*, 1860, p. 153.

16. *The Bible and Astronomy*, VI sec. xi.

17. *Bib. Psych.*, pp. 94 & 101.

18. In Keil & Delitzsch: *op. cit.*, I, pp. 88f (1885 ed. of Edinburgh: Clark).

aspects of **one and the same contemporaneous and triune event**. Similarly, explains Keil, "the *waw*-consecutive imperfects (in Genesis 2 verses 7-9), do not indicate the order of time or of thought" but synchronized triune actions.

97. "For the meaning is not that God planted the garden after He had created Adam; nor that He caused trees to grow after He had planted the garden and placed men there.... We must not understand the formation of man from dust and the breathing of the Breath of life in a mechanical sense - as if God first of all constructed a human figure from dust, and then, by breathing His Breath of life into the clod of earth which He had shaped into the form of a man, made it into a living being."
98. No! To the contrary! It was "by an act of divine omnipotence [that] man arose from the dust. And in the same moment in which the dust, by virtue of creative omnipotence, was shaped into a human form - [in that same moment] it was pervaded by the divine breath of life and created a living being. Consequently, we cannot say the body was earlier than the soul." For man "was formed into a personal being whose immaterial part was...a soul breathed entirely by God."

### Adam's and Eve's concreated personalities according to Leupold

99. The modern Lutheran Scholar, Rev. Professor Dr. H.C. Leupold, in his *Exposition of Genesis*, sheds even further light on Genesis 2:7. Thus Leupold declares:<sup>19</sup> "Here without a doubt a damp mass of the finest earth is under consideration.... This breathing on God's part must, as Keil rightly reminds us, be understood *theotripees* - that is, in a manner befitting God.
100. "Nor can we for a moment hold that air or human breath was what God breathed into man's nostrils. It was His Own vital Breath.... The author is at this point chiefly reporting the fact that this lifeless clay became animate by the Breath of the Almighty.... The expression 'living being' employs the term *nefesh* (or 'soul'), because the soul is the animate thing in man. God's Spirit animates the soul."
101. Next, let us hear God's Word about the 'conception' and the 'birth' of the first woman - Eve. Removing part of the living man (from inside of Adam), God built that part up into a 'wom(b)an' - or a 'woman' taken from the 'womb' of the 'man.'<sup>20</sup> To that 'woman' the man himself was henceforth to 'cleave' - by becoming "one flesh" with her.<sup>21</sup> This would then sometimes result in the conception and birth of children.
102. God made the first two human beings - respectively "male and female." Then He commanded them: "Be fruitful and multiply!"<sup>22</sup> For not just prehuman creatures, but man too was given 'seed.'<sup>23</sup> Indeed, it was (and is) to be by way of 'conception' (or pregnancy) that the man's 'seed' - through the woman's eggs - "shall produce children."<sup>24</sup>

### The commencement of personality in Adam and Eve and their children

103. In his *Commentary on Genesis* (2:18) Calvin states man and woman both image God. The Calvinist

19. H.C. Leupold: *Exposition of Genesis*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968, I pp. 115f.

20. Gen. 2:21-23 & I Cor. 11:8.

21. *Ib.* & Gen. 9:4f & Lev. 17:11; *cf.* too I Cor. 6:16f & Eph. 5:22.

22. Gen. 1:26-28 (*p<sup>e</sup>ruu oo-r<sup>e</sup>vuu*).

23. Gen. 4:1f & 1:11f *cf.* 3:16 (*zera*).

24. Gen. 1:24-29; 2:21-25; 3:15f; 4:1f (*zar'aah...w<sup>e</sup>heeroneech...theeldiy baaniym...wath-thahar wath-theeled...wath-thosef laledeth*).

Dr. Gispén says: "Humans...are endowed with the power to reproduce. They are to make use of this.... Because they are human and have received the command to fill the Earth and to subdue it and to have dominion over the animals, they must use it!" When humans "are fruitful and multiply, it is a blessing. It is something good."<sup>25</sup>

104. So, the man "knew" or started to have sexual relations with his wife. He "knew" her both psychically and physically. Then, a new *phusis* or 'material being' with a new *psuchee* or 'soul' was generated - a new living creature or ensouled corporeal person.<sup>26</sup> Adam generated, and Eve "conceived." She first "became hot" with passion, and then she "became hot" with pregnancy.<sup>27</sup>
105. "Afterward she gave birth to a child" - to a male baby.<sup>28</sup> "Then she again conceived. And [later still,] "she gave birth" to her first child's brother - and then also to other sons and daughters.<sup>29</sup>
106. Adam begat children<sup>30</sup> "in his likeness<sup>31</sup> as his image."<sup>32</sup> This suggests continuity in personhood, from conception onward, first *in utero* and then *ex utero*. It also suggests the **continual resemblance** between **parents and their offspring**, from conception itself onward.<sup>33</sup>

### The personalities of the twin unborn children of Isaac and Tamar

107. Hear Moses<sup>34</sup> on the prenatal existence of discrete personality, even in unborn twins! "Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because she was **barren**.... Then Rebekah his wife conceived.<sup>35</sup> Yet the children [Jacob and Esau] struggled together within her....<sup>36</sup> The Lord said to her...: 'Two nations are in your womb,<sup>37</sup> and two peoples shall be separated from your inside.'<sup>38</sup> ... Then, when her days to give birth had been fulfilled<sup>39</sup> - look, there were twins in her womb!"<sup>40</sup>
108. Later, Tamar sent word to Judah, saying: "I am pregnant!"<sup>41</sup> Then, at the time when that pregnancy

25. *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

26. Gen. 4:1; Prov. 30:18-20; John 3:8.

27. Gen. 4:1 (*W<sup>e</sup>Aadaam yaada' eth-Chavvaah ishthoo wath-thaha*). See too n. 50 and paras. 115 & 140.

28. Gen. 4:1 (*wath-theled*), & Heb. 11:4.

29. Gen. 4:2 (*wath-thosef laaledeth eth-aachiy*). See too Gen. 4:25f & 5:1-4f. "Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son and called his name Seth.... This is the book of the generations of Adam.... He begat sons and daughters, and all the days that Adam lived, were 930 years."

30. Gen. 3:16 & 4:4f,25.

31. Gen. 5:3's *bid<sup>e</sup>muuthoo* (cf. Heb. 9:4-10).

32. Gen. 5:3's *k<sup>e</sup>tsalmoo* (cf. Heb. 9:4-10).

33. Cf. nn. 31 & 32 with Job 10:3-11 & Ps. 139:13-16 & Jer. 18:1-6.

34. Gen. 25:21f (*'akaaraah* = barren).

35. *wath-thaahaar*.

36. *way-yithrotsa:tsuu ha-baaniym b<sup>e</sup>qirbaah*.

37. *sh<sup>e</sup>neey goyyiym b<sup>e</sup>vitneech*.

38. *uu-sh<sup>e</sup>neey l<sup>e</sup>ummiym mim-mee'a-yik yip-paareduu*. Here, *mee'a* means womb. It is used to describe a person's central inside body-part. Thus: intestines; bowels; belly; womb; heart; mind (Davidson). To this Gesenius adds "breast," deriving it from a root meaning "flowing down" and hence "softness." See A.B. Davidson's *Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, London: Bagster, 1959, p. DI (501); W. Gesenius: *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950, p. 491 at *maa'aah*.

39. *way-yim<sup>e</sup>uu yaameyhaa laaledeth*.

40. *thoomiym b<sup>e</sup>vitnaah*.

41. Gen. 38:25, *aanokiy haaraah*.

had run its full course, and when she was about to give birth - "look, twins were in her womb!"<sup>42</sup> Yet those twins too - Pharez and Zerah - had quite different personalities.

### Moses on the personalities of the unborn in Exodus

109. The very same chronicler Moses refers to the conception and gestation and birth centuries later of many Israelitic infants - including that of himself too when he was a baby.<sup>43</sup> Later, Moses also describes further cases where single births and miscarriages yielded more than one child at a time - where mothers were expecting twins (or triplets *etc.*).
110. He refers to cases where accidental injuries are inflicted on "a pregnant woman,<sup>44</sup> so that her [multiple] children miscarry"<sup>45</sup> after she had conceived them yet before she had carried them full term. Exodus 21:22-25. Some such children continue to live, even after sustaining injury. This proves those children had the same legal personalities and also similar existences after their miscarriages, as they did prenatally. Compare paragraphs 1181-1264 for full details of the above vital passage.

### Judges on Samson's personality from conception onward

111. Let us now hear the book of Judges, on the conception and birth of Samson. God's angel appeared unto the woman (who was to become the mother of Samson), and said to her: "Now, you are barren. You are not yet pregnant - but you shall conceive. And you shall give birth to a son. Now, therefore, please take care - and do not drink wine or strong drink or eat anything unclean! For look, you shall conceive and bear a son and...the child shall be a Nazarite for God even from the womb."<sup>46</sup>
112. Notice how the diet Samson's mother was to follow, starting even before his conception, presupposes its influence over Samson himself right from the very time of his conception. This further presupposes Samson's personal existence even from the first second he became a zygote immediately after he was conceived. Hence the angel reminded Samson's mother that her son would "be a Nazarite for God, **even from the womb**" of his soon-to-be-dieting maternal parent who would shortly conceive him.
113. Keil and Delitzsch commented on the above passage about Samson. "The promised son," they explain,<sup>47</sup> "was to be a Nazarite all his life long.... And in order that he might be so, his mother was to share in the renunciations of the Nazarite vow during the time of her pregnancy."
114. Also Dr. C.J. Goslinga observed<sup>48</sup> the woman "would become the mother of a child who would be dedicated to God in a special way.... The promise would be fulfilled with all speed.... Samson was undoubtedly to observe the prescription of abstaining from wine and strong drink, for that was even enjoined upon his mother herself.... Even before his birth and certainly also thereafter all unholy operations of a stimulating and intoxicating nature were to be avoided - unholy operations hindering the operation of the Spirit of God" in Samson from his very conception onward!

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42. Gen. 38:27, *way-hiy b<sup>e</sup>'eth lid<sup>e</sup>thaah w<sup>e</sup>-hinneeh th<sup>e</sup>.oomiyim b<sup>e</sup>vitnaah.*

43. Ex. 1:7 to 2:2.44.

44. Ex. 21:22, *ishshaah haaraah.*

45. *w<sup>e</sup>yaats<sup>e</sup>uu y<sup>e</sup>laadeyaah.*

46. Judg. 13:3-5.

47. *Op. cit. (Joshua, Judges, Ruth)*, p. 406.

48. C.J. Goslinga: *The Book of Judges*, Kampen: Kok, 1952, II pp. 16f.

## The inspired Job on prenatal personality and consciousness

115. Hear Job on the existence of human consciousness in fetuses, long before their birth. Hear him too even on zygotic consciousness right around conception itself - as well as on the continuing consciousness of dying fetuses after their prenatal deaths. For, harking back to his birth and even to the still-earlier time of his own conception, the adult Prophet Job referred to "the day when I was begotten<sup>49</sup> and the night when it was said: 'A male child has been conceived!'"<sup>50</sup>
116. Note first: Job refers to the very day 'he' was begotten. 'He' was thus brought into existence fully nine months prior to his later birth. Note second: Job refers to the night in which 'he' was conceived or 'began to get hot' as a result of his mother 'beginning to get hot' with passion, and shortly thereafter 'getting even hotter' (when she conceived Job).<sup>41</sup>
117. Note third: not just Job's personhood, but even his maleness or 'manchildness' was determined during the very night he was conceived. And note fourth: the Theologians Bickell and Duhm<sup>51</sup> and Delitzsch<sup>52</sup> - and even S.R. Driver<sup>53</sup> - all agree that it was during the very night of his conception that Job the new male child was given his very 'being.'
118. Feeling sorry for himself when sorely tried as an adult, Job then sorely complained: "Why did I not die **in** the womb?" <sup>54</sup> He explained further: "For then I would have...been at rest with Kings and Counsellors of the Earth, or Princes that [previously] **had** possessed gold." And then I would have been at rest "like a secret miscarriage" or abortion - "like infants which never saw the light. There, the wicked cease from troubling [others] - and there, the weary are at rest."
119. Starting in 3:1-3 and 3:11-12, the suffering Job traces his own early existence from conception through fetushood and birth to his being suckled. Bitterly, he thus bewails: "Cursed [be]...the night in which it was said: 'A male child has been **conceived**'.... Why didn't I die **in** the womb? Why didn't I give up the ghost [or yield my spirit to death] when I **came out** of the womb? Why did the knees [of my father] **receive** me? Or why did the breasts [of my mother], that I should **suck**?"

## Delitzsch on Job's conscious prenatal personality

49. Job 3:3a, *yoom ·iwwaaled boo*.

50. *ha-lay'laah...horaah gaaver*. Here, *horaah* is derived from *haaraah*, "to get hot" (with passion) and consequently at least sometimes thereafter "to get hot" (in pregnancy) as a result of "getting hot" (with passion). See too n. 83.

51. Bickell and Duhm: "It was the night of conception which properly gave Job being." Cited in Gentry's *op cit.*, p. 144.

52. Delitzsch: *op. cit. (Job)*, I pp. 77f: "The night alone was witness of this beginning of the development of a man-child, and made report of it to the High One."

53. S.R. Driver : *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* (in S.R. Driver, A. Plummer, & C.A. Briggs: *The International Critical Commentary*, rep. 1977, p. 31): "The night is personified, and so able to bear witness to what had happened in it. The poet...endows it with the faculty of knowing...the sex of the child at the moment of conception."

54. Job 3:11-17, *Laammaah lo mee-rechem ·aamuuth? ... Yaashanthiy ·oz yaanuuach liy 'im-m<sup>e</sup>laakiym...oo 'im-saariym zaahaav laachem...oo k<sup>e</sup>neefel taamuun...k<sup>e</sup>o<sup>e</sup>liym lo-raa uu ·oor*. Here *mee-* (in the phrase *mee-rechem*) is the temporal 'mem of condition' and needs to be translated **not** "from" but "**in** the womb." Thus too the 270 B.C. Greek Septuagint's *en koilias* (and **not** *apo tees koilias*). In v. 16 the Hebrew *neefel* (translated 'secret miscarriage') is rendered *ektrooma* in the B.C. 270 Greek Septuagint (*cf.* too I Cor. 15:8), and *abortivum* in the Latin Vulgate.

120. As regards Job's above queries, Rev. Professor Dr. Delitzsch rightly discerns:<sup>55</sup> "The four questions, verses 11 *sqq.*, form a climax. He follows the course of his life from its commencement in embryo [verse 11a *cf.* 3b]...to the birth [verse 11b *cf.* 3a], and from the joy of the father who took the newborn child upon his knees [verse 12a]...to the first development of the infant [verse 12b when his mother first suckled him] - and curses this growing life" frustratedly, yet sinfully.
121. Job then sins once again. Querying God's ways, he asks yet another important question about the actions of the Lord. Now Job poses the query:<sup>56</sup> "Why did He [then] give light...and life to those whose souls are bitter [now;] who long for death;<sup>57</sup> [and] who rejoice and are exceedingly glad when they find the grave?"<sup>58</sup>
122. Delitzsch states:<sup>59</sup> "The whole strophe contains strong reason for his cursing the night of his conception." That night, complains Job, "should rather have closed...the doors of his [mother's] womb...and so have withdrawn from his unborn eyes the sorrow he now experiences." Job thus "follows the course of his life from its commencement in embryo." The phrase 'Why did I not die **in** the womb?' - is "taken from the thought of the **first** period of his conception....."
123. "Millionaires, abortions (*cf.* Ecclesiastes 6:3-5), and the stillborn...are all removed from the sufferings of this life - in their quiet of the grave.... There, *i.e.* in the grave, all enjoy the rest they could not find here [their earthly life]" - *viz.* "perfect freedom from care." Even **before** the death of fetuses and others - "their longing for the grave...is placed before the eye...accompanied by rejoicing."
124. Immediately after the sad event of their deaths, those who go to glory thus and then, give a "cry and gesture of joy."<sup>60</sup> Such who then cry out for joy, include also those aborted and miscarried - those whom Professor Dr. Delitzsch calls: "abortions...and the stillborn." This then indicates that the latter too had been - and ever remain - human **persons**.

### Delitzsch on Job's prenatal personality (continued)

125. Still speaking of his own prenatal condition the adult believer Job says<sup>61</sup> to his Creator: "Your hands have made me and fashioned me."<sup>62</sup> For "You moulded me like clay."<sup>63</sup>
126. Job then goes on to refer to his yet-earlier condition, when he had been first a 'milky' zygote; then a 'cheese-like' embryo; and next a skeletal fetus.<sup>64</sup> In respect of his prenatal condition, the adult Job now tells the Lord: "Did You not pour me out like milk, and curdle me like cheese?<sup>65</sup> You clothed me with skin and flesh, and strengthened me with bones and sinews.<sup>66</sup> You granted me life and favour.<sup>67</sup>

55. Delitzsch: *op. cit.* (*Job*), I p. 80.

56. Job 3:20, *Laammaah yith-theen l'aameel oor...w<sup>e</sup>chayyiyim l'maareey naafesh?*

57. Job 3:21, *ha-m<sup>e</sup>chabbiym laam-maaweth.*

58. Job 3:21, *hash<sup>e</sup>meechiym e:leey-giy<sup>l</sup> yaashiyshuu kiy yimts<sup>e</sup>uu qaaver.*

59. *Op. cit.*, pp. 79-81.

60. *Ib.* on Job 3:20-22.

61. Job 10:8-19.

62. Job 10:8, *'its<sup>e</sup>buuniy way-yal'asuuniy.*

63. Job 10:9, *w<sup>e</sup>el-'aapaar th<sup>e</sup>shiybeeniy.*

64. *Cf.* Gentry's *op. cit.* p. 131 n. 52

65. Job 10:10, *Ha-lo ke'chaalaav thath-thiykeeniy w<sup>e</sup>kag<sup>e</sup>vinnaah thaq<sup>e</sup>piyeeniy?*

66. Job 10:11, *bosar thal<sup>e</sup>biysheeniy uu-va'atsaamooth w<sup>e</sup>giydiym th<sup>e</sup>sook<sup>e</sup>keeniy.*

67. Job 10:12a, *chayyiyim wa-chesed 'aasuythaa 'immaadiy.*



And Your providential care preserved my spirit."<sup>68</sup>

127. Complained Job: "Why then did You bring me forth from the womb?<sup>69</sup> Would that I had died [then], so that no eye would have seen me!<sup>70</sup> Then I would have...flowed forth from the womb to the grave."<sup>71</sup>
128. Delitzsch's comment on this passage is very illuminating.<sup>72</sup> First, he states the passage is dealing with "the development of the embryo." There, "a creative act similar to the creation of Adam is repeated at the origin of each individual." And there, "the primal origin of man from the moist earth (Job 33:6 and Psalm 139:15) is repeated in the womb."
129. Second, "the *sperma* is likened to milk"; and "the embryo which is formed from the *sperma* is likened to...cheese curd." For "the embryo - forming itself from the *sperma* - is like milk which is curdled."
130. Third, the adult Prophet "Job looks back to the beginning of his life." For the passage "describes the development of the embryo - to the fullgrown infant."
131. Fourth, if Job had indeed died before he was born, then (as he himself said), "I should have been...as one who had **scarcely** entered upon **existence** - and that, only of the **earliest** (as at conception)." Yet even such an existence, though '**early**' and very soon stunted, is indeed a **human** existence - which, in the **hereafter**,<sup>73</sup> continues **growing for ever**."
132. Last, Job here wishes he had "been carried...from the womb (without seeing the light as one born alive) to the grave." For thus, he would have achieved "alleviation of his sufferings." See paragraphs 504f.

### Delitzsch on Job's prenatal personality (concluded)

133. The adult Job also made further important statements about his own prenatal condition. "The Spirit of God has made me,"<sup>74</sup> he declared, "and the Breath of the Almighty has given me life."<sup>75</sup> "I too have been formed out of the clay."<sup>76</sup> "If God sets His heart upon man - if He gathers His Spirit and His Breath back to Himself - all flesh shall perish together, and man shall again turn back into dust."<sup>77</sup>
134. Here, Professor Delitzsch comments:<sup>78</sup> "The spirit of man...is an inspiration directly coming forth from

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<sup>68.</sup> Job 10:12b, *uu-pequdaathkaa shaamraah ruuchiy.*

<sup>69.</sup> Job 10:18a, *W<sup>e</sup>laammaah mee-rechem hootse thaaniy?*

<sup>70.</sup> Job 10:18b, *Egva' w<sup>e</sup>'ayin lo-thir-eeniy.*

<sup>71.</sup> Job 10:19, *mib-biten laq-qeber uubaal.*

<sup>72.</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 166-72.

<sup>73.</sup> Gentry (*op. cit.* pp. 145f) notes Job lamented he had not died prenatally. If he had, he would have gone to the realm of the dead in peace. This is elaborated on in Job 3:12-19. *Sheol* is not non-existent, but is a place for departed human beings continuing in time and quite consciously. In the context of Job 3:13-19, the phrase "I would not have been" in verse 16 can only mean: "I would no longer have continued in this present life." Thus: "I would not have been [here]" means "I would no longer have kept on being here." Those in *Sheol* "are not" with reference to this **present** life - but they certainly "are" with reference to the **next** life.

<sup>74.</sup> Job 33:4a, *Ruuchee-Eel 'aasaathni.*

<sup>75.</sup> Job 33:4b, *W<sup>e</sup>nishmath-Shadday th<sup>e</sup>chayyeeny.*

<sup>76.</sup> Job 33:6b, *heen-aaniy k<sup>e</sup>piychaa laa-eel mee-chomer qoratsthy.*

<sup>77.</sup> Job 34:14f, *im-yaasjym-eelaayv libboo Ruuchoo w<sup>e</sup>nishmaathoo-eelaayv ye e:soof yigva' kaal-bosar yaachad w<sup>e</sup>aadaam 'al- 'aafaar yaashuuv.*

<sup>78.</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 218f & 251f.

God the Personal Being - transferred into the bodily frame, and therefore forming a [human] person...endowed with life from the inbreathed Breath of the Almighty." Man's body, on the other hand, is "nipped from the clay, *i.e.* taken from the earth (as when the potter nips off a piece of his clay)."

135. Delitzsch further states it is only "by God's Spirit and Breath [that] the animal world as well as the world of men...has its life.... If He should...draw in...to Himself His Inspiration and Breath (Which emanated from Him or was effected by Him), all flesh would sink together, *i.e.* die off at once.... And man would return...to dust."

### The children of Ruth from their conception onward

136. When Boaz married Ruth, all the people and some elders exclaimed to him in respect of his wife: "May your house be like the house of Pharez whom Tamar bore for Judah" - see paragraph 108 and at note 42 above - "from the seed which the Lord shall give you, from this young woman!" So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife.... After he went in unto her [or completed *coitus* with her], the Lord gave her conception."<sup>79</sup>
137. Explains Dr. van Ronkel:<sup>80</sup> "The Lord usually works through the means provided. And He certainly does so as regards the continuing unfolding of the line of natural life. He works through the omnipresent power of His providence - with which He maintains and keeps in existence that which He created once and for all.... So the Bethlehemites expressed the wish that Ruth may, in God's hand, be the means of giving Boaz children. Indeed, this is why they added to their expressed wish the explicit words: 'from **this** young woman!'"

### The children of Hannah from their conception onward

138. Let us next observe the clearly-described circumstances of the coming into being of Samuel, and of and his younger brothers and sisters. "Elkanah had sexual intercourse with Hannah his wife. And the Lord remembered her" - by rendering her pregnant. "Therefore it came to pass that, after Hannah had conceived, the time came about for her to give birth. She bore a son, and called his name Samuel." Later, "the Lord visited Hannah [again], so that she conceived and bare three sons and two daughters."<sup>81</sup>
139. Keil and Delitzsch comment Elkanah slept with or "knew his wife Hannah; and Jehovah remembered her, *i.e.*, heard her prayer [that she might become pregnant]. 'In the revolution of the days' - *i.e.* of the period of her conception and pregnancy - Hannah conceived and bare a son which she called Samuel."<sup>82</sup> So all her children existed even from conception!

### David's personality from conception onward in Psalm 51

140. Hear too David, in Psalm 51. There, he declares, "my mother did conceive me in sin";<sup>83</sup> and "I was shapen in iniquity."<sup>84</sup> First, note here that the word "conceive" - is derived from a verbal root with the meaning of 'to get hot' (with passion). Hence, it also means 'to get pregnant' (as a result of that

<sup>79</sup>. Ruth 4:12f.

<sup>80</sup>. G. van Ronkel: *The Book of Ruth*, Amsterdam: Hoeveker & Son, n.d., pp. 374f.

<sup>81</sup>. I Sam. 1:11,19,24 & 2:21.

<sup>82</sup>. *Op. cit.* (*The Books of Samuel*), p. 25.

<sup>83</sup>. Ps. 51:5(7)b, *ye:chemathiy* - from *yacheem* ("to get hot"; hence, "to get pregnant").

<sup>84</sup>. Ps. 51:5(7)a, *choolaalthiy* - from *chuul* ("to turn"; "to twist"; "to bear").

passion).

141. Second, it should be noted that the word "shapen" here refers to the post-conceptual 'turning' of the zygote *via* the embryo into the fetus. For the word describes how the embryo 'gets twisted' into the shape of an unborn baby within his or her mother's womb.<sup>85</sup>
142. Third, David here traces his sin back to the very beginning of his life. That was when his mother "did conceive" him.
143. Fourth, as Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin comments:<sup>86</sup> "We are cherished in sin from the first moment that we are in the womb. David, then, is here brought...to cast a retrospective glance upon his whole past life.... David...confesses that he was formed in sin, and that he was a transgressor before he saw the light of this World.... David was far from seeking to invent an apology for **his** sin.... He traced it back to the period of his conception." **He** sinned, back then. Thus, he **existed**, already - even **then!**
144. In his great *Commentary on the Psalms*, Rev. Professor Dr. Delitzsch remarks<sup>87</sup> on this passage (at Psalm 51:5) that even the pious "David here confesses his hereditary sin.... The declaration moves backwards from his birth, to his conception. It consequently penetrates even to the most remote point of life's beginning.... His parents were sinful human beings.... This sinful state (or '*habitus*') operated upon his birth and even at his conception - and from that point had passed over to him.... Man from his first beginning onwards...is tainted with sin."

Yet David, "being born and conceived in sin, was commended to God's mercy." Indeed, God's **mercy** was given to **David** - at his **conception!** Psalm 22:9f.

### David's prenatal personality according to Psalm 139

145. In his fine work *Biblical Psychology*, Rev. Professor Delitzsch rightly observes<sup>88</sup> that "whenever the Holy Scripture speaks of the act of begetting and conception, *e.g.* Psalm 51:5, it speaks of it as of a fact to which is referred the beginning of the being...of the whole man.... The embryo...is, as much as possible, thrown into the form of an egg....
146. "A more significant word for the embryo could hardly be found than *golem* [alias 'still-undeveloped substance' in Psalm 139:16] - from '*gaalam*' (to roll together).... In the *Talmud*," explains Delitzsch, "*golem* implies the unformed man (especially the still-unformed 'vessel'). The development of the embryo, to the wisdom of the Israelite, stands for one of the profoundest mysteries. 'As you do not know what the direction of the wind is'...[so Ecclesiastes 11:5], 'nor how the bones grow [with]in the womb of her that is [pregnant] with child' - as you do not know how that child grows into a man - so too you cannot know the works of God Who makes all things."
147. Hence David praised the Lord: "You covered me in my mother's womb."<sup>89</sup> "I have been made awesomely and wonderfully."<sup>90</sup> Then, David went on: "My very substance<sup>91</sup> was not hidden from You -

<sup>85.</sup> *Op. cit.*, commenting on Ps. 51:5f.

<sup>86.</sup> In Keil & Delitzsch: *op. cit.* at Ps. 51:7f.

<sup>87.</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 247f.

<sup>88.</sup> *th<sup>e</sup>sukeeniy b<sup>e</sup>veten ·immij.*

<sup>89.</sup> *nooraa ooth nibleethiy.*

<sup>90.</sup> *'ots<sup>e</sup>miy*

<sup>91.</sup> *·asher-·ushsheeythiy vas-seether.*

while I was being made in seclusion<sup>92</sup> and while I was being woven artistically in the depths of my mother [earth].<sup>93</sup> Your eyes saw my still-undeveloped substance [or embryo].<sup>94</sup> All of my bodyparts which were even then only starting to be shaped, when not one of them yet existed - had previously already been recorded in Your book."<sup>95</sup> Psalm 139.

### Calvin on David's prenatal personality in Psalm 139

148. Here, one should note Calvin's helpful comments:<sup>96</sup> "Nothing is hid[den] from God.... He fashioned us in our mother's womb.... The embryo, when first conceived in the womb, has no form.... David speaks of God's having known him when he was yet a shapeless mass.... For *to embruon* is the name given to the foetus - from the time of conception to birth inclusive." David "was known to God before he had grown to certain definite shape...."
149. "The different parts of the human body," continues Calvin, "are formed in a succession of time. For in the first germ - there is no arrangement of parts, or proportion of members. But it is developed, and takes its peculiar form progressively.... The members were formed in the course of days, or gradually. None of them had existed, no order or distinctness of parts having been there at first but a formless substance. And thus, our admiration is directed to the providence of God - in gradually giving shape and beauty to a confused mass."

### Delitzsch on David's prenatal personality in Psalm 139

150. Also Professor Delitzsch's comments on the above passage are very illuminating. Explains Delitzsch:<sup>97</sup> "The fact that man is manifest to God even to the very bottom of his nature, and in every place, is now confirmed from the origin of man. The development of the child in the womb was looked upon by the Israelitish *chokma* as one of the greatest mysteries. Ecclesiastes 11:5...."
151. Here [in Psalm 139] the poet praises this coming into being as a marvellous work of the omniscient and omnipresent omnipotence of God." The unborn human embryo is "worked in different colours, or also embroidered." This gives us "a retrospective conception of...the undeveloped beginning - and of the forming of the members and of the organism in general."
152. In the *Talmud*, continues Delitzsch, "the egg of a bird or of a reptile is called *m<sup>e</sup>ruqqemeth* - when the outlines of the developed embryo are visible in it. And likewise the mole (*mola*) - when traces of

<sup>92</sup> *duqqamthiy b<sup>e</sup>thachthiyyooth aarets*. See Gentry's *op. cit.*, p. 134 n. 49.

<sup>93</sup> Massoretic Hebrew: *golem*. Here in its inflected form of *golem-iy* [meaning 'my embryo'], this word *golem* is not used elsewhere in Holy Scripture - though it is in the *Talmud*, see in our paragraph 146 above. *Golem* means: "my still- undeveloped substance." The B.C. 270 Greek Septuagint translates it: *akatergaston mou* - meaning: "my not-yet- completed manufacture." In Classical Greek, the expression *katergazesthai meli* means: "to manufacture honey." Compare the Latin Vulgate's *imperfectum meum*, meaning: "my unfinishedness." Throughout, the word "my" (Hebrew *-iy* and Greek *mou* and Latin *meum*) is very significant here. For it indicates the prenatal and postnatal **continuity** of human personality. See too Gentry's *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>94</sup> *w<sup>e</sup>'al-sif<sup>e</sup>kaa kullaam yik-kaatheevuu yaamiym yuttsaaruu w<sup>e</sup>lo echaad baahem*.

<sup>95</sup> *Op. cit.* (on Ps. 139:15f).

<sup>96</sup> *Commentary* on Ps. 139:13-18. Although what David here writes is said about his condition as a *fetus*, his statements are true (*mutatis mutandis*) also of his pre-fetal stage even as an unnidated *conceptus*. For the fetal David is still the identical person he was as his very conception. Hence his other statement: "In sin did my mother conceive **me**." Ps. 51:5.

<sup>97</sup> Isa. 7:14.

human organization can be discerned in it." Now "the mother's womb [or]...the place where the foetus is formed, is here called 'a threefold darkness.'"

153. Furthermore, "the 'lowest parts of the earth'" here means "the secret laboratory of the earthly origin [of man] - with the same retrospective reference to the first formation of the human body out of the dust of the earth.... The mode of Adam's creation is repeated in the formation of every man.... The earth was the mother's womb of Adam; and the mother's womb out of which the child of Adam comes forth is the earth out of which it is taken."
154. Next, concludes Delitzsch, "the embryo - folded up in the shape of an egg - is here called *golem* [from *gaalam* = to roll or wrap together (compare *glomus* = a ball)]. In the *Talmud*, this is said of any kind of unshapen mass.... [And] among the 'days' which were preformed in the idea of God...there was also one [day] - says the poet - for the embryonic beginning of my life." Cf. Job 3:3 with paragraphs 85 & 144 and 504-07.

### Calvin on "the virgin shall conceive" in Isaiah 7:14

155. Let us heed what Calvin calls 'the Gospel according to Isaiah.' "Look," he predicted,<sup>98</sup> "the young woman [or virgin]<sup>99</sup> shall conceive<sup>100</sup> and bear a son<sup>101</sup> and call His name 'Immanuel!'" It is significant that Matthew<sup>102</sup> quotes this Isaian text at the very time of its deepest and ultimate fulfilment. Matthew makes it very clear that to "conceive"<sup>103</sup> means "to be with child"<sup>104</sup> - alias "to be pregnant." (On the ultimate fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14, in its bearing on human life before birth, see especially paragraphs 178f and 2504-06.)
156. Here, Calvin correctly comments:<sup>105</sup> "There can be no doubt that the Prophet [Isaiah (7:14 cf. 9:6f)] was referring to Christ.... 'Look, a virgin shall conceive'.... It is, therefore, plain enough that Isaiah speaks of 'a virgin' who should conceive not by the ordinary course of nature but by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit. And this is the mystery which Paul extols in lofty terms [First Timothy 3:16] - that 'God was manifested in the flesh.'"
157. Indeed, also Isaiah himself has at least one other similar prediction. There, he apparently once again pre-eminently foreshadows the conception and birth of Jesus. Personifying the latter, Isaiah has the Messiah Himself predict: "The Lord shall call Me from the womb, from the inner parts of my mother...;

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<sup>98.</sup> Hebrew *haa-'almaah*. This means 'the young woman' (and usually one who is also a virgin). The B.C. 270 Greek Septuagint translation of the Alexandrine Jews here has *hee parthenos* (which can only mean 'the virgin'). In the New Testament, quoting Isa. 7:14, Matthew 1:23 infallibly renders the Hebrew word as *parthenos*. In Isa. 7:14 itself, the word *'almaah* seems to refer to a non-virginborn son then soon to be born and to be called 'Immanuel' **as well as** to our best Immanuel: Jesus of Nazareth (the **virginborn** son of Mary) - cf. too Isa. 7:3 & 8:1-8. Hence Isaiah's use at 7:14 of the word *'almaah*, rather than the word *b<sup>e</sup>thulaah* (which latter, like the Greek word *parthenos*, can only mean 'virgin'). See F.N. Lee: *The Virgin of Isaiah 7:14*, in *Anticom Newsletter* (Pretoria: D.R.C. Publishers, 1971). See too Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* (chs. 43 & 67 & 71 & 84). See too J.G. Machen's definitive 1930 book *The Virgin Birth of Christ*, Grand Rapids: Baker, rep. 1965, pp. 288f. See too paragraphs 178f and 2004-06.

<sup>99.</sup> Heb. *haaraah*. Septuagint *hexei*, and Vulgate *concipiet*.

<sup>100.</sup> Heb. *w<sup>e</sup>yoledeth ben*, LXX *texetai huion*.

<sup>101.</sup> Matt. 1:23.

<sup>102.</sup> *hexei* (= 3rd pers. sing. fut. tense, from *echein* ("to be with child").

<sup>103.</sup> Matt. 1:18.

<sup>104.</sup> *Op. cit.* (on Isa. 7:14).

<sup>105.</sup> Jer. 1:5.

the Lord Who shall form Me as His servant from the womb. Isaiah 49:1-5 (*cf.* too 52:13 to 53:12).

### Calvin and Habel on Jeremiah's prenatal sanctification

158. We should also note how God assured the adult Jeremiah. Thus, the Lord reminded him:<sup>106</sup> "Before I formed you in the womb,<sup>107</sup> I knew you.... Before you came forth from the womb, I sanctified you."<sup>108</sup>
159. Comments Rev. Professor Dr. Calvin:<sup>109</sup> "God declares that He 'knew' Jeremiah before He 'formed' him 'in the womb.' This is not said specially of the Prophet, as though other men are unknown to God.... The second part...says - 'Before you came forth from the womb, I sanctified you'.... It is nothing at all strange - that God declares that He had 'sanctified' Jeremiah." This is "as though He had said: 'I formed you as a human being - in the womb!'"
160. Lutheran Concordia Seminary's Old Testament Professor, Rev. Dr. Norman Habel (St. Louis U.S.A.) also makes an important comment on this verse. States Habel:<sup>110</sup> "Jeremiah was molded as though God the Creator were a potter at work in his mother's womb. There and then, God personally selected him and reserved him for His own use."
161. The verb "formed" in Jeremiah 1 "verse 5," continues Habel, "calls for comment. 'Form' is used in Genesis 2:7 to describe God molding man, as a potter would a vessel [*cf.* Jeremiah 18:1-4]. And in Isaiah 49:1, a special call 'from the womb' is affirmed."

### Conception and miscarriage in Hosea 9:1 to 10:1

162. Let us now observe God rebuking His 'whoring' people. Through the prophet Hosea, He first of all chastises the whole nation of Israel. "Do not rejoice, O im - which name, in Genesis 41:52, had implied 'Fruitfulness.' Again through Hosea, He assures them that "Ephraim shall return to Egypt.... Therefore, God will remember their iniquity; He will visit their sins.... As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird - from childbearing<sup>111</sup>; yes, from the womb; and even from conception!<sup>112</sup> Though they raise their children,<sup>113</sup> yet will I bereave them... Ephraim is to bring forth<sup>114</sup> his children - to the murderer!"
164. The B.C. 270 Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate here both have: "Ephraim is to lead out their children to be slain."<sup>115</sup> With this, we may freely compare intentional abortion today.
165. Hosea then continues: "O Lord, give them - what should You give them? - give them a miscarrying womb" (alias 'a womb that casts out the fetus')!<sup>116</sup> "Their root has been dried up,<sup>117</sup> so that they shall

<sup>106.</sup> *b<sup>e</sup>terem<sup>e</sup> ts-tsaavr<sup>e</sup>kaa va-beten.*

<sup>107.</sup> *uu-b<sup>e</sup>terem theetsee mee-rechem hiqdashthiycha.*

<sup>108.</sup> *Op. cit.*, on Jer. 1:5.

<sup>109.</sup> N. Habel: *Jeremiah and Lamentations*, St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1968, p. 40.

<sup>110.</sup> Hos. 9:1 to 10:1.

<sup>111.</sup> Hos. 9:11a, Massoretic Hebrew: *milleedaah.*

<sup>112.</sup> Hos. 9:11b, Massoretic Hebrew: *uu-mib-beten uu-mee-heeraayoon.*

<sup>113.</sup> Hos. 9:12a, Massoretic Hebrew: *kiy-im y<sup>e</sup>gadooluu eth-b<sup>e</sup>neeyhem.*

<sup>114.</sup> Hos. 9:13a, Massoretic Hebrew: *h<sup>e</sup>hootsiy...baanaayv.*

<sup>115.</sup> Hos. 9:13b, Massoretic Hebrew: *el hooreeg.* The B.C. 270 Greek Septuagint has: *Ephraim tou exagagein eis apokenteesin ta tekna autou.* The Latin Vulgate renders it: *Ephraim educet ad interfectorem filios suos.*

<sup>116.</sup> Hos. 9:14b, Massoretic Hebrew: *rechem mashkiyl.*

<sup>117.</sup> Hos. 9:16b, Massoretic Hebrew: *shaarshaam yaabeesh.*

develop no fruit.<sup>118</sup> Yes, though they may start to have children<sup>119</sup> - I will slay<sup>120</sup> even the beloved fruit [or 'the desires'] of their womb."<sup>121</sup> For "Israel is an empty vine"<sup>122</sup> - 'a vine which keeps on emptying the fruit it bears.'

### The implications of Hosea 9:1 to 10:1 for deliberate abortion

166. What a perfect description of modern abortion especially the latter phrase is! 'Israel is a vine which keeps on emptying the fruit it bears.' Similarly, modern aborting mothers keep on emptying the womb - as soon as it starts to bear fruit.
167. Here in Hosea 9:1f, note first: Hosea seems to mean that the Ephraimites "slew their own children in the service of idols." Thus the *Targum* or the ancient Israelitic translation and comment thereon, and also Rabbi Jarchi.
168. Note second: Ephraim's children were perishing in a threefold gradation. (1) They were perishing "from childbearing" - or from birth onward. (2) They were perishing "from the womb" - or from fetushood onward. (3) They were perishing "even from conception" - or from zygotehood onward.
169. Note third. Those slain "in the womb" - were "abortive." Thus the great Baptist commentator, Rev. Dr. John Gill.
170. Note fourth. "Here judgment blasts the very **germs** [alias the '**embryos**'] of the population." Thus Adam Clarke.
171. And note fifth (and last) that "the unchaste worship of Baal" had as its "natural punishment...the decrease of the population" through "the **unfruitfulness** of marriages." Thus Lange.
172. Here, Calvin correctly comments:<sup>123</sup> "Israel committed fornication like an unchaste and perfidious woman." For Hosea "says that they were like harlots...so enticed by gain that they are not ashamed of their lewdness.... The Prophet speaks of offspring [of such immoral 'harlots' even]...'from the birth, and the womb, and the conception'.... They shall be suffocated - as in the very womb.... What can be more miserable than...that children not yet born should perish with[in] their mothers?"
173. Note that the offspring are alive as human beings - even from conception onward. Indeed, they continue to remain the same persons - if they live long enough from their zygotehood and throughout their embryohood and fetushood to their birth and their subsequent childhood *etc.* So, the abortive slaying of a *conceptus* in the womb is the killing of a tiny human being.

### The implications of Zechariah 12:1 for prenatal personality

174. Hear too the testimony of the Prophet Zechariah the son of Iddo, in a vital but often overlooked passage. "The Lord," he declares, "stretches forth the Heavens and lays down the foundation of the

<sup>118.</sup> Hos. 9:16c, Massoretic Hebrew: *baly-ya'aṣuun [b'eliy (bal) ya'aṣuun] p'riy.*

<sup>119.</sup> Hos. 9:16d, *gam kiy yeeleeduun.*

<sup>120.</sup> Hos. 9:16e, *w'heemathiy.*

<sup>121.</sup> Hos. 9:16f, *macha:madeey bitnam*

<sup>122.</sup> Hos. 10:1a, *gefen booqeeq Yiṣraa eel.*

<sup>123.</sup> *Op. cit.*, on Hos. 9:11-16f.

Earth - and forms the spirit of man within him." <sup>124</sup>

175. Note first: God "**forms**" or shapes man's spirit. <sup>125</sup> Note second: God thus forms "**the spirit of man**." <sup>126</sup> Note third: God forms that spirit "**within**" man<sup>127</sup> (Hebrew: 'in his inward parts'). <sup>128</sup>
176. Note last, and above all, that the text clearly implies God **begins** to form man's **spirit** not before nor after but **at the very moment** He **begins** to form the human **body**. This takes place **at conception** itself - for God forms man's spirit "within" him. Very significantly, the B.C. 270 Greek Septuagint translation here has "[with]in him"<sup>129</sup> - and the Latin Vulgate "moulding [with]in him." <sup>130</sup>

### Matthew's testimony about the prenatal personality of Jesus

177. Now let us go on to the New(er) Testament, and investigate Matthew's account of Christ's own truly-human conception. <sup>131</sup> Matthew refers to "Mary, from whom Jesus was conceived." <sup>132</sup> Now this Mary, states Matthew, was found to be pregnant by the Holy Ghost." <sup>133</sup>
178. Then the angel of the Lord appeared to Mary's fiance' in a dream, saying: "Joseph, you son of David - do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife! For that child Who has been conceived in her<sup>134</sup> - is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>135</sup> And she shall bring forth a son and you shall call His name 'Jesus.'"<sup>136</sup> For, as the prophet Isaiah (7:14) previously predicted: "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant<sup>137</sup> - and shall bring forth a son." <sup>138</sup>
179. "Then Joseph...did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. And he took Mary as his wife. But he did not have sexual intercourse with her<sup>139</sup> - until after she had brought forth her [firstborn]." <sup>140</sup>
180. Here, one should carefully note the following points. First: although the Son of God had existed from all eternity past (as regards His divinity), He now became 'the Son of man' (as regards His humanity) only when He was "conceived" within the virgin Mary - some nine months before He was brought forth by her at His birth.
181. Note second: Jesus the Son of man was already a "child" - even at His conception. He was not just a piece of flesh but a fullyhuman "child" (capable of yet further growth) - ever since His incarnation nine

124. Zech. 12:1. 125. Heb., *weyootseer*; Sept., *plassoon*.

125. Heb., *weyootseer*; Sept., *plassoon*.

126. Heb., *ruuch-aadaam*; Sept., *pneuma anthropou*; Vulg., *spiritum hominis*.

127. Heb., *b<sup>e</sup>qirboo*.

128. From the verb *qaarab*, "to draw near."

129. *en autoo<sub>i</sub>*.

130. *in eo fingens*.

131. Matt. 1:16-23.

132. *looseph ton andra Marias ex hees egenneethee leesous*.

133. *heurethee en gastri echousa ek Pneumatos Hagiou*.

134. *to gar en autee<sub>i</sub> genneethen*.

135. *ek Pneumatos estin Hagiou*.

136. *texetai de huion, kal kaleseis to onoma Autou leesoun*

137. *hee parthenos en gastri hexei*.

138. *kai texetai huion*.

139. *ouk eginoosken auteen*.

140. *heos hou eteken huion ton proototokon*. Thus C, D, *Koinee*, and many Latin mss.



months before His birth.

182. Note third: the son Whom Mary would bring forth at His later birth, was already there at and after His conception and long before His birth. His human personhood or personality - though indeed subject to growth and enrichment - was already there. Indeed, it was present there from the very second of His conception onward.
183. Note fourth: the ongoing pregnancy of Mary and the prenatal growth of Jesus the Son of man - as distinct from His miraculous conception - was quite normal. So much was this the case, that Joseph had to be reminded that Mary had not been unfaithful to him.

### Luke's account of the personality of Jesus at His conception

184. The "beloved Physician" Dr. Luke's account<sup>141</sup> of the virgin Mary's conception of Jesus, and of her resulting pregnancy, gives further important gynecological details. "The angel Gabriel was sent from God...to a virgin."<sup>142</sup> To her, "the angel said: 'Greetings! You have been graced!<sup>143</sup> The Lord is with you! You have been blessed among women! ... Don't be afraid, for you have found favour with God!<sup>144</sup> Now look, [in just a few moments] you **shall** conceive in your womb.<sup>145</sup> And you shall [in nine months give birth to or] bring forth a son.'"<sup>146</sup>
185. "Then Mary said to the angel: 'How shall this happen, seeing that I do not engage in sexual intercourse with any man?'<sup>147</sup> Then the angel answered, saying to her - 'The Holy Spirit **shall** come upon you<sup>148</sup> and the power of the Allhighest **shall** overshadow you.'"<sup>149</sup>
186. These very words from God the Father *via* His angel started the process of the conception of the Son of man within Mary. "Therefore" - continued the angel - "the Holy One **Who is now being generated**" within and '**from** you' (so many manuscripts) "shall be called "the Son of God."<sup>150</sup>
187. God's angel then continued to inform Mary: "Look, your cousin Elisabeth **has** herself **also** conceived a son."<sup>151</sup> Then Mary said: "Let this happen to me, just as you have said!"<sup>152</sup>
188. The points concerning the conception of Jesus already revealed in Matthew,<sup>153</sup> are here augmented also by Luke. We should in addition here carefully note also the following additional points.

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141. Luke 1:26-38.

142. Luke 1:27, *pros parthenon*

143. Luke 1:28, *kecharitoomenee*.

144. Luke 1:28c-30a, *eulogeemenee su en gunaixin* (thus C, Koinee, D, etc.)...*heures gar charin para tou Theou*.

145. *epei andra ou ginooskoo*.

146. *sulleempsee, en gastrí*.

147. *kai texee, huion*.

148. *Pneuma Hagion epeleusetai epi se*.

149. *episkiasei soi*.

150. See too: Luke 1:13; 23:29; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; *etc. dio kai to gennoomenon Hagion [ek soi* (C, Theta, Lat., *etc.*), *kleetheesetai 'Huios Theou*. 'Here, note that the word *gennoomenon* is the singular neuter **present** passive participle of *gennaoo*. This verb often means to "conceive" (rather than 'to give birth to'). See its usage in Matt. 1:20, where the passive aorist participle *genneethen* indicates the **completedness** of conception

151. *kai autee suneileephen huion*.

152. *genoito moi*.

153. See at paras. 177-83f.

189. Note first: the instantaneous nature of Mary's conception. To her, the angel said: "You **shall** conceive." A moment later, the angel added: "The Holy One is **now** being conceived within you and from you."
190. Note second: Mary's act of conceiving and her resulting pregnancy - save for its initiation directly by the Holy Spirit Himself - was **just like** her cousin Elisabeth's. And the latter herself, like any other woman, conceived instantaneously.
191. Note third: Elisabeth had herself conceived a son (with his own **life** and his own **personality** and his own **maleness**) just six months earlier. No wonder, then, that Mary immediately replied to the angel: "Let this happen to me, just as you have said!"
192. That is to say: "May I too indeed carry a son, and later bring Him forth after carrying that son within me throughout my own just-begun pregnancy!" This proves that Jesus - the perfect human being - had a distinct personality and masculinity even from His very conception onward.

### Luke on John's prenatal recognition of the just-conceived Jesus

193. Hear too Luke's subsequent account<sup>154</sup> of the announcement alias the annunciation (to her cousin the six-months-pregnant Elisabeth) - as regards Mary's own pregnancy just after it began. "Mary rose up at that time,<sup>155</sup> and hastily went...and greeted Elisabeth.<sup>156</sup> And as soon as Elisabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby [of Elisabeth]<sup>157</sup> jumped up in her womb.<sup>158</sup>
194. "Then Elisabeth...said [to Mary]: 'you have been blessed among women!<sup>159</sup> And the Fruit of your womb has also been blessed!<sup>160</sup> For who am I, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?<sup>161</sup> For look - as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting...the baby jumped up for joy in my womb!'"<sup>162</sup>
195. Here, a number of rather important points should be marked well. Note first: it was at the very moment Mary conceived, that she was "blessed."
196. Note second: this was at that very same moment when also Jesus the Fruit of her womb was "blessed" along with Mary. Because Jesus was even then fully 'blessable' - He is thereby proven to have been right then in existence as the just-conceived **son** of man alias the Fruit of Mary's womb.
197. Note third: Elisabeth called Mary "the mother of my Lord" **just** after Mary had conceived. This again implies that the son of man even then already existed as an acknowledgeable person.
198. Note fourth: the unborn John is already called both a "baby" and a "son." This was so, even three months before he was born.

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<sup>154.</sup> Lk. 1:39-44.

<sup>155.</sup> *anastasa de Mariam en tais heemerai tautais.*

<sup>156.</sup> *eporeuthee...meta spoudees...kai eespasa teen Elisabet.*

<sup>157.</sup> *brephos* (compare II Tim. 3:15).

<sup>158.</sup> *eskirteesen...en tee, koilia, autees.*

<sup>159.</sup> *eulogeemenee su en gunaixin.*

<sup>160.</sup> *kai eulogeemenos ho Karpos tees koilias sou.*

<sup>161.</sup> *hina elthee hee meeteer tou Kuriou mou pros eme.*

<sup>162.</sup> *eskirteesen en agalliasei to brephos en tee, koilia, mou.*

199. Note fifth: the unborn John was even then undeniably a human person. For he right at that very time not only personally recognized the just-conceived Jesus; but he also personally signalled that recognition to his own mother Elisabeth.
200. Note last: the only-just-conceived Jesus was also even then a human **person**. For though still but a zygote or at most an embryo, He was right then already recognizable and worshippable. Indeed, he was precisely then recognized and worshipped - and not just by his adult mother Mary and by her adult cousin Elisabeth, but also even by the unborn John just six months after the latter's own conception and fully three months before John's own birth.

### How normative for us was Christ's unique conception within Mary?

201. It is, of course, quite true that Jesus' prenatal development (even when but a just-conceived zygote) was quite unique. For even before His human conception, He (and He alone) had been (and ever continues to remain) the pre-incarnate and essential Son of God (from all eternity past).<sup>163</sup> Indeed, He alone - as regards His now-assumed humanity - was conceived, miraculously, in a virgin, by the Holy Spirit.<sup>164</sup>
202. Yet Jesus was, just like us, also "made of a woman."<sup>165</sup> He assumed our very own human nature, and was thus made like us in all things (except that He remained - and always will remain) - "without sin."<sup>166</sup>
203. Hence, while announcing that Mary was right then conceiving Jesus, the angel rightly told her: "Look, your cousin Elisabeth has herself also conceived a son."<sup>167</sup> Accordingly, Augustine (the Bishop of Hippo-Regius)<sup>168</sup> and Leo the Great (a Bishop of Rome)<sup>169</sup> both rightly note that the infant Jesus in no way differed from the generality of infants.
204. Augustine himself insists that Christ was in the womb of Mary for fully nine months.<sup>169</sup> John (Bishop of Damascus) states of Christ's incarnation: "At the very instant there was flesh, it was the flesh of the Word of God...animated with a rational and intellectual soul."<sup>170</sup>
205. Also Thomas Aquinas fully recognizes that "we are conceived from the seed of man, but Christ was not." Yet Thomas also understands that "a difference...with reference to the origin of the soul, would bespeak a diversity of nature"<sup>171</sup> between us and Christ - a diversity which does not and could not exist.
206. In fact, Thomas even rightly adds<sup>172</sup> that the postnatal "development of Christ's body (see Luke 2:52) was the effect of the augmentative power in Christ's soul. And since this was of the same species as

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<sup>163.</sup> Gen. 1:1-3; Prov. 8:12-30; John 17:1-5. <sup>164.</sup>

<sup>164.</sup> Mt. 1 & Lk. 1.

<sup>165.</sup> Gal. 4:4-6.

<sup>166.</sup> Heb. 2:16-18 & 4:14-16.

<sup>167.</sup> Lk. 1:36.

<sup>168.</sup> Aug.: *On the Trinity*, ch. 4.

<sup>169.</sup> Leo: *4th Sermon in Epiphany*.

<sup>170.</sup> John Dam.: *On the Orthodox Faith*, 3.

<sup>171.</sup> Thos. Aq.: *Summa Theologiae*, IIIa, Q. 6, art. 4.

<sup>172.</sup> *Ib.*, Q. 33, art. 1, reply to obj. 1.

ours it behooved also His body to develop in the same way as do the bodies of other men, so as to prove the reality of His human nature."<sup>173</sup>

### James slams bloodshed and implies the human soul is given at conception

207. Let us now hear James on the sanctity of human life. Moderator of the First Synod of the Christian Church,<sup>174</sup> he apostolically<sup>175</sup> and very authoritatively<sup>176</sup> influenced the first General Assembly of the New Testament Church<sup>177</sup> to decree<sup>178</sup> that the Gentile converts to Christianity must "abstain...from things strangled and from blood."<sup>179</sup>
208. This is a prohibition against murder, and hearkens back to the Genesis 9:1-12 Noachic provisions against human bloodshedding. During the past, at the present, and throughout the future - it therefore binds both Gentiles and Jews.<sup>180</sup> Even the Judaistic *Talmud* rightly considers it as prohibiting also the abortion of unborn children.
209. However, it is not just the Jewish *Talmud* which, in terms of the universal Noachic Covenant of Genesis 9:1-12 - prohibits abortion by all persons of all nations and in all times.<sup>181</sup> Also the Early Church's Epistle of James enjoins: "you shall not murder!" For, "if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the Law."<sup>182</sup> Indeed, "the body without the spirit - is dead."<sup>183</sup>
210. This is obviously true at the end of our earthly life. Yet this must also surely imply that the body of a human zygote or an embryo would also be dead - if he or she no longer had a human spirit within, to personalize and genderize him or her.
211. Now human zygotes are alive - indeed **at** and certainly right after their conception. Therefore, it is **from conception itself onward** - that human beings already have their enlivening souls or spirits.<sup>184</sup>
212. James belabours the fact that human beings have been conceived alias brought into existence "according to the similitude of God" or in His image.<sup>185</sup> Indeed, James even seems to imply that human zygotes are conceived in sin (and are therefore in existence) **before** they are engrafted into the womb - and long before they are brought forth at birth unto ultimate physical death.<sup>186</sup>

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173. However, see too: *ad* 3, reply to obj. 2.

174. Acts 15:13.

175. Acts 12:17 & 21:18-25 *cf.* Gal. 1:19 & 2:9.

176. Acts 15:28.

177. Acts 15:22-29.

178. Acts 15:27-32 & 16:4f.

179. Acts 15:20,29.

180. Acts 15:20f.

181. *Sanhedrin 56b*. See too *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), arts. on *Abortion, Castration, and Murder*. See too A.M. Hyamson & A.M. Silbermann: *Vallentine's Jewish Encyclopaedia*, London: Shapiro, Vallentine, & Co., 1938, art. *Laws, the Noachian*.

182. Jas. 2:11.

183. Jas. 2:26.

184. See W. Randolph's *God Is Pro Life*, in *Journal of Pastoral Practice*, Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., 1971, p. 11.

185. Jas. 3:9, *tous anthropous tous...gegonotas* (compare the use of *ginomai* and *gennaoo* in Mt. ch. 1).

186. See Jas. 1:15's *sullabousa* or "conceived" - and 1:21's *emphuton* or "implanted or "fixed in" or "sprouted out."

## Paul on the personal nature of human fetushood

213. Hear the Apostle Paul on the essentially **personal nature** of human life - already before birth; even during fetushood; and right at conception itself. The Apostle claims that God had separated him [*viz.* Paul] from his mother's womb. <sup>187</sup> Timothy, he said, had known the Holy Scriptures "from infancy" (which can mean even "from fetushood").<sup>188</sup>
214. Paul also assures Christian spouses married to unbelievers that the children produced by such unions are not "unclean" like unbelievers. For, in spite of being "by nature" children of wrath<sup>189</sup> even from their conception in a state of sin, <sup>190</sup> such covenant children are nevertheless also "holy" even from the same moment of conception itself onward.
215. During such acts of sexual intercourse as result in conception - even an "unbelieving husband" is "sanctified" through his believing wife. Also, an unbelieving wife is "sanctified" through her believing husband. **So**, "the thus-conceived children are **holy**";<sup>191</sup> yes, **are** holy!
216. Indeed, such children are "holy" even from the time of their very **conception** onward - right after their believing parents' (thus-fruitful) act of sexual intercourse. "For if the first act of dedication is holy," explains Paul - compare the holy marriage act of the Christian parent - "the lump [also of 'clay'] is holy too" - compare the thus-produced embryo. "And if the root is holy" (compare the holy parent) - then so too are the branches" (compare the holy offspring).<sup>192</sup>
217. **Human offspring** or "branches" (says Paul) are "holy" from their very conception onward - because conceived from their "holy" parental "roots." Of course, when those children grow up, "some of the branches may be broken off...because of unbelief" (compare Esau). <sup>193</sup> Too, "when Rebekka had conceived..., before the children [alias her twins Jacob and Esau] were born...it was said to her: 'The elder shall serve the younger.' For it is written: 'Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.'"<sup>194</sup>
218. So, as regards even embryos and fetuses, "let not the one formed say to the One forming him: 'why have You made me thus?'"<sup>195</sup> For assuredly: "Doesn't the Potter have the authority to make one pot unto honour, and another to dishonour - from the same lump [of clay]?"<sup>196</sup>
219. Indeed, it is precisely during man's prenatal existence - from his zygotehood through his fetushood to

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<sup>187.</sup> Gal. 1:15 *cf.* II Tim. 1:3.

<sup>188.</sup> II Tim. 3:15's "from a child" (KJV) translates the Greek *apo brephous*, which literally means "from an infant" or "from a fetus" or even "from an embryo." See A.B. Davidson's *Analytical Greek Lexicon*, London: Bagster, rep. n.d., s.v. *brephos*. See too the use of the same word in Lk. 1:41-44.

<sup>189.</sup> Eph. 2:3.

<sup>190.</sup> Rom. 5:12f *cf.* Ps. 51:5f.

<sup>191.</sup> I Cor. 7:14, *heegiastai gar ho aneer ho apistos en tee; gunaiki, kai heegiastai hee gunee hee apistos en too; adelphoo; epei ara ta tekna humoon akatharta estin, nun de hagia estin.*

<sup>192.</sup> Rom. 11:16-20, *ei de hee aparchee hagia, kai to phurama kai ei hee rhiza hagia, kai hoi kladoi. Ei de tines toon kladoon exeklastheesan...tee; apistia;*

<sup>193.</sup> Gen. 26:34f & 27:46 *cf.* Heb. 12:16f.

<sup>194.</sup> Rom. 9:10-13, *Rebekka ex henos koiteen echousa..., meepoo gar genneethentoon..., errethee autee; hoti ho meizoon douleusei tee; helassoni kathaper gegraptai ton lakoob eegapeesa, ton de Eesau emiseesa.*

<sup>195.</sup> Rom. 9:20f, *mee erei to plasma too; plasantii, ee ouk echei exousian ho kerameus tou peelou ek tou autou phuramatos poieesai ho men eis timeen skeuos, ho de eis atimian?*

<sup>196.</sup> Rom. 9:21.

his infancy - that unborn humans are being shaped like clay. Compare: Genesis 2:7; Job 3:3-11; 4:9,19; 10:8-18; 33:4-6; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 45:9f; 64:8; Jeremiah 18:1-6; Romans 9:10-21; 11:16.

### Summary of Scriptures on the prenatal personality of fetuses

220. On the strength of passages of Scripture such as the above, there is an overwhelming consensus among Bible expositors that human life begins at conception itself. On this, see our subsequent chapters, respectively on: The Ancient Bible Commentators on Tiny Human Life; Post-Nicene Theologians on Tiny Human Life; Augustine and the Mediaevalists on Tiny Human Life; and Protestant Theologians on the Full Humanity of All Conceived. In the next few paragraphs, we simply state the findings of those chapters.
221. Extant Ancient Hebrew and other Semitic authorities manifest very strong positions against human abortions. Thus the *Samaritan Targum* and Philo of Alexandria both prescribe death against abortionists. The second-century-B.C. *Zohar*, in commenting on the Mosaic Pentateuch, calls abortions "abominations." The *Mishnah* insists that human fetuses are precious, and the *Talmud* prohibits the termination of any human pregnancy (except to save the mother's life). Too, the greatest first-century-A.D. Jewish Historian Flavius Josephus does not hesitate to call any woman who deliberately aborts her child - a "murderess."
222. Also Ancient-Christian Theologians clearly teach that human life and human ensoulment begin simultaneously - and both indeed at the moment of conception itself. Among the Ante-Nicene Fathers, such Theologians include: the Apostle Paul's friend Clement of Rome; the Samaritan Christian Justin Martyr; Irenaeus; Tertullian; Hippolytus; Dionysius of Alexandria; Methodius; and Lactantius (the mentor of the Emperor Constantine).
223. The above view is endorsed also by the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Among the various Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, it is further upheld by: Athanasius; Aphrahat the Persian; Hilary of Poitiers; Basil the Great; Ephraem the Syrian; Cyril of Jerusalem; Gregory Nazianzen; Gregory of Nyssa; Ambrose; Chrysostom; Jerome; Augustine; John Cassian; Leo the Great; Fulgentius; Gregory the Great; John of Damascus; Anselm; Odo of Tornay; and Thomas Aquinas.
224. At and from the Protestant Reformation onward, the above view was endorsed by both Martin Luther and John Calvin. Thereafter, it was upheld also by: Zacharius Ursinus; Bartholomew Keckermann; John Wollebius; Francis Turretin; Leonard Riissen, Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Hopkins, Robert Dabney, Dr. Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge, William Shedd, Franz Delitzsch, Abraham Kuyper Sr., Herman Bavinck, William Geesink, A.G. Honig, and J. Gresham Machen.
225. Such too is the position also of the great Creeds of the Christian Church. For we find it either expressed or implied in the *Nicene Creed*; the *Athanasian Creed*; the *Chalcedonian Creed*; the *French Confession*; the *Scots Confession*; the *Belgic Confession*; the *Thirtynine Articles*; the *Heidelberg Confession*; the *Second Helvetic Confession*; the *Canons of Dordt*; the *Polish Confession* (alias the *Declaration of Thorn*); and the *Westminster Standards*.

### Conclusion: prenatal human beings are really persons

226. Conclusion. The Bible teaches that not just human life but even human personality and sexuality all begin with the increation of the soul (or personality-kernel) at conception itself. For conception is the

very event which immediately "enlivens" the spermimpinged ovum and causes it to become a zygote alias a tiny human being.

227. Prenatal human life therefore begins at conception - before cellular division; prior to implantation alias nidation; ahead of embryonization; and long before the still-later formation of the fetus's material brain and other developing organs. This is the common and indeed also the inspired view of God, Adam, Moses, Job, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, Matthew, Luke, James and Paul.
- 228 It is therefore also the common view of pious Ancient Hebrew expositors; of many leading Christian Theologians; and also of all the great Creeds of the Church. Indeed, it also seems to have been the common prenatal experience not only of John the baptizer and all other "holy children" - but even of the sinlessly-conceived Lord Jesus Christ Himself.





## D. ANTE-NICENE BIBLE COMMENTATORS ON TINY HUMAN LIFE

"The king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives...and he said: 'When you act as midwives toward the Hebrew women and see them ready to give birth - if it be a son, kill him!' ... But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them. For they saved the male children alive.... Therefore God made houses for the midwives. But Pharaoh commanded all his people and said: 'Every son that is born, you must throw into the river!'" - Exodus 1:15-22.

229. In our previous chapter, we have seen that Holy Scripture itself places a high premium on prenatal human life. As we shall see (in subsequent paragraphs), even many ancient Bible Commentaries themselves do the same.

### Tiny human life in the Samaritan Targum, Zohar, Mishnah, and the Talmud

230. The ancient *Samaritan Targum*, for example, requires the death penalty for abortion. Also the second-century-B.C. *Zohar* - when commenting on Moses' Pentateuch - calls abortions "abominations."
231. The *Mishnah*, an originally-oral tradition which claims to be of Mosaic antiquity, asserts the preciousness of unborn human fetuses. Indeed, also the Judaistic *Talmud* prohibits the termination of human pregnancy - except when trying to save the mother's life (but even then only when mortally imperilled).

### Philo and Josephus protect tiny human life

232. The Alexandrian Jew Philo (B.C. 30 to A.D. 50) insists on "life for life" from anyone aborting a formed fetus. Indeed, the Palestinian Jew Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37-104) is adamant that a woman who aborts her own child - is a "murderess."<sup>1</sup>
233. Philo was contemporary to the New Testament writers themselves. He firmly grounded the conception of all children - in the first woman Eve's conception of Cain and Abel. Also, he firmly grounded the criminal abortion of all murdered fetuses ("life for life") - in humanity's first murder, when Cain slew Abel.
234. For "Adam had sexual intercourse with his wife" Eve, and "she conceived. She gave birth to Cain. Then she said: 'I have received a male [baby], by the instrumentality of God!' ... Again, she gave birth to his brother - Abel." Later, after Abel had been slain by Cain, the latter had very good reason to fear retribution. For he fearfully said: "Everyone who finds me, shall slay me!" Genesis 4:1,2,14 cf. Exodus 21:22.
235. Comments the Judaist Philo:<sup>2</sup> "A man, in accordance with nature, comes together with a woman - a male of the human race with a female - to enter upon those embraces that lead to the generation of children.... Yet they alone will never of themselves bring forth offspring, without receiving seed from an Other.
236. "Who then is that [Other] One? Who sows in them the things that are good? Unless it be the Father of

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<sup>1</sup> *Against Apion*, 2:202 (cf. paras. 624-743f & esp. 221 & 225 & 1931-50).

<sup>2</sup> Philo's *On the Cherubs* 12-15 and his *The Special Laws* III:108f.

existing things - the uncreated God, Who Himself begets all things! It is God, then, Who indeed sows the seed. But on the other hand, [God] bestows His Own offspring [upon parents] - as a gift which He has sown."

237. Thus, "Moses...introduces Sarah as being 'with child' - when God 'visited' her." Yet Moses also represented Sarah "as being 'with child' **not** to **Him** Who made the visitation - but to...**Abraham**....
238. "Indeed, in the case of Leah, Moses teaches that...**God** indeed opened her womb." Yet, "to open the womb is the function of a husband." So Leah, "when she conceived, brought forth **not** to God...but to **Jacob**."
239. In his treatise *The Special Laws*, Philo also elaborates on Exodus 21:22f. There, he explains: "If a man comes to blows with a pregnant woman and strikes her...and she miscarries...; if the offspring is already shaped and all the limbs have their proper qualities and places in the system, then **he must die** (*thneesketo*). For that living entity (*zooon*) which answers to this description, is a human being - which he has destroyed."
240. To Philo, then, deliberate abortionists merit capital punishment. For though the human offspring is fathered directly by his immediate parent, indirectly he is generated by God the Father - Whose little image he is.
241. Here Philo combines the Noachic provisions of Genesis 9:5f with the Mosaic directives in Exodus 21:22f. "I shall requite the blood of your lives.... At the hand of every man's brother, I will requite the life of man. At the hand of man, I will requite it....
242. "Whosoever sheds man's blood - by man shall his blood be shed. For God made him as His image.... If men...hurt a pregnant woman so that her fetus depart from her..., if any mischief follow - you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" *etc.*

### **Clement of Rome on man's prenatal personality**

243. Also the Apostle Paul's friend<sup>3</sup> Clement - the Presbyter Bishop of Rome around A.D 95 - discusses "what matter we were made of." He then concludes<sup>4</sup> that "we came into the World as it were out of a sepulchre, and from utter darkness [Psalm 139:15]."
244. Clement here presupposes the pre-existence of human persons ("we") before their birth. He further realizes that "we" are the same persons after our birth as "we" were before that. Thus, also prenatal fetuses are persons.

### **Justin Martyr on the status of tiny babies**

245. It was, however, Justin Martyr of Samaria (around A.D. 150) who in the first great *Apology* (or 'Defence of the Christian Faith') ever written, rightly identified the creation of man as the very antithesis of his destruction such as by way of abortion. Wrote Justin: "God took dust of the earth, and made man [Genesis 2:7]. It is evident, however, that man - made in the image of God - is flesh. Is it not absurd, then,

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<sup>3</sup> Phil. 1:1 & 4:3.

<sup>4</sup> Clem. Rom.: *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, ch. 38.

to say that the 'flesh' (made by God in His Own image) is contemptible and worth nothing?"<sup>5</sup>

246. So to Justin, not only the human soul but also the human body images God Himself. At least to some extent, therefore, it is probably for this reason that Justin elsewhere adds: "We have been taught that, to expose newly-born children, is the part of wicked men." We Christians, however, fear to expose our children - "lest...we become murderers."<sup>6</sup>

### **Irenaeus: soul and body are concreated and comingled**

247. Around 185 A.D., Irenaeus Presbyter Bishop of Lyons denied<sup>7</sup> the existence of the human soul before its conception - but not thereafter, before birth. States he:<sup>8</sup> "When God...bestows life and perpetual duration it comes to pass that even souls which did not previously exist, should henceforth endure [for ever].... Thus far, then, let me speak concerning the creation and the continued duration of the soul."
248. Indeed, even at the first man's creation - states Irenaeus - "God formed man, taking clay from the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life."<sup>9</sup> "For by the hands of the Father - that is, by the Son and the Holy Spirit - man, and not [merely] a part of man, was made in the likeness of God."
249. "Now the soul and the spirit are certainly part of the man. But they are certainly not the [whole] man. For the perfected man consists in the commingling and the union of the soul (which receives the spirit from the Father) and the flesh (or that moulded fleshly nature) - according to the image of God. Genesis 2:7."<sup>10</sup>

### **Clement of Alexandria and Theodotus on embryonic souls**

250. Clement of Alexandria called "the embryo...a living creature."<sup>11</sup> Also Theodotus was an Anti-Gnostic Theologian of the Early-Alexandrian School. He wrote "that aborted infants share a better fate"<sup>12</sup> than abortion itself: namely, a better fate after their abortive deaths. See paragraphs 1408-51.
251. Explains Theodotus: "An ancient [rightly] said that the embryo is alive.... The soul [of the embryo] enters into the womb after the latter has been cleansed and prepared for conception." The new soul is "introduced" into the mother's womb "by one of the angels who preside over generation and who, foreknowing the time of conception, moves the woman to intercourse...."
252. "On the seed being deposited, the 'spirit' which is in the 'seed' is so to speak 'appropriated' [by the woman's egg-cell] and is thus assumed into conjunction, in the process of formation [of the embryo].... When the angels give glad tidings to the barren, they introduce souls [right] at conception.... In the Gospel [Luke 1:43], 'the baby leaped up' as a living being." On the other hand, "the barren are barren - because the soul...is not in such cases introduced to secure conception and generation."

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<sup>5</sup> Just. Mart.: *On the Resurrection*, ch. 7

<sup>6</sup> Just. Mart.: *1st Apology*, chs. 27 & 29. Phil. 1:1 & 4:3

<sup>7</sup> Iren.: *Against Heresies*, II:33.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.*, II:34:4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, IV:20:1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.*, V:6:1

<sup>11</sup> Cl. Alex." *The Instructor*, in ANF II p. 221

<sup>12</sup> Theod.: *Excerpts 48-50* (quoting the *Apocalypse of Peter*) in *Ante-Nic. Fath.* VIII pp. 48f. See too R.J. Rushdoony's art. *Abortion*, in *Encyclopaedia of Christianity*, Wilmington: National Foundation for Christian Education, 1964, I p. 20.

### **Tertullian of Carthage's *Treatise on the Soul***

253. It was Tertullian, the great Presbyter-Theologian of Carthage, who around 200 A.D. wrote the first-ever Christian *Treatise on the Soul*. In that work, he has a great deal to say about pre-natal human development in general. His work is so thorough, that it has still hardly been equalled (and never surpassed) by any subsequent theological reflection on this subject.<sup>13</sup>
254. Tertullian is 'the Founder of Latin Theology.'<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the Western Church by and large<sup>15</sup> followed his theology. Here are just a few important excerpts from his insights concerning the vital area of psycho-anthropology.
255. Even in "the infancy...of a human being," states Tertullian, he has a "soul which may be compared with the nascent sprout of a tree." So, right after birth, "his infant cries...testify to his actual possession of the faculties of sensation and intellect - by the fact of his birth.... The baby knows his mother; discerns the nurse; and even recognizes the maid.... It would be very strange indeed that infancy were naturally so lively - if it had not mental power!"

### **Tertullian vs. the Pagan Greeks: the embryo is ensouled prenatally**

256. What, however, is the position as to the nature of the soul **before** birth? "The Stoics, along with Aenesidemus" - explains Tertullian<sup>16</sup> - quite wrongly "begin by maintaining that the soul is not conceived in the womb, nor is produced at the time that the flesh is moulded.... [For] they say...that the human seed - having been deposited duly in the womb by sexual intercourse, and having been quickened by 'natural' impulse - [then] becomes condensed into the mere substance of the flesh...."
257. "Plato himself...tells us that the soul...(originating elsewhere and externally to the womb) is inhaled when the new-born infant first draws breath - and by and by exhaled with the man's last breath.... This view of his is merely fictitious. Even the medical profession has not lacked its Hicesius - to prove a 'traitor' both to nature and to his own calling!
258. "These gentlemen" (the Stoics; Aenisidemus; Plato; and that traitor to the medical profession Dr. Hicesius) - continues Tertullian - "were too 'modest' to come to terms with women regarding the mysteries of childbirth.... Give us then **your** testimony, you mothers - whether yet pregnant, or after delivery!" Tell us then "whether you feel in the embryo within you, any vital force [or vivacity] - other than your own? ... Inasmuch as sustenance by food and the lack thereof, growth and decay, fear, and motion are conditions of the soul or life - he who experiences them, must be alive."

### **Tertullian's insistence on the personhood of prenatal babies**

259. It is true, now as then, that sometimes "infants are still-born. But how so - unless they **had** had life" previously? Human **personality** and **ensoulment**, then, are brought into existence long before our birth. Indeed, they both **originate at our conception** itself. For "where does it come from, that from similarity of soul we resemble our parents in disposition" - asks Tertullian - "if we are not produced from this 'seed of the soul'?"

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13. Yet we reject some Tertullianic concepts anent the soul - such as its unincreasability. For see Zech. 12:1 & Lk. 2:40f

14. Tert.: On the Soul, in Ante-Nic. Fath. III pp. iii et seq.

15. *Soul*, ch. 19

16. *Ib.*, ch. 25.

260. From the above, Tertullian therefore cannot but deduce that "a man's 'nativity' [exists] from his earliest conception." Accordingly, "his soul also draws...its origin from that moment. To this ['nativity'] likewise belongs the 'inbreathing' of the soul." Genesis 2:7.
261. Continues Tertullian:<sup>17</sup> "Consider the wombs of the most sainted women naturally implanted with the [zygotic or embryonic] life within them." For "their babes...were not only alive within, but were even endowed with prophetic intuition. See how the inward parts of Rebecca are disquieted [Genesis 25:22f] - though her giving birth is as yet remote.... A twin off-spring chafes within the mother's womb....
262. "Consider, again, those extraordinary conceptions...of the barren woman [Elisabeth] and the virgin [Mary]. These women would [normally] only be able to produce imperfect offspring - against the course of nature." This is clear "from the very fact that one of them was too old to bear seed, and the other was pure from the contact of man....
263. "However, even these [offspring of Elisabeth and Mary] have life - each of them in his mother's womb.... Mary magnifies the Lord, [for] Christ had stirred her up within [Luke 1:46].... Elisabeth exults with joy, [for] John had leaped up within her womb [Luke 1:41-45]. The mothers each recognize their own offspring, being moreover each recognized by their infants which were therefore of course alive....
264. "Accordingly, you read [about] the Word of God which was spoken to Jeremiah [1:5] - 'Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you!' Since God forms us in the womb" - first in one of the fallopian tubes and, within the next week, thenceforth in the uterus - "He also breathes upon us" when starting to form us. "So did He also do at the first creation, when 'the Lord God formed man and breathed into him the breath of life' [see Genesis 2:7]. Nor could God have known man in the womb, except in his entire nature.... '**Before** you came forth out of the womb - I sanctified **you!**'" Jeremiah 1:5.

### **Tertullian: humans are ensouled from their very conception onward**

265. "How then," Tertullian now asks,<sup>18</sup> "is a living being conceived? Is the substance of both body and soul formed together at one and the same time? ... **Both are conceived and formed, and absolutely simultaneously**.... Not a moment's interval occurs, even at their conception....
266. "Consider what occurs at man's earliest existence - in the light of what occurs to him at the very end [of his earthly existence]. As death is defined to be nothing else than the **separation** of body and soul - life, which is the opposite of death, is susceptible of no other definition than the **conjunction** of body and soul. If the severance happens at one and the same time to both substances by means of death - then the law of their [initial] combination ought to assure us that it [too] occurs simultaneously....
267. "Life begins with conception... The soul also begins from conception. For life takes its commencement at the same moment, and in the same place, as the soul does."
268. Comparing differences between the body and the soul, Tertullian explains: "We still declare that they are...contemporaneous and simultaneous in origin.... It is lust, not natural usage, which has brought shame on the intercourse of the sexes.... The normal condition has received a blessing from God, and is blest by Him: 'Be fruitful and multiply!'" Genesis 1:28.

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<sup>17.</sup> *Ib.*, ch. 26.

<sup>18.</sup> *Ib.*, ch. 27.

269. Tertullian continues: "In this usual function of the sexes which brings together the male and the female in their common [sexual] intercourse, we know that both the soul[s] and the flesh [of the marriage partners] discharge a duty together: the soul supplies desire; the flesh contributes the gratification of it...."
270. "Adam's flesh was formed of clay. Now what is 'clay' - but an excellent moisture from which the generating fluid should spring? It is from the Breath of God that the soul first came.... The clay and the Breath combined at the first creation, in forming the individual man. They then both amalgamated...and ever afterwards communicated to the human race the normal mode of its propagation.... Even now, the two substances - although diverse from each other - flow forth simultaneously in a united channel.
271. "The entire process of sowing, forming, and completing the human embryo in the womb" - explains Tertullian - "is no doubt regulated by some power.... We, for our part, believe that the angels here officiate for God." The embryo is clearly "a human being in the womb...."
272. "We are, however, forbidden to suppose that the soul increases<sup>13</sup> in substance - lest it should be said also to be capable of diminution in substance, so that even its extinction should be believed to be possible. But its inherent power, in which are contained all its natural peculiarities originally implanted in its being, is gradually developed along with the flesh - without impairing the germinal basis of the substance which it received when at first breathed into man."

### **Tertullian on man's prenatal spirit and the resurrection**

273. Opposing the gnostic heresy of Marcion, Tertullian insists<sup>19</sup> that Jesus the Son of man - like every other human person at conception and during subsequent embryonization - was "condensed [or coagulated] as human flesh in the womb of a woman...; grew from human beginnings, according to the law of corporeal substance, from the fluids of a woman [namely *ex femine humore*]; was...deemed 'flesh' before being shaped in the womb; [was]...called *foetus* [or '*pecus*'] after such shaping; [and] was...delivered [or 'brought forth'] - after a ten months' [or forty weeks'] writhing in the womb."
274. Last, in his important treatise *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, Tertullian rounds off his discussion of man's prenatal development. For there, he tells us<sup>20</sup> that "Adam was wholly a new man. And of that new man, there could be no part an old man. And from that time - ever since the blessing which was pronounced upon man's generation [Genesis 1:28], the flesh and the soul have had a simultaneous origin<sup>21</sup> - without any calculable difference in time...."
275. "The two have ever [since] been generated together in the womb.... Contemporaneous[ly] in the womb, they are also temporally identical in their origin. The two are no doubt produced by human parents from two [different] substances - but not at two different periods. Rather - they are so entirely one, that neither is before the other in point of time."
276. So then, Tertullian comprehensively demonstrates that the human soul and the human body both originate contemporaneously. God makes them both together, in the womb, at conception - and in a way rather analogous to the creation of Adam himself. Genesis 2:7 *cf.* Zechariah 12:1.

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19. Tert.: *Against Marcion*, 4:21

20. Tert.: *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, ch. 45

21. See our paragraphs 265f

### Origen on the personhoods of the prenatal John and Jesus

277. Soon after Tertullian's time, Origen - President of Alexandria's Catechetical School - wrote<sup>22</sup> the following passage around 230 A.D.: "The mother of Jesus..., as soon as she conceived, stayed with John's mother [Elisabeth], who was also at that time pregnant [expecting John]. And [the Lord Jesus Christ,] the 'Former' [of all things], then with some exactness communicated His Own image to [John] the 'formed.'"
278. For Christ then "caused John to be conformed to Christ's [Own] glory.... When the voice of Mary's salutation came to the ears of Elisabeth, the baby John leaped up in the womb of his mother.... For it came to pass, we read [in Luke 1:41f], that 'when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the baby leaped up in her womb. And Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. And she lifted up her voice with a loud cry....
279. "John was helped - to the shape he was to have - by the Lord Who approached Elisabeth." For also Origen saw that Christ was not merely pre-existent before His incarnation - but also, as regards His just-assumed human nature, was Himself still in the process of formation within His Own mother's womb.
280. "Mary," continued Origen, "journeyed hastily to the hill country - and entered into the house of Zacharias and greeted and saluted Elisabeth. She did thus, so that she might communicate some of the power she derived from Him she had conceived - to John, [who was] yet in his mother's womb."
281. Clearly, Origen understood that Christ in His divine nature was the "Former" and Shaper of all things. Yet He, in Person - within the womb of His mother from His conception onward (as regards His assumed human nature) - caused His older half-cousin John to leap up for joy within his mother

### Dionysius's anti-materialistic human embryology

282. Dionysius, the Presbyter-Bishop of Alexandria, around A.D. 260 condemns the Epicurean materialists who denied the existence [and therefore also the prenatal existence] of human souls. "Let them," he exclaimed,<sup>23</sup> seek for themselves - to see into what is beyond the reach of sight!"
283. "Let them perceive that which is beyond the range of perception!" For these materialists, Dionysius goes on, are quite unlike the faithful David who declared in respect of himself prenatally: "my eyes, then being imperfect, saw Your work!" Psalm 139:16, Alexandrian Septuagint.
284. "Further," continues Dionysius<sup>24</sup> in his views on the Epicureans, "these men understand neither themselves" nor that which is proper to themselves. "For if any of the leaders in this impious doctrine only considered what manner of person he himself is, and where he comes from - he would surely be led to a wise decision." For - like one who has obtained understanding of himself - he would then not say to those atoms, but to his Father and Maker: "Your hands have made and fashioned me!" Psalm 119:72.
285. Dionysius adds if one would but consider where he comes from, "he would take up too the wonderful account of his formation given by one of old. 'Have You not poured me out like milk, and curdled me like cheese? You have granted me life and favour, and Your visitation has preserved my spirit.'" Job 10:10f. The milky element (*sperma*) marvellously changed into flesh, and the embroidery or weaving of the

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<sup>22</sup> Origen: *Commentary on John* (10:30). Elisabeth's womb three months before the latter was born. To Origen, then, John was already a **human person** three months - and Christ in His human nature fully nine months - before birth.

<sup>23</sup> Dion. Alex.: *Book of Nature* - as quoted in Eusebius's *Preparation for the Gospel* 14:23-27.

<sup>24</sup> Dion. Alex.: *Theological Fragments*, I.2:4.

human anatomy before birth, are here admirably brought out." Compare Psalm 139:12-16, on the human embryo.<sup>25</sup>

286. "For of what quantity and of what origin," asks Dionysius with holy irony, "were the atoms which the father of Epicurus gave forth from himself - when he begat Epicurus? And how, when they were received within his mother's womb, did they coalesce and take form and figure?"
287. "And how were they put in motion, and made to increase? And how did that little seed of generation draw together the many atoms that were to constitute Epicurus - and change some of them into skin and flesh for a covering, and make bone of others for erectness and strength, and form sinews of others?"<sup>26</sup>

### **The Apostolic Constitutions on prenatal human life**

288. The famous *Apostolic Constitutions* (275f A.D.)<sup>27</sup> declare that "He Who formed man[kind] in the womb out of a little seed, created in him a soul which was not in being beforehand. This is what He Himself somewhere speaks to Jeremiah [1:5, 'Before forming you in the womb I knew you'] - and elsewhere": 'I am the Lord Who established the Heaven...and Who forms the spirit of man within him.' Zechariah 12:1. Indeed, God Himself "also wishes to raise up all men as His workmanship...."
289. "The most godly and patient Job [10:10]...speaks to God thus: 'Have You not milked me like milk, and curdled me like cheese? You have clothed me with skin and flesh - and have fenced me with bones and sinews. You have granted me life and favour. Indeed, Your visitation has preserved my spirit.'
290. "David, the beloved of God, says: 'Your hands have made me and fashioned me' [Psalm 119:73]. And again [David says]: 'You know my frame' [Psalm 103:14]. And afterward [he again says]: 'You have fashioned me and laid Your hand upon me' [Psalm 139:5]. 'In Your book, Your eyes saw my substance [or embryo] while still unperfect[ed]."<sup>28</sup> Psalm 139:16.

### **Methodius on the status of the human embryo**

291. Methodius, the famous Presbyter-Bishop of Olympus, around 300 A.D. elaborated even further on the prenatal origin of the human soul at the very time of conception itself. See his work *The Banquet of the Ten Virgins*.
292. Writes Methodius:<sup>29</sup> "Man must co-operate in the forming of the image of God, while the World exists.... For it is said [Genesis 1:28] - 'Increase and multiply!' Indeed, we must not be offended at the ordinance of the Creator - from which, moreover, we ourselves have our being. For the casting of seed [or *sperma*] into the furrows of the matrix, is the beginning of the conception [or *generatio*] of men...."

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25. *Ib.*, penult.

26. *Ib.*, in *Ante-Nic. Fath.* VI p. 88n

27. Thus Von Drey and Schaff, see *Ante-Nic. Fath.* VII p. 388.

28. *Banq. Ten Virg.*, II:1-2. without divine help. For Who gave to the bones their fixed nature? And Who bound the yielding members with nerves, to be extended and relaxed at the joints? Or Who prepared channels for the blood, and a soft windpipe for the breath? Or what 'god' caused the humours to ferment, mixing them with blood and forming the soft flesh out of the earth? Only the Supreme Artist - Who made us to be human [alias the rational and living image of Himself], and Who from small moist seed formed us like wax within the womb!" *Cf.* Job 10:8-12

29. *Apost. Const.*, V:1.



293. "Therefore, while God still forms man - shall we not be guilty of audacity if we think of the conception of children as something offensive, [something] which the Almighty Himself is not ashamed to make use of in working with His undefiled hands? For He says to Jeremiah [1:5], 'Before I formed you in the belly - I knew you!' Indeed, [He says] to Job [38:24 LXX], 'Did you [as I the Lord did!] take clay and form a living creature and make it speak upon the Earth?' Then Job [10:8] draws near to Him in supplication, saying - '**Your** hands have made **me**, and **fashioned** me!'
294. "The creative power of God pervading all things," continues Rev. Methodius, "is more especially the real cause in the conception of men.... Nature could not thus, in [so] little a time, accomplish so great a work.
295. Methodius continues: "By Whose providence was it that the foetus was not suffocated by damp, when shut up within? ... Or Who, after it was brought forth and had come into the light [Job 3:3-16], changed it from weakness and smallness to size and beauty and strength? As I said, only God Himself: the Supreme Artist Who made 'living images' by His creative power!"<sup>30</sup>
296. Methodius does concede<sup>31</sup> that "some may argue plausibly - among those who are wanting in discrimination and judgment - that [the body alias] this fleshly garment of the soul, being planted by men [viz. by way of sexual intercourse], is shaped spontaneously - apart from the sentence of God.... However...the immortal being of the soul is also sown - along with the mortal body.... For the Almighty alone breathes into man the undying and undecaying part.... For He says He 'breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.'" Genesis 2:7.

### Lactantius: human life starts from conception also in the case of Christ

297. Around A.D. 315, the accomplished Theologian Lactantius Firmianus became the mentor of the first Christian Roman Emperor - Constantine the Great.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Constantine would himself thereafter start christianizing the previously-pagan Roman Law<sup>33</sup> - and then apply his Christian legislation throughout his Empire.
298. Lactantius declares:<sup>34</sup> "Every animated creature consists of soul [or the living principle], and body. The essence of the body is contained in moisture; that of the soul, in heat. This we may know from the eggs of birds. For though these are full of thick moisture - unless they are cherished by creative heat [or the constructive force], the moisture cannot become a 'body'...animated with life.... The young of animated creatures are furnished with a 'body' - by heat and moisture, and are thus animated to life.... For when moisture and heat become mingled, they conceive."
299. Moreover, Lactantius also remarks<sup>35</sup> about the conception of Jesus that "the Holy Spirit of God, descending from Heaven, chose the holy virgin so that He might enter into her womb. Then she, after having been filled by the possession of the Divine Spirit, conceived.... Her virgin womb was suddenly impregnated." For to Lactantius, the human life of Jesus - just like that of all other men - began at conception.

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30. *Ib.*, chs. 4 & 6.

31. *Ib.*, ch. 7.

32. *Ante-Nic. Fath.*, VII pp. 3f.

33. See at paras. 1111f.

34. Lact.: *Div. Inst.*, II:10....

35. *Ib.*, IV:12.

**Conclusion: The Ante-Nicene Bible Commentators uphold prenatal human life**

300. Conclusion. The Early Church Fathers, even before the great incarnational declarations at the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D., all seem to have followed the 'zygotic' teaching of both the Old(er) and the New(er) Testaments. This is the Biblical teaching that a human being's soul is connected to his or her zygotic or embryonic body no earlier or later than at conception itself.
301. For that is the unambiguous verdict not just of the *Targums* and the *Talmud* and Judaistic Philosophers like Philo and the great Jewish Historian Josephus. It was further - and in a much more Biblical form - very clearly taught also by Early Christian Church Fathers like Clement of Rome, Justin the Samaritan Martyr, Irenaeus, Theodotus, Tertullian, Dionysius of Alexandria, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Methodius, and Lactantius.
302. The way thus inevitably led to Nicaea. There, the Church would link the origin of human life to the incarnation of Christ. Indeed, Emperor Constantine and his successors would then give political recognition to this - throughout the civilized World.

## E. POST-NICENE THEOLOGIAN ON TINY HUMAN LIFE

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.... Jesus Christ our Lord...was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh.... When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son - made of a woman...so that we might receive the adoption of sons.... God was manifested in the flesh!" - John 1:14; Romans 1:3; Galatians 4:4f; First Timothy 3:16.

303. After the declarations of the early-fourth-century Methodius and Lactantius about man's prenatal existence, also the Church Universal accepted this position. It did so, especially as a consequence of the christological formulations in the *Nicene Creed*.

### The impact of the *Nicene Creed* on human embryology

304. For the Council of Nicaea gave much further impetus to the ongoing study of this matter. It did this, by its dogmatic definition of the extreme importance of the conception and the incarnation of Jesus the Son of man in the womb of His human mother.
305. Declares the *Nicene Creed* of 325 A.D.: "We believe...in one Lord Jesus Christ...Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and made man."<sup>1</sup> Later, the *Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed* of 381 A.D. went on to clarify that Christ came down "from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary."<sup>2</sup>
306. After the Council of Nicaea, the doctrines of human ensoulment and sex-determination and **personalization at conception itself** went almost without challenge throughout all subsequent Church History. This continued until the rise of evolutionism in certain ecclesiastical circles (only just recently).

### Aphrahat the Persian on prenatal human death

307. Thus Aphrahat the Persian - a Christian Theologian altogether the contemporary and successor of the Nicene Theologians themselves<sup>3</sup> - around 345 A.D. reaffirmed the abovementioned classic position anent human personhood from the time of conception onward<sup>4</sup>. That was just two decades after the date of the great Council of Nicaea.
308. Quoting the great "zygotic" and "embryonic" and "fetal" passage Job 3:3-19, Aphrahat clearly presupposes that those dying before birth had truly lived before they died. He writes:<sup>5</sup> "Suddenly death shall come and separate and lead away the beloved children from their parents." Death "leads away and gathers unto himself the beloved infants of days.... Death rules over the unborn and takes them captive to himself before they are born."

### Hilary on the ensoulment of Adam and Christ and us

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1. See P. Schaff: *History of the Christian Church*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971 rep., III pp. 668f.  
2. See Barhebraeus's *Ecclesiastical History*, II.10 cc. 31-33 with I.16 cc. 83-85.  
3. See Barhebraeus's *Ecclesiastical History*, II.10 cc. 31-33 with I.16 cc. 83-85.  
4. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969f, XIII p. 153.  
5. Aphrahat: [*Select*] *Demonstrations* 22:7 (in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.* XIII).

309. Presbyter-Bishop Hilary of Poitiers developed this further, around 350 A.D. Said he: "Each one who had been conceived" - with the exception of only the first Adam and the Second Adam Jesus Christ - "had his origin from one who had been. Nevertheless, that very parent from whom he was conceived, did not [himself] exist before he [himself] was conceived.... He who has been conceived, was conceived after he was not.... For, if he is conceived today, in the time which was yesterday he was not; and he has come into a state of being from a state of non-being."<sup>6</sup>
310. In respect of the unique (because pre-existent and divine) Second Adam Jesus Christ, "the virgin conceived what she conceived - from the Holy Ghost alone." Yet the eternal Son of God then became fully human - from the moment of His incarnation in Mary's womb. Thus, explains Hilary,<sup>7</sup> "for His conception in the flesh she supplied from herself that element which women always contribute to the seed planted in them."
311. So then, Hilary concludes, "Mary contributed to His growth in the womb." The Son was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary. By the Son's "own power, the power of God which overshadowed her - He sowed the beginning of His body and entered on the first stage of His life in the flesh.... He passed through every stage - through conception, birth, wailing, cradle, and each successive humiliation."<sup>8</sup>

#### **Athanasius on the human personality even from conception**

312. In his *Defence of the Nicene Definition*, the Chief Presbyter-Bishop of Alexandria - the great and godly Athanasius himself - issued a very clear statement on man's prenatal condition. Declared Athanasius:<sup>9</sup>
313. "Adam was created alone; by God alone; through the Word.... We all spring from Adam, and exist according to succession of the race.... The hand Which then fashioned Adam, is also both now and ever fashioning - and giving entire existence to those who come after Adam. And God Himself declares this to Jeremiah (1:5). As I said previously: 'Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.'
314. "And so He says of everything: 'All those things My hand has made' [Isaiah 66:2]. And again by Isaiah [44:2], 'This is what the Lord your Redeemer says - He Who formed you from the womb'.... And David, knowing this, says in the Psalm [119:73] - 'Your hands have made me and fashioned me.' And he who [in Isaiah 49:5] says: 'This is what the Lord says Who formed me from the womb to be His servant' - signifies the same."
315. In *Four Discourses Against the Arians*, Athanasius states<sup>10</sup> that "Jeremiah [1:5] was hallowed even from the womb. And John [the baptizer], while yet in the womb, leaped up for joy at the voice of Mary [Luke 1:44]."
316. In the *Athanasian Creed* of the Post-Nicene Church, "whosoever will be saved" must believe not only in the Trinity. Indeed, "it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also rightly believe in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that:
317. "'Our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, is God and man - God, of the substance of the Father, begotten

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<sup>6</sup>. Hilary: *On the Trinity*, 12:16.

<sup>7</sup>. *Ib.*, 10:15f.

<sup>8</sup>. *Ib.*, 2:24.

<sup>9</sup>. Athanasius: *Defence of the Nicene Definition*, III:33.

<sup>10</sup> Ath.: *Four Discourses Against the Arians*, arts. 1 & 29-35.

before the World; and man, of the substance of His mother, born in time: perfect God and perfect man, having a reasonable soul and a human body: equal to the Father, according to His God-head; and inferior to the Father, as to His manhood: Who, although He be God and man, yet is not two but one Christ: one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God."<sup>11</sup>

### Ephraem the Syrian on the incarnation and on embryonic human life

318. Perhaps around 350 A.D., Ephraem ("the Prophet of the Syrians") wrote about the pre-natal Jesus. Declares Ephraem: "While His [human] body was forming within the womb - [according to His pre-conceptual Divinity] His power was fashioning all [His human body-parts or] members. While the conception of the Son [of man] was fashioning [His humanity] in the womb - He Himself [as the Son of God] was fashioning babes in the womb.... When He was dwelling wholly in the womb - His hidden will was visiting all...."
319. "Thus was He entirely in the womb - while He was again wholly in everything.... [Also even] while He was in the womb - He opened wombs.... While His power was dwelling in the womb - He was fashioning infants in the womb.... While He was within the womb - He left not His hold of all. He in His own Person shaped an image in the womb [of His own mother] - and was shaping all countenances in all wombs."<sup>12</sup>
320. So then, concludes Ephraim, "John leaped up in the womb and perceived the voice of the mother of our Lord [Luke 1:41].... For lo, it was because of Him that John knew [so as] to hear in the womb."<sup>13</sup>

### Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures* on prenatal human life

321. About A.D. 380, the *Catechetical Lectures* were written by Cyril the Presbyter-Bishop of Jerusalem. Cyril challenged<sup>14</sup> his catechumens: "From your own nature, consider its Manufacturer! What is there to find fault with, in the framing of your body? ... The Maker thereof, is wise.
322. "Who prepared the recesses of the womb for childbearing? Who gave life to the lifeless thing within it? Who 'knitted us with sinews and bones, and clothed us with skin and flesh' [Job 3:11] - and, as soon as the child was born, brought streams of milk out of the breasts?" Only God could - and did - do this."
323. Indeed, "it is God Who even now creates the children in the womb. For it is written in Job [10:10f], 'have You not poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese? You have clothed me with skin and flesh, and You have knit me together with bones and sinews."<sup>15</sup>
324. Accordingly, also John the baptizer "was sanctified by the Holy Ghost, even while he was still being carried in his mother's womb [Luke 1:15]. Jeremiah [1:5] was sanctified...in the womb.... John..., while being carried in the womb, leaped up for joy [Luke 1:44]. And, though he did not see with the eyes of flesh," yet John even then "**knew** His Master - by the Spirit."<sup>16</sup>
325. Indeed, concludes Cyril, concerning man's soul the Scripture says: 'his spirit shall go forth - and he shall

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11. *The Athanasian Creed*, arts. 29-55.

12. Ephraem the Syrian: *Hymns on the Nativity*, III

13. Eph.: *Three Homilies on Our Lord*, 53.

14. Cyril Jerus.: *Catechetical Lectures*, VIII:15.

15. *Ib.*, 12:26.

16. *Ib.*, 3:6 & 16:13. forward...from the history of animate beings...what [the Divine] Nature has contrived with wonderful art, in connection with their generation.... I will mention just one fact of our own nature....

return to his earth' [Psalm 144:4]. And of the same soul, it says again...[that the Lord] 'forms the spirit of man within him.' Zechariah 12:1."

### Prenatal human life in Gregory Nazianzen

326. The career of the famous Presbyter-Bishop of Sasima, Gregory of Nazianze, zenithed around 385 A.D. This Gregory observed: "I might bring
327. "What was Adam? A creature of God. What then was Eve? A fragment of the creature. And what was Seth? The begotten of both [Genesis 2:7 to 4:26].... Did not both Eve and Seth come from the one Adam?" Yes. "But were they both begotten by him? No. For the one was a fragment of him - and the other was begotten by him."<sup>17</sup>
328. Again, in Romans 9:11 - adds the Nazianzene - "Esau" was in existence after his conception and "before his birth."<sup>18</sup> Also Jesus Christ - before His human birth and after His human conception - "dwelt in the womb." Even then, "He was recognized [Luke 1:41f] by the Prophet [John] - himself still in the womb, leaping up before the Word."<sup>19</sup>
329. Accordingly, Gregory becomes urgent with his addressees - in his *Oration on the Theophany or Birthday of Christ*. "Now, then" - he implores them - "Please! Accept His conception - and 'leap up' before Him...like John [did - even] from the womb!"<sup>20</sup>

### Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Early Death of Infants*

330. Shortly after this, the Presbyter-Bishop Gregory of Nyssa wrote an important essay *On the Early Deaths of Infants*. There, he declares<sup>21</sup> that such an early-ailing infant is "a human being [which then] enters on the scene of life." Even a newborn baby boy has "no advantage over the embryo in the womb - except that he has seen the air." For an embryo is simply a conceived "infant - ere it sees the light."
331. The situation of dying embryos, however, is much better than that of dying adults who "during their sojourn in life have been fierce.... More execrable still - [some of them have committed] patricide, [and others of them have become] mother-killers [and] child-murderers."

### Gregory Nyssa's essay *The Making of Man*

332. In his essay *On the Making of Man*, Gregory once more refers<sup>22</sup> to "the first beginning of our existence." For "you see," he declares, "how that which is implanted in the womb to be the beginning of the formation of
333. "It is not true to say either, that the soul exists before the body - or that the body exists without the soul [at

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17. Greg. Naz.: *Oration* 31:10f.

18. *Orat.* 44:36 (*Panegyric on Basil*).

19. *Orat.* 3 (29) (*On the Son*).

20. *Orat.* 38:17.

21. Greg. Nys.: *On the Early Death of Infants*, in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.* V pp. 373-80

22. Greg. Nys.: *On the Making of Man*, 27:9 & 29:1,3,10 & 30:29. The body, is in a manner simple and homogeneous.... Man is one - the being consisting of soul and body. We are to suppose that the beginning of his existence is one - common to both parts - so that he should not be found to be antecedent and posterior to himself, [as] if the bodily element were first in point of time and the other were a later addition....

least before death].... There is one beginning of both.... It is possible for one who considers the mode of his own life and learns how closely concerned the body is in every vital operation, to know in what the vegetative principle of the soul was occupied on the occasion of the first formation of that which was beginning its existence.... The seminal cause of our constitution is neither a soul without body, nor a body without soul.... From animated and living bodies, it is generated at the first as a living and animate being."

### Gregory Nyssa's *On the Soul and the Resurrection*

334. Gregory explains this in his *On the Soul and the Resurrection*. There he writes<sup>23</sup> about "the **when** of the soul's commencement of existence."
335. He argues: "No one who can reflect, will imagine an afterbirth of the soul - *i.e.*, that it is younger than the moulding of the body. For every one can see for himself that not one amongst all the things that are inanimate or soulless, possesses any power of motion or growth. Whereas there is no question about that which is bred in the uterus, both growing and moving from place to place....
336. "The point of commencement of existence is one and the same for body and soul.... The earth receives the sapling from the hands of the husbandman and makes a tree of it, without imparting the power of growth to its nursling - but only lending it, when placed within itself, the impulse to grow. In this very same way, that which is secreted from a man for the planting of a human being, is itself [after producing conception]...a living being - as much gifted with a soul and as capable of nourishing itself as that [parent man] from which it comes.
337. "We need not be surprised," continues Gregory, "if this offshoot" or prenatal *conceptus* "cannot in its diminutiveness at first contain all the activities and the movements of the soul. For neither in the seed of corn is the ear...visible all at once.... But the earth keeps on feeding it with its congenial aliment. And so the grain becomes the ear, without changing its nature while in the clod, but only developing it and bringing it to perfection under the stimulus of that nourishment.
338. "As, then, in the case of those growing seeds, the advance to perfection is a graduated one - so, in man's formation, the forces of his

### Ambrose of Milan: human personhood starts at conception

339. Ambrose was the famous Presbyter-Bishop of Milan. Around 395 A.D., he wrote<sup>24</sup> that "men have existed - before they are born.... Jacob, while yet hidden in the secret chamber of his mother's womb, supplanted his brother...before he was born [Genesis 25:23].... Jeremiah [1:5] - to whom the message comes: 'before I formed you in your mother's womb I knew you; and before you came forth from the belly I sanctified you' - [was a] great Prophet who was sanctified before he was born, and known before he was shaped.
340. "Again, what shall I say of John [the baptizer]? His holy mother [Elisabeth] testifies of him that - while he yet lay in her womb - he perceived in spirit the presence of his Lord, and leaped for joy.... Surely John was [then already] in being - [he] who worshipped his Maker? [Yes,] John **was** in being. For he 'spake' - in his

<sup>23</sup>. Greg. Nys.: *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.* II:5 pp. 458f. soul show themselves in proportion to the size to which his body has attained. They dawn first in the foetus, in the shape of the power of nutrition and of development.... From these considerations, we grasp the fact that - in the compound which results from the joining of both [soul and body] - there is a **simultaneous passage of both into existence**. The **one** does **not** come **first**."

<sup>24</sup>. Ambrose: *On the Christian Faith*, IV:9:113-15.

mother's womb! And so Elisabeth was filled with [the Holy Ghost within] the spirit of her son - and Mary was sanctified by [the Holy Ghost within] the spirit of hers!

341. "For this is what you can find recorded: 'the babe [John] leaped up in her womb, and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.'" Now "consider," continues Ambrose, "the proper force of each word [above]. Elisabeth was indeed the first to hear the voice of Mary. But John was first to feel His Lord's gracious presence.... The women speak words of grace; the babes move hiddenly; and, as their mothers approach one another, so do they [the unborn offspring] engage in mysterious conversation of love. Indeed, in a twofold miracle - though in diverse degrees of honour - the mothers prophesy in the spirit about their [already existing] little ones."
342. Yet Christ, explains Ambrose, was unique! "He was not begotten - as is every [other] man [since the first pair] - by intercourse between male and female. But he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and of the virgin. He received a stainless body which no sins polluted.... Neither the generation nor the conception had been stained by any admixture of defilement. Yet **we** men are all born under sin, and **our** very origin is in evil. As we read in the words of David [Psalm 51:1] - 'look, I was conceived in wickedness!'"<sup>25</sup>
343. Ambrose adds: "We men are all of us born in sin. Our very origin is in sin - as you may read [Psalm 51:5] when David says: 'behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me!'"
344. Yet elsewhere, once again, Ambrose insists:<sup>26</sup> "Before we are born, we are spotted with contagion.... We are conceived in iniquity." Indeed, "Scripture often designates the soul of man by the word 'spirit.' For (Zechariah 12:1) you read [about God that He] 'creates the spirit of man within him.'"<sup>27</sup> At that very same moment, the human spirit gets tainted with the guilt of sin inherited from Adam. Yet also often at that very same moment, the elect child of the covenant is regenerated.
345. Accordingly, Ambrose could remind<sup>28</sup> even the Christian Emperor Gratian about "that faith which - from your earliest childhood - you have ever devoutly and lovingly kept. 'Before I formed you in your mother's belly, I knew you,' - says the Scripture [Jeremiah 1:5]. 'And before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you.'"

### **Chrysostom: incarnation shows nine months' prenatal humanity**

346. John Chrysostom was the Patriarch of Constantinople, around 400 A.D. In the third and fourth chapters of his essay *Against the Marcionites and the Manichaeans* he observes<sup>29</sup> that God Himself "designed to become man." For He deigned "to take flesh formed of the earth and clay, and to enter the womb of a virgin, and to be carried there for the period of nine months...."
347. "The patriarch [Jacob] predicted it, saying [Genesis 49:9] - 'You shall spring from a tender shoot, my Son! And Isaiah [in 7:14 predicted it too], saying - 'look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son!' And elsewhere, again [he predicted]: 'we behold Him as a young child - as an offshoot out of dry ground' [Isaiah 53:2]. And by the 'dry ground' he means the virgin's womb.

25. Amb.: *On Penitance*, I:3:13 and I:2:3 (against the Novatians), as cited in Augustine's *On Original Sin* II:47(41).

26. Amb.: *Apology of the Prophet David*, chs. 56f.

27. Amb.: *Of the Holy Spirit*, II:6:56.....

28. Amb.: *Exposition of the Christian Faith*, I, Prologue, 2.

29. John Chrysostom: *Against the Marcionites and the Manichaeans*, 3-4. according to the saying in the Gospel [John 5:17], 'My Father keeps on working hitherto' [or 'even up till now'].



348. "Indeed, again [Isaiah predicts in 11:1] - 'a rod shall come forth out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall spring out of his root.' And David...said [Psalm 72:6] - 'He shall come down like the rain...which distills upon the earth' - because He noiselessly and gently entered into the virgin's womb.... For he did not enter once and for all into a matured and completely-developed [adult] man - but into a virgin's womb, so as to undergo the process of gestation and birth."

**Jerome: those conceived in the womb already possess the image of God**

349. Around 410 A.D., Jerome the famous Presbyter-Theologian of Palestine addressed the "problem about the nature of the soul." Especially did he insist that souls "are formed by God and introduced into bodies day by day -
350. Asks Jerome anent the life-principle of every human being: "**When** was that soul made? ... The 'inbreathing' of God" [in Genesis 2:7], is "the creating of the human soul.... I ask, when did Cain and Abel - who were the firstborn of our first parents - get their souls? And as regards the whole human race after that - what, are we to think, was the origin of **their** souls? ... Surely [as the Church teaches, in accordance with the Saviour's words, John 5:17] - 'My Father keeps on working till now.'<sup>30</sup>
351. Moreover, adds Jerome,<sup>31</sup> it is God "Who makes the spirit of man within him [Zechariah 12:1]." Too, "in the Psalms [33:15]," we read that God "fashions the hearts one by one." We conclude, then, that "God daily makes souls." For, "as in the case of seeds" in the vegetable kingdom, "the seed which is thrown into the furrows...under whose influence the grain bursts into bud" - so too, "in the begetting of men, the womb...receives its own and nourishes what it has received and then gives a body to that which it nourishes.... Within those secret recesses of the belly, the hand of God is always working. And there [too] - is the same Creator of body and soul."
352. What about the nature of "the blessing...conferred upon Adam and upon the generations which descended from him?" Explains Jerome (approvingly translating Epiphanius):<sup>32</sup> "No one can presume to say that this grace of God was given to only one." No one can presume to say that Adam "alone was made in the image of God" - for see too Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9. Indeed, no one can presume to say "that those who were conceived in the womb (subsequently) and not 'born' in the way Adam was - did not possess God's image."
353. For the very opposite, explains Jerome,<sup>33</sup> was evidenced by God "when He sanctified Jeremiah [1:5] before he was born; when He made John to leap up in his mother's womb [Luke 1:41]; and when...He set Paul apart" or distinguished him within and later from his mother's womb [Galatians 1:15 cf. Second Timothy 1:3]." The same is true of the Son of man Jesus Christ, even from the very moment of His conception in the womb of Mary. Thus "Mary the mother of the Lord left the lowlands and made her way to the hill country when, after receiving the angel's message, she realized she herself was carrying the Son within her womb."<sup>34</sup> Luke 1:26-31,39.

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30. Jerome: *Epistle* 126:1. To Jerome and to all who have a non-traducian or 'creationist' view as to the time of the origin of the soul, the text John 5:17 seems to imply that God continued and still continues 'creating' new human souls even after the commencement of His seventh-day creation sabbath - and that He continued and still continues creating such souls 'hitherto' alias right down to the time of Christ's first advent (and beyond).

31. Jer.: *To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem*, 21f.

32. *Ib.* 11-14 and Jer.: *Epistle* 51:6

33. Jer.: *Ep.* 24:2.

34. *Ep.* 46:2

354. Then there is also the unborn "John the baptizer who, when Mary came in, leaped up for joy [Luke 1:41]. For he heard the Lord speaking [shortly after His Owen conception even] by the mouth of the virgin<sup>35</sup>." Indeed, "John leaps up in his mother's womb when - at Mary's salutation - Elisabeth declares herself unworthy" of Mary's notice. "In this way," Jerome explains, "John prophesied while still in his mother's womb."<sup>36</sup> Luke 1:41. For the Lord gave the Holy Ghost to John "who from his mother's womb cried out: 'Who am I, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?!'"<sup>37</sup>

### **Conclusion: the Post-Nicaean Church upholds tiny human life**

355. Conclusion. The A.D. 325 Council of Nicaea was a watershed in Church History. It gave sharp definition to the doctrine of Christ's incarnation - even from His very conception onward, and precisely within the womb of Mary. For there it was that the Son of God, in the fullness of time, became fully human - prenatally through post-mortally, and even unto all eternity thereafter.
356. This christology was reflected in the views of very many early Post-Nicene Theologians - even as regards their understanding of the anthropology of all men everywhere. For it strengthened the Biblical view that all human embryos, just like Jesus, receive their human soul at conception itself.
357. Indeed, this was clearly taught not only by the great Nicaean Athanasius himself. It was taught, even before Augustine of Hippo-Regius, also by the leading Post-Nicaeans. Such include: Aphrahat the Persian; Hilary of Poitiers; Ephraem the Syrian; Cyril of Jerusalem; Gregory of Nazianze; Gregory of Nyssa; Ambrose of Milan; John Chrysostom of Constantinople, and the great Jerome of Bethlehem.

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<sup>35</sup> *Ep.* 107:3. <sup>36</sup> *Ep.* 124:8 & 130:4. <sup>37</sup> Jer.: *Dialogue Against the Luciferians*, 7.

<sup>36</sup> *Ep.* 124:8 & 130:4.

<sup>37</sup> Jer.: *Dialogue Against the Luciferians*, 7.

## F. AUGUSTINE AND THE MEDIAEVALISTS ON TINY HUMAN LIFE

"Let the day perish on which I was born! And let the night perish when it was said, 'A male child has been conceived!' Why didn't I die from the womb? ... Remember, I implore You, that You made me - like clay... Didn't You pour me out like milk[y sperm], and curdle me like cheese? You clothed me with skin and flesh, and protected me with bones and sinews.... Why then did You bring me forth out of the womb? O, that I would have died before anybody ever saw me!" - Job 3:2-3,11 & 10:9-11,18.

358. The great Augustine of North Africa was conceived by his Christian mother Monica in 354 A.D. His later impact on subsequent theological history and indeed also on the course of all human culture on this planet, has been very profound. Certainly the greatest thinker between the time of the Apostles and the Protestant Reformation, if not also down to this very day, his views merit very careful consideration.
359. Before becoming Presbyter-Bishop of Hippo-Regius in 395 A.D., he underwent some fascinating developments. One of the most interesting of these, involves his lifelong study anent the origin of the human soul.\*

\* Right after his conversion from Manichaeism, Augustine was, at first, a straightforward 'soul-creationist' - believing that the soul was created no earlier (and probably too no later) than at conception. See his *Questions on the Heptateuch*, II Q. 80 on Ex. 21:22-25 and his *Questions on the Old and New Testaments* 23. Especially during the Pelagian controversy, however - when the Pelagians opted for creationism perhaps principally to try to deny the transmissibility of original sin - Augustine reacted away from their (pseudo-)'creationistic' emphasis. See Aug.: *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, X ch. 16 para. 28. Yet he later again re-evaluated his own doctrine of the soul, in his *Retractions* (2:45-52 & esp. 71). Indeed, in his *Epistle to Optatus*, Augustine stated that the traducian "Tertullian was dreaming when he thought...that souls...are derived from their parents." See Aug.: *Retract.* (ed. Bogan, Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1968, p. 219; and compare too F. Copleston's *History of Philosophy*, Garden City, N.Y.: Image, 1962f, II pp. 79f). In Augustine's *The Lit. Mean. of Gen.* (10:19:34 & 10:25:41), he admitted that "the question of the [origin of the] soul is not easily solved from the Scripture (Dan. 10:17). Largely because he denied that the human soul of Christ Himself had been in the loins of the sinners Adam and Abraham, Augustine felt obligated to expose "the error of [the traducian] Tertullian regarding the soul." On the other hand, Augustine also had sympathy toward traducianism. This can be seen quite clearly, in his *Epistle to Jerome* (166:q:27) and in his work *Forgiveness and Baptism* (3:18). Cf. B.B. Warfield's great essay *Augustine and the Pelagian Controversy*. See too Dr. W.G.T. Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969 rep., III pp. 250f) and J.O. Buswell Jr.'s *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, I pp. 248f). As Dr. Bogan rightly observes (*op. cit.* p. 219): "He [Augustine] believed in creationism, and in a form of traducianism.... He firmly maintained that the soul of man is spiritual, not corporeal." See too the Eerdman's ed. of the *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.*, 1st Series, I p. 183 & esp. n. 4 (*q.v.!*). Augustine thus carefully seems to have allowed for traducianism, although he continued to favour creationism. Yet he clearly rejected pre-existentialism, transmigratism, and incidentalism. See his *Epistles* 166:3:6d (*q.v.!*). See too paras. 1721f.

**Augustine's Confessions: the human soul created at conception**

360. In his famous *Confessions*, Augustine writes<sup>1</sup> about God's creation of "the moving creatures which have life" (*viz.* in Genesis 1:20). Then, in an obvious reference to the creation of man, Augustine goes on to state that the earth next brought forth "not the creeping and flying creature that has life, but the living soul itself [Genesis 2:7]."
361. Some twenty years later,<sup>2</sup> Augustine would oppose the Pelagians. They denied not only the transmission, but also the very transmissibility, of Adam's original sin to all of his descendants. Here, Augustine himself responded that original sin was transmitted to the next generation nine months before their birth, even at conception itself. *Cf.* Psalm 51:5.
362. Accordingly, Augustine clearly continued to believe that the souls of infants - or at least their 'sensitive' souls<sup>3</sup> - were created by God out of nothing even at the time of each fresh conception. (For such, maintained Augustine's contemporary the creationistic Jerome,<sup>4</sup> was also the view even of "Tertullian, Apollinaris, and the majority of the Western divines.")

### Augustine's A.D. 415 Treatise on the Origin of the Soul

363. In A.D. 415, Augustine wrote his *Treatise on the Origin of the Soul* (addressed to his famous contemporary Jerome of Bethlehem). There, Augustine insists<sup>5</sup> "that there is not one soul in the human family to whose salvation the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is not absolutely necessary." Job 3:3 & 19:25.
364. Augustine then continues:<sup>6</sup> "I ask - **when** can the soul, even of an infant snatched away by death, have contracted the guilt" of Adam's sin? The only answer could be [Psalm 51:5] - 'Look, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother **conceive** me!' For, Augustine continues, as the Septuagint itself points out in "the book of Job [14:4f] - 'in Thy sight, no one is clean - not even the infant whose time of life on Earth is a single day.'"
365. It is true, however - continues Augustine<sup>7</sup> - that "some bring [an objection] forward...against this opinion [that souls are created for each individual separately at conception]. The objection [is] that it seems unworthy of God that He should give souls to the offspring of adulterers...."
366. "This objection does not disturb me... In the case of stolen wheat, there is no fault in the grain but only in him that stole it.... The earth is not under obligation to refuse to cherish the seed [just] because the
367. "These things," Augustine continues, "I constantly state against those who attempt to overthrow...the opinion that souls are made for each individual [just as the first man's soul was made for him]."<sup>8</sup> Some

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1. Augustine: *Confessions*, 13:20:26 to 13:21:25.

2. See Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath., Eerdmans ed., I:1, p. 522 n. 1.

3. See at para. 414.

4. Jerome: *Epistle to Marcellinus and Anapsychia* I:1 (in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.*, I:1, p. 522).

5. Aug.: *Epistle* 166:2:5, in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath*

6. *Ib.*, 166:3:6.

7. *Ib.*, 166:5:15. sower may have cast it in with a hand defiled by dishonesty.... God brings many good things to light, even out of our evils and our sins. Now the creation of any living creature compels every one who considers it with piety and wisdom, to give to the Creator praise which words cannot express. And if this praise is called forth by the creation of any living creature whatsoever - how much more is it called forth by the creation of a man.

8. *Ib.*, 166:6:16.

may ask: "Why are bodily sufferings experienced by the little children who by reason of their tender age have no sins" committed by themselves personally? Answers Augustine:<sup>9</sup> "Is there any reason why these things should **not** take place?"

### Augustine never retracted his conceptional creationism

368. It is true that Augustine does not definitively push his own personal variety of 'creationism' as to the soul's origin - in the rest of his *Treatise on the Origin of the Soul*. Nor does he push this view in his later *Retractions*.<sup>10</sup> Yet it is clear enough from what we have already seen above, that Augustine indeed believed the soul of an unborn baby already exists - at least 'sensitively' - even from conception itself.
369. For, in his great pre-400-A.D. work *On the Trinity*, Augustine points out<sup>11</sup> that "the Son of God so came - as to become the Son of man." Indeed, "He is the Word" - and "He is sent by Him from Whom He was begotten (*genitum*)."<sup>12</sup>
370. In his work *Concerning Holy Virginity*, Augustine gladly admits that those who have been justified, "are chaste." Yet he also insists that "their mothers [had previously] nurtured them in their wombs - in sin."<sup>13</sup>

### Augustine's *City of God* on the resurrection of those aborted

371. In his renowned work *The City of God*,<sup>14</sup> Augustine even considers whether "abortions shall rise again" - that is, whether there will be a resurrection of aborted human beings who "were alive in the womb" - and who "also died there." Here, Augustine concludes: "I fail to see why, if they are not excluded from the number of the dead, they should not attain [also] to the resurrection of the dead...."
372. "All human souls shall receive again the bodies which they had, wherever they lived.... I do not see how I can say that even those who died in their mother's womb, shall have no resurrection.... We must at least apply to them [too]...all that we have to say of infants who have been born."
373. Of course, continues Augustine, those that die as "infants...will not rise in that diminutive body in which they died - but shall receive by the marvellous and rapid operation of God, that body which time (by a slower process) would have given them.... To the dead infants, there was wanting the perfect stature of its body.... This perfect stature is (in a sense) so possessed by all, that they are **conceived** and born with it - that is, they have it **potentially**, though not yet in actual bulk. Just as all the members [or bodyparts] of the body are potentially in the 'seed' - though, even after the child is born, some of them (the teeth for example) may be wanting."
374. At the resurrection, however, "every man shall receive his own size which he had in youth, though he died an old man - or which he would have had, supposing he died before his prime.... The measure of Christ will be completed when...all shall rise neither beyond nor under youth - but in that vigour and age to which we know that Christ had arrived. For even the World's wisest men have fixed the bloom

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9. *Ib.*, 166:7:18.

10. See Aug.: *Retractions*, II:45.

11. Aug.: *On the Trinity*, 4:18:24 (in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.*).

12. *Ib.*, 4:20:28.

13. Aug.: *Concerning Holy Virginity*, ch. 37.

14. Aug: *The City of God*, 22:13-15.

of youth at about the age of thirty."

### Augustine on the prenatal personalities of John and Jesus

375. In his *Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon*, Augustine makes<sup>15</sup> an important statement about the prenatal John the baptizer and his half-cousin Jesus Christ. "John saw his Relative - in the family of Abraham, and...of Mary, and Elisabeth. And he recognized the same Person, as his Lord and his God. For, as John says, he himself received of His fullness [John 1:6-16].
376. "On account of this vision, among those born of women there has arisen nobody greater than John [Matthew 11:11]. Because - of all who foretold about Christ - John alone saw what many righteous men and prophets desired to see, yet did not see." Indeed, "John saluted Christ - from the womb [Luke 1:44]."
377. Yes, even then, John "knew Him... For he even leaped up in his mother's womb - when Mary visited Elisabeth." Luke 1:41. Thus Augustine, in his *Harmony of the Gospels*.<sup>16</sup>

### Prenatal life in Augustine's Treatise on...Forgiveness of Sins

378. Augustine gives us additional valuable information, in his *Treatise on the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins*. "By one man," namely Adam - explains Augustine<sup>17</sup> - "sin entered into the World, and death by sin [Romans 5:12].... Sin and death together...passed by natural descent [or 'by one man'] from one [human being] - upon **all** human beings....
379. "This indicates **propagation**, not imitation [of sin]. For if imitation were meant - Paul would have said 'by the devil' [and not: 'by one **man**']. But, as no one doubts, Paul refers to that first 'man' [who is called 'Adam']. 'And so,' says Paul, sin and death 'passed upon all men.'
380. "Yet, by grace," Augustine further explains, "God engrafts into His body even...infants, who certainly have not yet become able to imitate anyone.... He in Whom all are made alive - besides offering Himself as an example of righteousness to those who imitate Him - gives also of His Spirit, Which He secretly infuses even into infants."
381. Augustine goes on: "Others again, like Jeremiah [1:5], are sanctified even in their mother's womb. Whereas all men, if there is original sin [as is indeed the case], are equally guilty.... Infants do not deserve to be absolved from that guilt even before they are born." Some wrongly "think of the soul...that, before birth, it had done nothing good or evil." But "it is quite possible for one who is not cleansed, to be born [even] of parents who are cleansed." For "not generation, but regeneration, makes Christians....
382. "Therefore the saying of the Apostle: 'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean. But now they are holy'....
383. "The Apostle's words [here in First Corinthians 7:14] seem...to indicate [that]...some particular sanctification is to be understood here." By such a particular sanctification - "an unbelieving husband

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<sup>15</sup>. Aug.: *Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon* 22:85 (in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.*).

<sup>16</sup>. Aug.: *Harmony of the Gospels*, II:15.

<sup>17</sup>. *Treatise on the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins*, I:9f,30 & II:59 & III:17,21 (compare his *On Original Sin* II:36).

or wife is sanctified by the believing partner." For only in this way could it come about that even the unborn "children of believing parents were sanctified" before their birth. For there is indeed "a sprinkling of holiness arising out of the close ties of married life and children."

### The relevance of Augustine's work *On the Soul and its Origin*

384. It is especially in his treatise *On the Soul and its Origin* that Augustine addresses<sup>18</sup> these matters. Of course, it is not only the soul which is made by the Lord. For "God also creates the entire body of man" - and "He makes the human body by the process of propagation...."
385. "We have read," recalls Augustine, "all about the mother of the Maccabean youths" - about the mother who said: 'I cannot tell, my sons, **how** you came into my womb.... But it was **God** Who...formed the generation of men'
386. "At the same time, we do not hesitate to affirm that the proposition...that the soul comes to man neither out of descent nor out of nothing, is certainly not true.... We certainly do not in the least object to the opinion being maintained that new souls are created by [God's] inbreathing."

### Augustine against the Pelagians and on the Psalms

387. One does not "find male organs of generation in the body of a bird without also finding a male bird" - even at conception. So Augustine claimed against the Pelagians:<sup>19</sup> "The infant that you look upon, was conceived in iniquity; and in sin did the mother nourish him or her in the womb."
388. Also in his *Expositions on the Psalms*, Augustine concludes<sup>20</sup> that during a baptism "if that infant could speak to you, he or she would say...: 'I have been conceived in iniquity - and in sin did my mother nourish me in the womb'.... God has foreknown men...even in the wombs of their mothers [Genesis 25:23]. For why when Rebecca was yet pregnant and was bearing twins in the womb was it said: 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated?'" Malachi 1:2 & Romans 9:13. "It was said: 'The elder shall serve the younger!' Hidden at that time was the judgment of God. But yet, from the womb - that is, from the very origin - sinners are [already] alienated [from God]...."
389. "You have been conceived [and]...you have been generated inside a mother.... Therefore even Mary was told: 'For He Who is being generated inside you, is of the Holy Spirit' [Matthew 1:20 and Luke 1:35]. He had not yet been born from her. But He had already been **conceived** inside of her!"
390. Similarly, said Augustine,<sup>21</sup> "certain little ones are generated inside the Church. It is a good thing when, while being formed, they do not drop out by way of miscarriage - but go out [by way of normal birth]."
391. "Let the mother give birth to you - and do not miscarry! If you are patient while you are being formed" [even until the sure doctrine of truth shall be in you] - "the maternal womb ought to protect you. But if

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18. Aug.: *On the Soul and its Origin*, I:21,23,25 & I:24,33 & III:9 & IV:32f.[Second Maccabees 7:22f].... The mother of the Maccabean youths...knew very well that she had conceived children from her husband, and that they had been created for her both in body and in soul and spirit by the Creator of all....

19. Aug.: *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, IV:4.

20. Aug.: *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (51 - para. 10).

21. Aug.: *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (51:10).

you impatiently shake the sides of your mother [the Church], she will indeed expel you outside - and more to your loss, than to hers!" See Galatians 4:19-27.

### John Cassian on prenatal human life and personality

394. Around 435 A.D., John Cassian - the Presbyter-Abbot of Marseilles - wrote his work *The Second Conference of Abbot Serenus*. There, he says<sup>22</sup> that "the compacting of flesh is formed from man's seed.... In the actual compacting of this body, a ministerial office alone must be attributed to men. But the chief part of its formation [...is done by] to God the Creator of all.
393. "As David says: 'Your hands have made me and fashioned me' [Psalm 119:73]. And [as] the blessed Job [declares] - 'have You not milked me like milk, and curdled me like cheese? You have put me together with bones and sinews' [Job 10:10f]. And [as] the Lord [said] to Jeremiah [1:5] - 'before I formed you in the womb, I knew you!'"

### Leo the Great and Fulgentius: human life begins at conception

394. About two decades later, Leo the Great - the Presbyter-Bishop of Rome - wrote his *Letter to Terribius* around 455 A.D. There, Leo states<sup>23</sup> that "the universal Christian faith acknowledges every man to be formed by the Maker of the universe, in the substance of his body and soul - and to receive the breath of life within his mother's womb....
395. "This is why David too - who certainly was a son of promise - says to God: 'Your hands have made me and fashioned me' [Psalm 119:73]. And the Lord says to Jeremiah [1:5] - before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and I sanctified you in your mother's belly."
396. Almost a century later, around 533 A.D., Fulgentius (Presbyter of Ruspe) wrote a work titled: *On Faith*. There, he indicated<sup>24</sup> that "infants carry...original sin from their first conception."
397. This shows that Fulgentius not only affirmed the ongoing transmittibility of inherited guilt. It further implies he believed that personhood exists even from conception itself. For he well perceived that infants possess a moral status even from then onward.

### Gregory the Great on the conceptional origin of human life

398. Around 600 A.D., Gregory the Great - the Presbyter-Bishop of Rome - drew attention<sup>25</sup> to David who said: 'Behold, I was conceived in iniquities; and in sin did my mother bring me forth' [Psalm 51:7]. Here, states Gregory, "knowing himself to have been conceived in iniquities, David groaned because he had been born in sin: because the [parent] tree bears in its [offspring] branch, the vicious humour which it has drawn from its root [Adam]."
399. Elsewhere too<sup>26</sup> - while describing the origin of Jesus' human nature - Gregory writes that "when the holy virgin...heard the angel speaking to her, she said: 'Behold, I am the Lord's handmaid! Let this

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22. John Cassian: *The Second Conference of Abbot Serenus*, VIII:25.

23. Leo the Gt.: *Epistles* 15:10.

24. Fulgentius: *On Faith*, 27.

25. Greg. Gt.: *Epistles*, 64.

26. *Ib.*, 67. gone to Elisabeth her kinswoman, at once she heard: 'Who am I, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?'" Luke 1:28.



happen to me, just as you have said!" Luke 1:38. "Then, when Mary had conceived Him and

400. Here, Gregory adds: "It was not that the **flesh** was first conceived in the womb of the virgin - and the divinity **afterwards** came into the flesh. But, as soon as the Word came into the womb, immediately: the Word, retaining the excellence of His own [divine] nature, was made flesh....
401. "The Only-begotten Son of God, through the womb of the virgin, was born a perfect man - that is, in verity of flesh and of rational soul.... He Who existed as God before the ages, was conceived as man through the Holy Spirit in the virgin's womb at the end of the ages.... To be conceived in the Holy Spirit of the flesh of the virgin, was itself to be anointed."

### **John of Damascus: body and soul both made at generation**

402. Presbyter John of Damascus wrote his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* around 750 A.D. In that work,<sup>27</sup> he states that "no one will say to his Maker: 'why have You fashioned me like this?' For the Potter is able at His will to make vessels of various patterns out of His clay - as a proof of His own wisdom [*cf.* Romans 9:21].... He creates [man] with His own hands....
403. "On the one hand, He formed man's body out of earth. And on the other, He bestowed man's reasoning and thinking soul upon him by His own inbreathing.... **Body and soul were formed at one and the same time**.... The soul, accordingly, is a living essence...making use of an organized body and being the source of its...life and growth and sensation and generation."

### **Anselm: infants exist from and inherit sin at their conception**

404. Anselm was Chief Presbyter-Bishop of Canterbury around 1080 A.D. He declares: "Before my mother conceived me [Psalm 51:5], I fell.... I was conceived in that darkness; and I was born wrapped up in it."<sup>28</sup> After the fall, man "is conceived and born in sin."<sup>29</sup>
405. Apparently following Augustine of Hippo-Regius,<sup>30</sup> Anselm of Canterbury further claims<sup>31</sup> that "the conception" only of Jesus Himself "is pure and free from sin." Even "the virgin herself from whom He was taken, was 'conceived in iniquities'; and her mother conceived her 'in sins' [Psalm 51:5] and she was conceived with original sin - since she also sinned in Adam, 'in whom all have sinned' (Romans 5:12)."
406. It is certainly quite true that "if Adam and Eve...had preserved their original justice, those who were born of them would originally have been just."<sup>32</sup> But, especially after the fall, is it seen "that an **infant** has a **rational soul**...from the very moment of its **conception** - for otherwise there would be no original sin in it as soon as it is conceived."<sup>33</sup>
407. Indeed, continues Anselm, "if the infant does not have sin from the very instant of its conception - what

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27. John Dam.: *Exposition Orthodox Faith*, ch. 12.

28. Ans.: *Proslogium* 18.

29. Ans.: *Why Did God Become Man?* 22.

30. Compare Augustine's *Against Julian the Pelagian* V:15, and his *Imperfect Work* VI:22 (in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, Paris, XLIV-XLV, at pp. 813 & 1552f).

31. Ans.: *Why Did God Become Man?* 16:1.

32. Ans.: *Virgin Conception & Original Sin*, ch. 2

33. *Ib.*, 7:1.

does Job [14:4] mean when he says to God: 'Who can cleanse him that is conceived of unclean seed?' ... And how then would what David says be true: 'I was conceived in iniquities; and in sin did my mother conceive me?'"<sup>34</sup> Psalm 51:5. For "how - if sin were not in infants from the very moment of their conception - could infants be said to be conceived in iniquities and in sins, from unclean seed?"

408. After the fall, the simple fact about any human being - explains Anselm of Canterbury - is this: "From the very seed and the very **conception** by which he **begins** to be **human**, he derives the necessity of having the [abiding] uncleanness of sin...[just] as soon as he has a rational soul."<sup>35</sup> The fact is, "each and every child of Adam is [hu]man by propagation - and a person by that individuation whereby he is distinguished from others."<sup>36</sup>
409. This also means that "the sin of Adam descends to infants.... None of them can be conceived without sin.... [For the Apostle Paul] declares that all the children of Adam - except the virgin's Son - are 'sinners' and 'children of wrath.'"<sup>37</sup> Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 2:3.
410. Yet "by original sin," concludes Anselm, "I do not understand anything different from what is in the infant as soon as it has a rational soul.... [For] corruption...is...in all infants naturally begotten."<sup>38</sup>

### Odo of Tornay: the human embryo is an animated or ensouled egg

411. Around 1110 A.D., Abbot Odo of Tornay (and later the Presbyter-Bishop of Cambrai) wrote<sup>39</sup> his treatise *On Original Sin*. There, he explains human propagation or conception from the fact that "the **soul** is the **animating**, energizing, and governing part of the man. The life and force of the body - come from the mind, or spirit, behind it. For when the spirit leaves the body, this [body] has neither life nor force....
412. "**The human embryo** is the result of one solely-physical ovum [once fertilized].... The merely physical ovum is animated and rationalized by the life of reason which is in the mind or spirit of the man.... The human embryo in this way...has two principles, an animate and a rational."<sup>40</sup>

### Thomas Aquinas: prenatal soul created at the same time as the body

413. Around 1275 A.D., the great Mediaeval Theologian Thomas Aquinas wrote much on the subject of human ensoulment (in his great work *Summa Theologiae*). Says Thomas:<sup>41</sup> "The 'soul' is defined as the first principle of life in those things which live.... It is the first principle of life which we call the 'soul'.... The soul, which is the first principle of life, is not the body - but the **act[ivator]** of a body....
414. "**In man, the sensitive soul [and] the intellectual soul and the nutritive soul are numerically one 'soul'.... The embryo has first of all a soul which is merely sensitive."<sup>42</sup> Yet "the human soul...was**

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34. *Ib.*, 7:2.

35. *Ib.*, 7:4.

36. *Ib.*, ch. 10.

37. *Ib.*, 22:2.

38. *Ib.*, 27:1.

39. Odo of Tornay: *On Original Sin* (in A. Migne's *Patrologia Latina* CLX pp. 1071).

40. See in W.G.T. Shedd: *Dogmatic Theology*, III pp. 254-58.

41. Thos. Aq.: *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, Q. 75, art. 1, ans

42. *Ib.*, Q. 76, art. 4, Reply to Obj. 3.

**itself created at the same time as the body.**"<sup>43</sup> At conception, "the generating power begets.... In perfect animals generated by coition, the active force is in the semen of the male.... The foetal matter is provided by the female....

415. "This matter, therefore, is **transmuted** by the power which is in the semen of the male - **until** it is actually '**informed**'.... After the sensitive soul (by the power of the active principle in the semen) has been produced...the sensitive soul of the offspring begins to work towards the perfection of its own body."<sup>44</sup> However, adds Thomas, "**the intellectual soul**...is an immaterial substance. It **cannot be caused through generation**, but only through creation by God."<sup>45</sup>
416. To Thomas - quite rightly - the soul is substantially distinct from the body. Yet he then very questionably adds that "both in man and in other animals...the **intellectual** soul is created by God at the **end** of human generation, and this soul is at the same time sensitive and nutritive."<sup>46</sup> Indeed, "in the generation of an animal [alias an 'enspirited' creature which is not a plant], the seminal power disposes the matter - while the power of the soul gives the form."<sup>47</sup> Semi-Aristotelianism rides again!
417. We agree with semi-tricho-tomistic Thomas - against both dicho-tomists and dicho-tomists - that human souls indeed have **three** aspects. But we disagree that man's soul is (semi-)tricho-tomous, and that an zygote's soul is at first merely sensitive and not yet also intellectual and nutritive. We cannot see that a human zygote first needs a brain in order to be at least incipiently 'intellectual.' After all, man still has intelligence in the next life - even after his brain has decomposed in the grave (until later resurrection). Luke 15:19-30 & Revelation 6:9-11.
418. Nor can we agree with the prenatal misapplication by some Neo-Thomists (both Romish and Protestant) of the postnatal particulars given in Leviticus 12:1-8. We deny that a male human embryo receives any aspect of his soul at but forty days and a female only at eighty days<sup>48</sup> - for both male and

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43. *Ib.*, Q. 90, art. 4, ans

44. *Ib.*, Q. 118, art. 1, Reply to Objs. 2 & 4.

45. *Ib.*, Art. 2, ans.

46. *Ib.*, Q. 118, art. 2, ans.

47. *Ib.*, Q. 118, Reply to Ob. 3.

48. See: Dr. W. Farrell's *A Companion to the Summa [of Thomas Aquinas]*, New York: Sheed & Ward, 1941, IV, pp. 270f, 284f, & 446f; Dr. B.V. Miller's *God the Creator*, London: Burnes Oates & Washbourne, 1927, pp. 64 & 73f; and Dr. J.P. Murphy's *The Sacrament of Baptism*, London: Burnes Oates & Washbourne, 1929, p. 32 (citing Thomas: *IV Sent.*, I:ii, dist. xxx, q. II, a. 2, ad 5 um). See too, on Thomas, Drs. J. van Genderen & W.H. Velema's *Concise Reformed Dogmatics*, Kampen: Kok, 1993, pp. 309-12; Dr. H. Bavinck's *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, Kampen: Kok, 1920, pp. 20f, 31, 58f & 79. The Protestant Neo-Thomist Polan, in his *Syntagma Theologiae Christiana* (Hanover, 1625 ed., V:31), apparently misapplying prenataly the postmortal portions in Leviticus 12:1-8, states that the uniting of newly-created souls with newly-begotten bodies takes place "in males, according to common opinion, about the *40th*; in females, about the *80th* day" after conception (see in Dr. Heppes's *Reformed Dogmatics*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978 ed., p. 231). Better is Dr. A. Kuyper Sr., in his *Dogmatic Dictations*, Kampen: Kok, n.d., II pp. 66f: "God creates the soul in the embryo.... Previously, it was said on the 30th or 40th day after fertilization." Yet "the new trilogy of father and mother and child comes into being as a reflection of the (co-eternal) Holy Trinity. Just as the Holy Spirit goes forth from the Father and from the Son, and the Father and the Son again find their unity in the Holy Spirit - so too do father and mother again find their unity in the child." Kuyper's son rightly fixes this at the very time of the child's conception. "Think of the first beginning of fertilization in the womb. O, how small and puny is that 'very first beginning' of the human who will one day stand in front of you as an adult man or woman! But here too there is the development, the continual becoming, of what it yet shall be.... All that the big strong man possesses, was in...him from the moment he began living.... So was it even with the holy child Jesus.... Luke 2:52" cf. 1:35f & 2:52 & 4:16. Thus

female humans are ensouled *in toto* at their very conception. Too, the human soul is not tricho-tomous but tri-une. Whether male or female the human soul is **not** (semi-)tri-partite **but** a complete tri-unity - created by the Triune God at conception itself. For the **triune human soul** reflects **the Holy Trinity** even **from conception onward**, and indeed increasingly so. Compare Genesis 1:26-28 with Luke 2:40-52 & 3:21-38 and Matthew 20:22f & 28:18.

### Conclusions: Augustine and the mediaevalists on tiny human life

419. Conclusion. Although Augustine never seems to have resolved the issue of creationism *versus* traducianism, he firmly believed that the soul was present in the human zygote even at conception. For this reason, as we shall later see,<sup>49</sup> he strongly condemned abortions performed on tiny human beings.
420. This view anent the personality of human embryos and their great worth was carefully maintained by all of the Post-Augustinian Fathers. For such was the clear teaching of John Cassian, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, John Damascene, Anselm of Canterbury, and Odo of Tornay. This was taught too even by the great Semi-Aristotelian Thomas Aquinas himself - in spite of his semi-trichotomistic embryology (which because of his baptismal regenerationism persuaded him to allow the removal from the womb of apparently-dying 'formed' or 'intellectual'<sup>50</sup> fetuses in order then to get them baptized 'in time').
421. Understandably, as to be seen in our next chapter, the **Biblical** aspects of the above teaching were continued also by the two greatest Protestant Augustinians. We mean, of course, Martin Luther and John Calvin. Indeed, *mutatis mutandis*, the same applies also to their many successors.

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Dr. A. Kuyper Jr.: *The Image of God*, Amsterdam: N.V. Daily & Pub., 1929, pp. 116f.

<sup>49</sup>. See para. 1494-97.

<sup>50</sup>. See para. 414.

## G. PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN ON THE FULL HUMANITY OF ALL CONCEIVED

"To avoid sexual immorality, every man should have his own wife, and every woman should have her own husband. The husband must give the wife the sexual intercourse he owes her. Likewise, the wife must give the husband the sexual intercourse she owes him.... Do not defraud one another.... Come together sexually.... For [even] an unbelieving husband is sanctified by his [believing] wife. And an unbelieving wife is sanctified by her [believing] husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean. But now, they are holy." - First Corinthians 7:2,3,5,14.

422. In one sense, Protestantism - or that form of Christianity which seeks to abide by the written teachings solely of the Holy Bible - started in the times of the New Testament with the preaching of Jesus and His Apostles also *vis-a-vis* all manmade traditions. Matthew 5:17-20f & 15:1-9 & 23:2-35f and Acts 4:1f & 23:6f. As such, by and large, that 'Proto-Protestantism' was continued by the Early Church Fathers of the pre-mediaeval Church.
423. Yet in another sense, Protestantism was rediscovered and developed further - only later. We mean by the post-mediaeval Church, and then again precisely after the invention of printing and the resultant serious study and widespread witness of the writtendown (and henceforth even printed-up) Sacred Scriptures. In this chapter, however, we shall trace only the period from the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation onward.
424. We shall defer to a later chapter below the consideration of the whole question of abortion - whether from a Biblical, from a Patristic, from a Romish, or from a Protestant viewpoint. For the present, we shall confine our attention only to the value of (especially prenatal) tiny human life, as propounded by: Luther; Calvin; the Reformed Confessions of Faith; Ursinus; Keckermann; Wollebius; Owen; Turretini; Riissen; Edwards; Hopkins; the Hodges; Shedd; Delitzsch; Kuyper; Bavinck; Geesink; Machen; Buswell; and Honig.

### Luther on the value of prenatal human life

425. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther (1483-1546), the great Protestant Reformer, clearly believed that humans who attained adulthood had existed as persons also prior to their birth. Quoting Psalm 139:15 with approval, Luther remarked: "What does the psalmist intend by such words - but to show us by this marvellous illustration [anent tiny human life before birth] how God has always been caring for us without our help.
426. "For who can boast that he contributed any part - to his [own] formation in the womb? Who gave to our mother that loving care with which she fed and fondled and caressed us and performed all those duties of motherhood, when we had as yet no consciousness of our life, and when we should neither know nor remember these things - but that, seeing the same things done to others, we believe that they were done to us also? For they were performed on us as though we had been asleep...or rather not yet born, so far as our knowledge of them is concerned."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. M. Luther: *The Fourteenth of Consolation*, cf. 3 (in *Works*, Philadelphia: Holman, 1915, I pp. 153f).

427. Elsewhere, Luther discusses Genesis 5:1-8. There,<sup>2</sup> he rightly observes that the image of Adam in which Seth was begotten or conceived, "included original sin. And the penalty of eternal death [was] inflicted - because of the sin of Adam."

### Calvin: the teaching on the origin of human life (Adam and Eve)

428. Professor Dr. John Calvin (1509-1564) was the greatest Protestant and indeed also the most influential Christian Theologian since the Apostle Paul. We have already noted his observations<sup>3</sup> on Psalm 51:6 that we humans are already in existence "**from the first moment that we are in the womb**" - just like David, "before he saw the light of this World." Indeed, we have also seen Calvin's other statement that God "fashioned us in our mother's womb" - even though "**the embryo, when first conceived...has no form.**"<sup>4</sup>
429. Now God's creation of Adam and Eve themselves is the antetype of all this. Compare Psalm 139:15f with Genesis 2:7 & 2:18f. For "in the creation of man," comments Calvin,<sup>5</sup> though "he was formed after the **image of God**," - yet, "lest men should use **it** as an occasion of pride, their **first** origin is placed immediately before them...."
430. "Moses relates that man had been, in the beginning, dust of the earth.... The body of Adam is formed from clay.... The peculiar dignity of man is shown in this, that he was formed gradually.... A 'soul' was given to man by which he might live, and be endued with sense and motion.... For Moses intended nothing more than to explain the animating of the clayey figure, whereby it came to pass that man began to live."

### Calvin: the teaching on tiny human life of the Older Testament

431. Again, Calvin gives us another important comment (*viz.* on Hebrews 12:9), in respect of the creation/conception of all of Adam's descendants by the sovereign God. Says Calvin:<sup>6</sup> "He is called 'the Father of spirits' - because He alone creates and recreates souls without the help of man.... God is the Father both of soul and body - and, properly speaking, the only ['father'].... This name ['father'] is given to men by way of concession [only] - whether in regard to the body or the soul. Since He does not use the help of men in creating souls, and [since He] renews them miraculously by the power of His Spirit, He is called particularly: 'the Father of spirits.'"
432. Calvin's account of the condition of the twins Jacob and Esau after their conception and before their birth, is also very instructive. He comments "that the infants struggle[d] together in their mother's womb.... The intestine strife in her womb continued to the time of bringing forth. For...Jacob seized his brother by the heel and attempted to get out before him.... [God] might [indeed] have brought forth Jacob first from the womb; but He made the other the firstborn."<sup>7</sup>
433. Later, "by saying 'the children being not yet born neither having done anything good or bad' [Romans 9:11] - Paul shows that God, in making the difference between them, could not have paid any regard to works which did not yet exist.... Esau deserved to be rejected, for he was by nature [or from

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2. Luth.: *Commentary on Genesis* (ch. 5), in *Works*, St. Louis: Concordia, 1958, I p. 98.

3. On Ps. 51:6 - see para. 143).

4. See paras. 148f.

5. J. Calvin: *Commentary on Genesis*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948f, I, at Gen. 2:7.

6. Calv.: *Commentary on Hebrews*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948f (at 12:9).

7. Calv.: *Comm. on Gen.* (25:22,24,23).

conception onward] a 'child of wrath' [*cf.* Ephesians 2:3]." Accordingly, "the Lord distinguishes between the sons of Isaac - while they are still in their mother's womb."<sup>8</sup>

434. There are also Calvin's *11th & 12th Sermons on the Third Chapter of Job* (3:3-16). There, the Reformer insists: "When God **created** us, He also printed His own **image** in us...[during] 'the night wherein...a male child is **conceived**'.... We see here how Job speaks of little babes.... We know that **when** the creature is **conceived** in the mother's womb, God breathes a **soul** into it - and it is certain that it has in it the seed of life."

### Calvin: the bearing of the incarnation on tiny human life

435. Last, let us heed Calvin's account of the human conception of the Lord Jesus. Here Calvin comments: "Christ, because **He** was **conceived** by a spiritual power, is called 'the holy seed'.... He contracted no defilement from a sinful nature. For the Spirit of God kept Him pure from the very commencement.... The manner of conception, therefore, assures us [Hebrews 7:26] that we have a Mediator separate from sinners."<sup>9</sup>
436. For this reason, Mary "cherished in her heart, by faith, the Son of God...conceived in her womb." Now as regards the pregnant Elisabeth's response when Mary visited her shortly thereafter - "it is natural that sudden joy on the part of a pregnant woman should cause a motion of the child in her womb.... The babe started [or jumped up] in her womb... Elisabeth affirms that her cousin was 'blessed' - on account of the blessedness of her child."
437. Yet "to carry Christ in her womb was not Mary's first 'blessedness' - but was greatly inferior to the distinction of being born again by the Spirit of God to a new life. Yet she is justly called 'blessed'; [she] on whom God bestowed the remarkable ['blessing' and] honour of bringing into the World - His Own Son through Whom she had been spiritually renewed." For "He Who was begotten [as] a mortal man in the womb of Mary is, at the same time, the eternal God."

### The 1559 French Confession of Faith on tiny human life

438. Calvin was co-author (with Chandieu) of the 1559 *French Confession of Faith*. This obtained tremendous influence in the Protestant congregations of France. States that *Confession*:<sup>10</sup> "We believe that the entire posterity of Adam was infected with this corruption called original sin" - Christ alone excepted.
439. It continues: "We also believe that this impediment is truly sin. It reaches down to damn the entire human race - even unto the tiny children from their mother's womb.... However, the damnation of the children of God is removed. For He, according to His free grace, does not impute it to them. Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Job 14:4; Psalm 51:7; Romans 3:9-12,23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 7:5f."

### The 1560 Scots Confession of Faith on tiny human life

440. No different is the statement of the 1560 *Scots Confession* of the Protestant Church in Scotland. It

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<sup>8</sup>. Calv.: *Commentary on Romans*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948f (at 9:11f).

<sup>9</sup>. Calv.: *Commentary on Luke* (1:35,39,41-43), in his *Harmony of the Gospels*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948f (at 9:11f).

<sup>10</sup>. Calvin and Chandieu: *French Confession of Faith*, arts. 10f.

explains:<sup>11</sup> "By this transgression generally known as original sin, the image of God was utterly defaced in man - and he and his children became **by nature** [alias from their very conception onward] hostile to God, slaves to Satan, and servants to sin...."

441. "Thus everlasting death has had - and shall have - power and dominion over all who have not been, are not, or shall not be reborn from above. Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 5:6,8; John 3:5,6,15." Mercifully, however, "God sent His Son into the World. He took the nature of humanity, from the substance of a woman. Galatians 4:4; Luke 2:6."

### **The 1561 Belgic Confession of Faith on tiny human life**

442. The 1561 *Belgic Confession* of the Dutch Reformed Protestant Church teaches that "through the disobedience of Adam original sin has been spread over all mankind. Romans 5:17-19." This original sin "is a corruption of the whole nature - and an hereditary depravity with which even infants themselves are infected **even in their mother's womb** and which, being in him as a root thereof, produces in man all sorts of sin. John 3:6; Psalm 51:7; Genesis 8:21; Ephesians 2:3; First Corinthians 15:22." Thus the *Belgica*.<sup>12</sup>
443. However, "God...sent into the World...His Own only-begotten and eternal Son, 'Who took upon Him[self] the form of a servant and became like unto man' - in very deed **assuming the true human nature** with all its infirmities, sin excepted, being **conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary** [Matthew 1:18-25.... And [He] did not only assume human nature as to the body, but also a true human soul - [so] that He might be very man. Luke 1:25-45; 2:7,40,52; Galatians 4:5.... By this conception, the Person of the Son is inseparably united and connected with the human nature; so that there are not two sons of God nor two Persons but two natures united in one single Person..., the **human nature...having beginning of days**. Isaiah 7:14 & 9:6." For "the virgin shall conceive"; "unto us a Son is born."

### **The 1562 English Confession of Faith on tiny human life**

444. Similarly, the Protestant Church of England's *English Confession* (as the basis of the *Thirtynine Articles* of 1562-71) in turn insists<sup>13</sup> that "original sin...is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man of Adam's offspring that is engendered naturally [or conceived by nature].... Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; First Corinthians 15:22; Romans 5:12.... Therefore, every person born into this World deserves God's wrath and damnation."
445. However, "there is no condemnation for them that believe." For "the Son..., of one substance with the Father, **took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin** - of her substance (Galatians 4:4 & Luke 1:38)...., to reconcile His Father to us and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt but also for all actual sins of men."<sup>14</sup>

### **The 1562 Heidelberg Catechism on tiny human life**

446. The 1562 *Heidelberg Catechism* of the German Reformed Church asks: "Where, then, does this

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11. J. Knox: *Scots Confession*, chs. 3 & 6.

12. *Belgic Confession*, arts. 15 & 18 & 19.

13. *Thirtynine Articles*, 9 & 20.

14. *Ib.*, art. 2.



corruption of human nature come from?" It then answers<sup>15</sup> that our human corruption comes "from the fall and disobedience of our first parents Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, whereby our human life is so poisoned - that we are all conceived and born in the state of sin. Psalm 51:5 & Genesis 5:3."

447. Accordingly, when the *Apostles' Creed* professes that Christ was "conceived by the Holy Spirit [and] born of the virgin Mary" - it means<sup>16</sup> "that the eternal Son of God...took upon Himself our true manhood from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, through the action of the Holy Spirit, so that He might also be...like His fellow men in all things except for sin. John 1:14; Galatians 4:4; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35." The *Heidelberg* then adds<sup>17</sup> it is precisely by way of "Christ's holy conception and nativity" - that His "perfect holiness covers...my sins in which **I was conceived**". Hebrews 2:16f & First Timothy 2:5."

### **Ursinus: original sin imputed at prenatal ensoulment**

448. Rev. Professor Dr. Zacharius Ursinus, the co-author of the above-mentioned *Heidelberg Catechism*, himself insists<sup>18</sup> that "original sin [is] inherent." It "passes over" to Adam's descendants "through the impious generation [meaning 'conception'] of the whole man."
449. This is "on account of the guilt of our first parents." It is because of this guilt that "God by a just judgment - **when He creates our souls** - at the same time deprives them of [or rather withholds from them] the original rectitude and gifts which He had conferred upon the [first] parents."

### **The 1566 Second Helvetic Confession on tiny human life**

450. In the 1566 *Second Helvetic Confession* of the Reformed Church in Switzerland,<sup>19</sup> "concerning man Scripture says that in the beginning he was made good according to the image and likeness of God [Genesis 1].... More-over, God gave him a wife, and blessed them [Genesis 2].... Man consists of two different substances in one person: an immortal soul...and a mortal body which will nevertheless be raised up from the dead at the last judgment...."
451. "By sin, we understand that innate corruption of man which has been derived or propagated in us all - from our first parents. Matthew 12:22f.... The Apostle says: 'We were dead through trespasses and sins...and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.' Ephesians 2:1f *cf.* Romans 5:12.... There is original sin in all men.... We therefore condemn all who have taught contrary to this - especially Pelagius, and all Pelagians."
452. Yet there is one man - and one alone - Who never sinned at all. Explains the *Helvetica*: "The eternal Son of the eternal God was made the son of man from the seed of Abraham and David, not from the *coitus* of a man (as the Ebionites said) but most chastely conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the ever-virgin Mary - as the evangelical history carefully explains to us. Matthew chapter 1.... Indeed, we detest the dogma of the Nestorians who make two of the one Christ and dissolve the unity of the Person. Likewise, we thoroughly execrate the madness of Eutyches and of the Monothelites or Monophysites who destroy the property of the human nature."

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15. *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q. & A. 8.

16. *Ib.*, Q. 35.

17. *Ib.*, Q. 36.

18. Z. Ursinus: *Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism*, Quaest. 7, pp. 40f

19. *Second Helvetic Confession*, chs. 7f & 11.

### **Keckermann: the incarnation and our prenatal ensoulment**

453. A great contribution to our subject was made by the Danzig Professor Rev. Dr. Bartholomew Keckermann, in his 1611 *System of Holy Theology*. Writes he:<sup>20</sup> "Christ's incarnation was at once [both] ordinary and extra-ordinary: ordinary as regards the material supplied by the virgin Mary; extra-ordinary as regards the formative force added to this material [by the Holy Spirit].... The union of the divine nature with the human began the moment the formation of the human nature was completed...."
454. "The formation of the foetus in the virgin's womb had its stages and processes, as is usual in the formation of other foetuses...usually completed in the space of nine months. It was right that Christ should be made like us in this too, namely in not being formed and born in a moment - but being completed in a matrix suited to the order and processes of nature."

### **The 1618f *Decrees of Dordt* on tiny human life**

455. Some of the implications of this seem to have been drawn out in the *Canons of Dordt*, as laid down at the great Synod of Dordrecht in 1618-19. Declares Dordt:<sup>21</sup> "The children of believers are holy [First Corinthians 7:14] - not by nature, but by virtue of the covenant of grace in which they, together with their parents, are comprehended. Genesis 17:7; Isaiah 59:21; Acts 2:39. Godly parents have no reason to doubt of the election and salvation of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life in their infancy. Cf. Second Samuel 11:26f & 12:13-22 with First Corinthians 7:14."
456. This is so, concludes *Dordt*,<sup>22</sup> even though "such as man was after the fall - so were the children begotten [or conceived] by him, so that the corruption according to God's just judgment has come upon all the posterity of Adam (Christ only excepted) not by imitation as the Pelagians of old asserted but by the propagation of a vicious nature. Job 14:4; Genesis 8:21; Psalm 51:7; Romans 3:9f; 5:12f."
457. Again, as confessed and declared in the *Formula for the Baptism of Infants of Believers* of the Dutch Reformed Church,<sup>23</sup> even God's covenant people are corrupt - inasmuch as "we, with our children, are 'conceived and born in sin' (Psalm 51:5) and therefore are 'children of wrath' (Ephesians 2:1f) so that we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God except we be born again (John 3:3-8)." Yet, "although our children are conceived and born in sin and therefore are subject to all misery, yes, to condemnation itself - yet...they are sanctified in Christ (Ezekiel 16:20f and First Corinthians 7:14)."

### **Wollebius: prenatal ensoulment from conception onward**

458. Basel's Rev. Professor Dr. John Wollebius, in his 1626 *Compendium of Christian Theology*, insists<sup>24</sup> that "the human soul is not reproduced by transmission of semen but is put into the body as immediately created by God. Concerning man's creation, Moses [Genesis 2:7] writes: 'God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man was made a living soul.'"
459. "In this text, three points are to be noted. First, the immediate creation of the soul.... Second, its being

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20. B. Keckermann: *System of Holy Theology*, Geneva, 1611, pp. 323f.

21. *Canons of Dordt*, I art. 17.

22. *Ib.*, III & IV, art. 2.

23. *Formula for the Baptism of Infants of Believers*, First Part, and First Question. In *Doctrinal Standards and Liturgy of the Reformed Dutch Church*, Cape Town: Rose, 1876, pp. 126-29.

24. J. Wollebius: *Compendium of Christian Theology*. In ed. J.W. Beardslee's *Reformed Dogmatics*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965, pp. 57 & 69f.

breathed in. Third, the hypstatic union of body and soul: 'he was made a living soul' means, by metonymy, that he became an animate creature....

460. "The soul of man today is still created by God from nothing and breathed into the individual. (1) If this were not true, our souls would be unlike that of Adam.... Nothing is generated from matter, except what was originally created from matter. (2) Because the soul of Christ was not made by transmission of semen.... Rather was He conceived, through the action of the Holy Spirit, from the blood of the blessed virgin. (3) Scripture speaks of the origin of our souls as a work of creation, not of nature."
461. Relevant texts here, continues Rev. Professor Dr. John Wollebius, are "Job 33:4 and Zechariah 12:1." In Job 33:4 the inspired Job declares of himself: 'The Spirit of God made me, and the Breath of the Almighty gives me life.' In Zechariah 12:1 it is stated: 'The Lord...forms the spirit of man within him.' On the basis of the foregoing, Wollebius then goes on: "Although **the human soul** is breathed into [the person] directly by God, yet, **from the first moment** of being united to the body it is guilty of the first sin which is imputed to the entire human race - and so it is corrupted by that sinfulness.... No human being whatsoever...is free from original sin [Christ Alone excepted]. Nor does it affect children merely, but also people yet unborn."
462. Consequently, concludes Wollebius,<sup>25</sup> even as regards Jesus "there are two stages in the incarnation of Christ: conception, and birth.... The form of the conception of Christ, consists in the preparation and sanctification of the blood of the blessed virgin" and "the formation of the body" of Jesus. For the purpose of the miraculous conception of Christ, is that He may be free from original sin."

### **The 1645 Declaration of Thorn on original sin at conception**

463. The *Declaration of Thorn* of the Polish Protestant Church, in 1645, takes a similar position. By teaching the imputation of original sin at the moment of conception, it clearly implies that this is when personality begins.
464. It states<sup>26</sup> that "all people - Christ alone excepted - were conceived and born in original sin.... Original sin consists not only of the mere loss of righteousness, but also of the perversion or the tendency toward evil planted forth into all persons from Adam onward."

### **The 1647f Westminster Standards on original sin at conception**

465. The teaching of the *Westminster Standards* of the British Protestant Churches and the Parliament of England during the seventeenth century - previously referred to in paragraphs 38 to 49 above (*q.v.*) - is extremely important. For the *Westminster Standards* epitomize all that is best in the Biblical and Reformational Faith of John Calvin - now known as Calvinism.
466. This Calvinism was transmitted to the *Westminster Standards* by way of Calvin's *French Confession*; Knox's *Scots Confession*; De Bres's *Belgic Confession*; Cranmer's *English Confession* (soon becoming known as the *Thirty-nine Articles*); Olevianus's and Ursinus's *Heidelberg Catechism*; Bullinger's *Second Helvetic Confession*; Keckermann; the *Canons of Dordt*; Wollebius; and the *Declaration of Thorn*. The relevant teaching of the *Westminster Standards* themselves has already

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<sup>25.</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 89f.

<sup>26.</sup> *Declaration of Thorn*, II:3:4-5. In E.G.A. Boeckel: *The Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Reformed Churches*, Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1847, p. 869.

been set forth in paragraphs 428 to 464 (*q.v.*).

467. Here we would only state further, that the *Westminster Standards* specifically teach original sin is transmitted to us as soon as we are **conceived**.<sup>27</sup> They insist that Jesus alone was conceived without sin.<sup>28</sup> However, the *Westminster Confession* itself declares that even "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated by the Spirit" - as too are "all other elect persons" (such as elect fetuses dying before their birth).<sup>29</sup>

### Owen: prenatal ensoulment from conception onward

468. The great seventeenth-century British Theologian Rev. Dr. John Owen agreed with Westminster. He stated that "we derive our [human] nature from Adam, by the way of natural generation."<sup>30</sup>
469. Strikingly, Owen's Congregationalists themselves adopted the *Savoy Confession* - adapting it from Westminster's doctrinal declarations. In all material respects the *Savoy* was almost identical to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (except as regards church government and eschatology). The Baptists did the same with their *London Confession*. That, again, was an exact copy of the *Westminster* (save regarding church government and baptism).

### Turretini: prenatal ensoulment and besmirchment at conception

470. The Geneva Professor Rev. Dr. Francisco Turretini, in his 1685 *Theological Institutes*, maintained<sup>31</sup> that "original sin is proved...from Genesis 5:3 - where Adam is stated to have begotten Seth 'after his image'; that is, a corrupt one begat the same.... From Psalm 51:5 - 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me!' - [the] 'I' [who] was 'conceive[d]' cannot be referred to the parents' acts of begetting, but [only to the person conceived and] to the formation of the begotten body in the womb....
471. "The children of believers are holy, First Corinthians 7:14 - not as to immunity from all sin...but as to communion with the Church from which those considered unholy and unclean are excluded.... They may be called 'holy' inherently...because that holiness would be a blessing of grace...which they do not have from themselves nor [from their] parents but from the Spirit of Christ renewing believers....
472. "How is original sin propagated from parents to their children? ... As a man begets a man, and a leper a leper - it ought not to seem wonderful for a sinner to beget a sinner also like himself... The tinder of that sin is derived in the **conception** itself, and is impressed upon the foetus through the vital and animating spirits.... Original sin...in the soul of infants...would arise only when the soul began to operate through the body."

### Riissen: prenatal zygotes are persons even from conception

473. The Amsterdam Theologian Rev. Dr. Leonard Riissen asked<sup>32</sup> the following important question in

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27. *Westminster Larger Catechism*, QQ. & AA. 26f.

28. *Ib.*, Q. & A. 28 (compare *Westminster Confession of Faith* 8:2).

29. *West. Conf. Faith*, 10:3f.

30. J. Owen: *The Person of Christ*, in his *Works*, ed. Russell, London: Banner of Truth, 1965, XII pp. 247-49.

31. F. Turretini: *Theological Institutes*, Grandville, Mich.: Theological School of the Prot. Reformed Churches, 1980, pp. 238-49.

32. L. Riissen: *Francis Turretin's Didactical-Elenctical Compendium of Theology Augmented and Illustrated from*

1695: "Was Christ's body formed in a moment, or successively? Answer - Three things occur here: (1) the preparation of the material from which Christ's body was formed; (2) the formation of the body from the material duly prepared; (3) the completing of the same body brought gradually, by its own increments, to the proper stature.

474. "As regards (1) and (3), all are agreed that they were accomplished by degrees (*'successive'*). As regards (2), Theologians disagree [with one another] - some urging an instantaneous formation, others a successive (with which latter we agree).
475. "(1) The instantaneous and miraculous formation of Christ's complete body and its union with the soul, is a fiction unsupported by Scripture. (2) In His assumption of the human nature, Christ is said to have been made like us, except for sin. (3) If Christ's body were to have been completed in a moment, it could equally have been born the same moment - but the blessed virgin need not [in that case] have suffered the inconveniences of ordinary gestation."
476. Here, it is quite obvious what the Reformed Church's Dr. Riissen believed the Bible teaches or implies without exception - in respect of the conception of all humans who have descended from our first ancestral parents. For Riissen did not believe, also in the case of Jesus Himself, that Scripture teaches any **instantaneously-completed** or **fully-formed** human fetus has ever since the beginning of time even once been conceived.
477. Riissen believed, even in the case of Jesus Himself, that Holy Scripture teaches only pre-fetal human **zygotes** are ever **conceived** - zygotes which only subsequently can develop first into embryos, next into fetuses, and then into babies. Consequently, also Jesus, Who took upon Himself our own human nature even from His conception, was already a complete human person - though not yet an embryo or a fetus or a baby - even while still a zygote.
478. So it must follow that all the other descendants of Adam and Eve too, even when they are or were zygotes, are or were already real human persons. For even as zygotes, they are or were not just potentially-human or only potential persons - but fully-human persons with the potential of much further antemortal development, both prenatally and post-natally (should they so continue to live).

### **American Protestant Churches: ensoulment at start of human life**

479. In the American Protestant Churches, there has - at least since the times of Rev. Professor Dr. Jonathan Edwards and Rev. Professor Dr. Samuel Hopkins - alongside the continuation of Jerome's creationism, also been a strong resurgence of Tertullian's traducianism.<sup>33</sup> **Traducianism** generally teaches that human zygotes' souls are derived from, or rather through, their parents and/or their more remote ancestors.
480. **Creationism** generally teaches that human zygotes' souls are freshly 'created' by the immediate action of God Himself. However, both consistent traducianism and consistent creationism equally teach that a new human being with an immortal soul is already in existence - even at the very moment of conception itself.
481. Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Hodge, while tolerating traducianism as a viable option, strongly favoured

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*the Institutes of our own Theologians*, Amsterdam, 1695, XI:28

<sup>33</sup>. See A.A. Hodge: *Outlines of Theology*, London: Nelson, 1879, pp. 351 & 353.

creationism.<sup>34</sup> However, his son Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge<sup>35</sup> - as well as Rev. Professor Dr. Robert L. Dabney<sup>36</sup> - after discussing the issue more adequately, then left it open. Rev. Professor Dr. W.G.T. Shedd, who tolerated creationism, strongly favoured traducianism.<sup>37</sup> And Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield gave<sup>38</sup> a very careful presentation of some of the issues here involved - in his great essay on *Augustine and the Pelagian Controversy*.

482. Rev. Professor Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr., while having a very slight preference for traducianism, most wisely concluded:<sup>39</sup> "All that the Bible says on this subject, can be adhered to consistently on either of these two theories.... There is a certain obvious fact which has [often] been neglected.... And that is: the perfect uniformity and regularity of the arrival of a soul - **whenever** a human life begins to be."

### Edwards & Hopkins on human ensoulment already at conception

483. After the above general explanation of creationism and traducianism in America, we return to trace the historical development of understanding particularly the origin of human life - in American Protestant Theology. We begin with Rev. Professor Dr. Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), Founder of Princeton University and probably the greatest American Theologian of all time.
484. In his very important writing *Against Watts's Notion of the Pre-existence of Christ's Human Soul*, Jonathan Edwards lays down<sup>40</sup> the universal principle that "to be the son of a woman is to receive being in both soul and body in consequence of a conception in her womb. The soul is the principal part of the man. And sonship implies derivation of the soul, as well as the body - by conception.
485. "Not that the soul is a [material] part of the mother, as the body is. Though the soul is not a [material] part of the mother, and be immediately given by God - yet that hinders not its being derived by conception.... It is agreeable to a law of nature that, when a perfect human body is conceived in the womb of a woman and properly nourished and increased - a human soul comes into being."
486. Edwards's disciple Rev. Professor Dr. Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803) draws an interesting conclusion from all this. For Hopkins states<sup>41</sup> that "the mother, according to a law of nature, conceives both the soul and body of her son." For she does "as much toward the one as towards the other."

### Charles Hodge: human embryos ensouled when conceived

487. In his famous work *Systematic Theology*, the great Princeton Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Hodge (1797-1878) discusses<sup>42</sup> the 'Origin of the Soul.' Says Hodge: "The common doctrine of the Church, and especially of the Reformed Theologians, has ever been that the soul of the child [before birth] is...created by the immediate agency of God.... God is said to form 'the spirit of man within him.'

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34. C. Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, London: Nelson, 1874, II pp. 65-76.

35. *Op. cit.*, pp. 348-66.

36. Dabney: *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972 rep., pp. 317-21

37. W.G.T. Shedd: *Dog. Theol.*, II pp. 3-94 (esp. pp. 22 & 75) & III pp. 249-63 (esp. p. 250).

38. B.B. Warfield: *Augustine and the Pelagian Controversy*, in his *Studies in Tertullian and Augustine*, England: Oxford University Press, 1930.

39. J.O. Buswell Jr.: *Op. cit.*, p. 252.

40. J. Edwards: *Against Watts's Notion of the Pre-existence of Christ's Human Soul*, as cited in Shedd's *Dog. Theol.* II p. 27

41. S. Hopkins: *Works*, I p. 289 (as cited in Shedd's *Dog. Theol.* II p. 27).

42. *Op. cit.*, II pp. 70-75

Zechariah 12:1.... This language nearly agrees with the account of the original creation, in which God is said to have breathed into man the breath of life.... Genesis 2:7. Hence He is called 'the God of the spirits of all flesh.' Numbers 16:22....

488. "Christ...was very man; He had a true human nature; a true body, and a rational soul. He was born of a woman.... He was in all points made like we are, yet without sin.... Generation, the production of a new individual of the human race, is an inscrutable mystery. But this must be said of the transmission of life in all its forms.... Life is not the product of physical causes. We know not that its origin is in any case due to any cause other than the immediate power of God....
489. "The organization of a seed, or of the embryo of an animal, so far as it consists of matter, may be due to the operation of material causes guided by the providential agency of God - while the vital principle itself is due to His creative power.... The origination of life, therefore, is neither in nature nor design a miracle in the proper sense of the word. This exercise of God's creative energy, in connection with the agency of second causes, no more implies approbation - than the fact that He gives and sustains the energy of the murderer, proves that He sanctions murder."

### **A.A. Hodge: "nascent souls in infant bodies" even before birth**

490. Charles Hodge's son, Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge (1823-86), also became a famous Reformed Theologian. The younger Hodge points out<sup>43</sup> that "God's covenants...embrace the children with the parents, and rest upon the natural relations of generator and generated. The constitutions alike of the Jewish and Christian Churches provide that the rights of infants are predetermined by the status of their parents. This is, of course, determined by a gracious covenant. Yet that covenant presupposes the more fundamental and general natural relation of generation [or conception] and education [or development].... The natural headship of Adam is referred to in general terms, and we ['branches'] are said to have been in him as a 'root' - or [we] as 'branches in a tree.'"
491. Just as Adam the fallen 'root' started to die (spiritually in particular), we too as his later 'branches' also die. Indeed, this slow death of all the members of mankind - whether finally accomplished right at, or soon after, conception [as in zygotic or fetal death]; or whether accomplished only in advanced senility [as in the physical expiration of an octogenarian] - begins in the way it affects what Hodge calls "nascent souls in infant bodies" even before their birth. Hence, this explains why - of all the millions of human beings (each of whom must at length pass away) - some die prematurely, while yet others die very soon after their conception and quite long even before their birth.

### **W.G.T. Shedd: bodies and souls are created together**

492. Several excerpts on our subject from the important writings of the great Union Theological Seminary's Dogmatician Rev. Professor Dr. William G.T. Shedd (1820-94), will be very helpful precisely at this particular point. For Shedd declares<sup>44</sup> that our own bodies and souls are created together - just as were the body and the soul of the first man, in the way described in "Genesis 2:7."
493. For, explains Shedd, "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Indeed, Shedd further declares that the creation of the body and the soul of the first woman - was similar in that regard. For "the same creative act which produced the body of Eve out of a rib of

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<sup>43</sup>. *Op. cit.*, pp. 363-66.

<sup>44</sup>. *Op. cit.*, II pp. 4 & 21f.

Adam, produced her soul also [Genesis 2:22]. By a single divine energy, Eve was derived from Adam psychically as well as physically.

494. "This goes to show that when a child of Adam is propagated, the propagation includes the whole person - and is both psychical and physical. For the connection between a child and its parents is nearer and closer than was the connection between Adam and Eve at creation.... Eve is 'the mother of all living.' Genesis 3:20. Adam 'begat a son after his own image.' Genesis 5:3.
495. "In John 1:13," continues Shedd,<sup>45</sup> "the regenerate are said to be 'begotten (*egenneetheesan*) not of blood [alias human seed], nor of the will of the flesh [alias sexual appetite], nor of the will of man [alias human decision].' This implies that the **un**regenerate **are** 'begotten of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man.' But an unregenerate man is an entire man, consisting of soul and body. His soul and body, therefore, were 'begotten and born of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man.' In this passage, the soul sustains the same relation to generation and birth that the body does. Both come under one and the same category." Consequently, the body and the soul originate contemporaneously.

### **W.G.T. Shedd: "the embryonic and foetal life...includes the mental"**

496. "In Psalm 139:15-16," continues Shedd further,<sup>46</sup> "there is a description of the mysterious generation of man. 'My substance was not hid[den] from You, when I was being made in secret.' Though the reference is to the embryonic and foetal life, yet it includes the mental and moral part of man with the physical. The clauses 'I was made' and '**my** substance' certainly denote the speaker as an entire whole.
497. "The same is true of the passage Job 10:10, 'have You not poured **me** out like milk and curdled **me** like cheese?' The '**me**' here, is the whole person. The total *ego* is described as begotten [or conceived] in Jeremiah 1:5 - 'before I formed **you** in the belly, I knew **you**.' In Psalm 22:9-10, David says: 'You are He Who took **me** from the womb. I was cast upon You, from the womb. You are **my** God - from my mother's belly!'"
498. Now "original sin, **propagated** in every individual" - continues Shedd,<sup>47</sup> "rests upon original sin **inherent** in every individual." Shedd goes on:<sup>48</sup> "Man at every point in his history - embryonic as well as foetal - is a **union** of soul and body, of mind and matter. He is both psychical and physical. There is no instant when he is [or ever was] a mere brute. An embryo without a rational principle in it, would be brutal - not human....
499. "The fact that there is no **manifestation** of mind, does **not** prove that there **is** no mental principle **in** the human **embryo**. The new**born** child reveals moral and mental traits [almost] as little as does the **un**born child [which **also** possesses them].... In the foetal state, the soul 'sleeps'" - without being totally unconscious - just "as it does in the infant or the adult. Only it [the foetal 'sleep'] is a continual sleep. But the soul is as really **existent** in its 'sleeping' state - as in its 'waking' state."

### **W.G.T. Shedd: soul not created after conception of the body**

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45. *Ib.*, p. 23.

46. *Ib.*, p. 25.

47. *Ib.*, p. 42.

48. *Ib.*, pp. 75f.



500. The erroneous theory of "the creation of the soul **subsequently** to the conception of the body," argues Shedd,<sup>49</sup> "is contrary to all the analogies in nature. Under the common providence of God, as seen in nature, one portion of a living organism is **not** first propagated and **then** a second part created and **added** to it. Composition and juxtaposition of parts is not the method in propagation. But [the method of propagation is] generation and growth of the **whole** individual creature - at once, and altogether....
501. "Propagation implies **continuity** of substance and sameness of properties between the producing and the produced individuals - between the parents and the child.... In every instance of bodily conception, a certain amount of cellular substance which has been secreted and prepared by the invisible physical life, issues [forth] and is transformed into a child's embryo. The child, physically considered, is a part of the specific human nature transmitted through the parents - and by their instrumentality formed into a separate individual body. It is an **offspring** from them.... The soul of the child is derived **simultaneously** with his body - psychically, out of the common human nature which is both psychical and physical."
502. Last, concludes Shedd,<sup>50</sup> "the origin of the soul is supernatural.... The human soul, as specific, was not an evolution from physical substance but a creation *ex nihilo* of spiritual substance." Therefore "the 'conception' of the first individual of the species was also supernatural. Genesis 2:7." Ditto the second and third individuals. Genesis 2:21f & 4:1.
503. Thus, "Adam had sexual intercourse with Eve his wife - and she conceived. She bare Cain, and said: 'I have gotten a man - **from** the Lord.'" Genesis 4:1. Shedd therefore concludes: "When Cain was begotten [or **conceived**] - his separate individual existence **began**."

### **Delitzsch: embryo's body and soul are concreated simultaneously**

504. Now the great (1813-90) Lutheran Scholar Rev. Professor Dr. Franz Delitzsch, when discussing<sup>51</sup> the expression 'the lowest parts of the earth' in Psalm 139:15, observed that there "the female uterus is called *thachthiy-yooth erets*." The famous Pre-Reformation Hebrew Scholar Dr. John Reuchlin Delitzsch then goes on to explain in a footnote - previously interpreted [this phrase] briefly and well. For in his 1506 *Rudiments*, Reuchlin renders it: 'I was woven in the depths of the earth - that is, in the womb.'
505. "The 'womb' - continues Delitzsch - "is called...the secret workshop of the earthly principle with...reference back to the first origination of man's body from dust of the earth. Thus, Job [1:21] says: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return back there again'; and 'I too have been moulded out of the clay' (Job 33:6); and 'God's Spirit has made me, and the Breath of the Almighty has given me life' (Job 33:4).
506. "In the origination of every man is thus repeated, according to the view of Scripture, the mode of Adam's creation." Hence, "we are **not**...at all to assume in respect of Genesis 2:7 that the child has no soul of its own until its **birth**. But, on the contrary, the substance of the **germ** [or **embryo**] from which man is developed - must be taken for an interaction of body and spirit.... Also, the undeveloped soul has not formed its own body to itself. But it is constituted by the creative Spirit, Who comes forth at the divine call to [bring a living soul into] being at the same moment with the body....

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49. *Ib.*, pp. 76 & 86f.

50. *Ib.*, pp. 87-89.

51. *Bib. Psych.*, pp. 249-52 (citing J. Reuchlin's 1506 *Rudiments*).

507. "From the first moment of its beginning to be, the embryo is a germinating concrete unity of body and soul.... From this first moment, the soul is a co-efficient factor of the bodily development.... The soul is thus the purpose and link and support of this growth into being. It is the selfliving centre round which all the atoms of the body are grouped and arranged." See too paragraphs 85-90 and 150-54.

### **Kuyper: "at conception itself...the soul takes over"**

508. The A.D. 1900f Dutch Prime Minister and great Reformed Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Abraham Kuyper Sr. (1837-1920), made interesting observations about our subject. Says he:<sup>52</sup> "When a person is born, one may indeed still explain so much from generation by the father and from the pregnancy of the mother - not only as regards the body, but also as regards original guilt and original sin and even as regards disposition and mode of existence.
509. "But there still always remains something else too in this coming into existence of a human being who will continue unto all eternity. And here we confess that this involves a direct act of God.... It was a good thing that our Reformed Theologians constantly advocated creationism.... For as regards its deepest origin - the soul of man must be connected directly with God Himself....
510. "Our fathers," explains Kuyper of the classic Calvinist Theologians,<sup>53</sup> "adhered to what is called 'creation' - that is, to the confession that a soul comes into being not by reproduction but by a creative act of God. However, they also further maintained that this soul is created in purity.
511. "It is not just at birth but rather **at conception itself** that the **soul** takes over its own vital operations from the parents. And it is not just at birth but again rather at **conception itself** that the sinful course of these vital operations is for the first time taken over. For the [new] soul does so, at its first contact with the nature of the father and the mother - and thus itself becomes depraved by nature."

### **Bavinck: "soul lives...germinally...in the psychical life of the fetus"**

512. Also illuminating is the position of Kuyper's famous contemporary, Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Bavinck (1854-1921). He declares:<sup>54</sup> "As soon as a spiritual [and] immortal soul lives in an organism, there is a human being; an individual; a personality - even if only principally and germinally....
513. "There must therefore be a moment at which the fetus...has an independent and continual existence.... The soul, though called into being as a reasonable and spiritual soul by a creative operation of God, nevertheless receives its existence in the psychical life of the fetus (which was preformed in the life of the parents and ancestors and thus not above nor outside but under and in the sinful connection which presses upon the whole of humanity)."

### **Geesink: "the fruit [or 'foetus'] lives from the first moment of conception"**

514. Important are the views of Amsterdam's Free University Professor of Ethics, Rev. Dr. William Geesink (1854-1929). In his multi-volumed work *Concerning the Lord's Ordinances*, he writes:<sup>55</sup> "In First

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<sup>52</sup>. A. Kuyper: *Common Grace*, Kampen: Kok, 4th ed., p. 438.

<sup>53</sup>. A. Kuyper: *E Voto Dordraceno*, Amsterdam: Wormser, 1892, I pp. 49f.

<sup>54</sup>. H. Bavinck: *Reformed Dogmatics*, Kampen: Kok, 1928, pp. 545-47.

<sup>55</sup>. W. Geesink: *Concerning the Lord's Ordinances*, Kampen: Kok, 2nd ed., II pp. 271 & 277f.

Corinthians 15:45, we read... 'The first man Adam was made a living soul.'

515. "This apparently refers back to what is written in Genesis 2:7. For our Dutch *States-General Bible* comments [at First Corinthians 15:45] - 'God created his [Adam's] body from the dust of the ground. He [God then] breathed a reasonable and immortal soul into him [Adam] - by which [soul] the body was enlivened and moved'....
516. "The entire history of a child's formation, as regards its body, is now known - from conception to birth.... We can for the moment leave the details of this undiscussed. Here we limit ourselves only to the fact that the ['*foetus*' or] fruit **lives** from the **first** moment of **conception**, through all the stages of its development in the womb.
517. "For as soon as the living semen-cell of the father has penetrated and fructified the living egg-cell of the mother - the new life of the child **has** originated (from both of the parents) in indivisible unity.... Behind this operation of the new human life, there is a still deeper cause. And that is the operation of the omnipresent power of God.
518. "It is that power of God and therefore God Himself which is being referred to, where the Scripture [Psalm 139:15f] so carefully states: 'my substance [or bony-structure] was not hidden from You while I was being made in secret and artistically being fashioned in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my embryo while it was still being developed' from moment to moment from conception to birth (during the entire formation of the fetus)."

### **Geesink: the embryo lives "from its own principle"**

519. Also in his volumes on *Reformed Ethics*, Geesink further says: "A newly-born normal child is complete in bodyparts but not yet in the stages [of their development]. In his soul, not a single function is operational [actively] - but altogether only potentially."<sup>56</sup> *Mutatis mutandis*, the same applies also earlier, even "embryonically." For the newly-born child is the same person as was conceived yet earlier.
520. Continues Geesink:<sup>57</sup> "Let us look at the origin of the human body from the 'fertilized egg-cell'.... It is from the fertilized egg-cell that the '*foetus*' next arises.... This [*foetus*] is a Latin word, meaning 'fruit' - from *feo* [or] *feto*: 'I fructify.'
521. "Alongside of this, we have another word with a similar meaning - the word '*embryo*' (from the Greek word *bruein*: 'to germinate'.... In this period...the body of the unborn child...not only **lives**, but even performs vital functions (from its **own** principle)....
522. "Embryology," explains Dr. Geesink, "is concerned with the still-unborn fruit and its development. We are filled with silent amazement concerning what this science has discovered about fixed law and order in natural occurrences among animals and human beings as regards embryos 'artistically being fashioned.'" Psalm 139:15.
523. "Our Lord and Saviour Himself," continues Geesink, "remarked how ears of wheat are built up (from the inside out): 'For the earth brings forth fruit from herself - first the blade; then the ear; after that, the

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<sup>56.</sup> *Reformed Ethics*, Kampen: Kok, 1931, I p. 522.

<sup>57.</sup> *Concerning the Lord's Ordinances*, II, pp. 284-86 & 141-45.

full corn in the ear' [Mark 4:28]. Thus, also [Christ] the Wisdom of Israel drew attention - even to the world of small and subtle and hidden things. And this, come to mention it, is true also of the great mystery of the development of the child in the womb [even when to some degree unveiled].

524. "For we read in Ecclesiastes [11:5] that 'you do not know what is the way of the Spirit - nor how the bones grow in the womb of a pregnant woman'.... So too Job...10:9-12.... And, alongside of these two places, what we read in Psalm 139 is also remarkable....
525. "By analogy of what he [the psalmist] knew from observation about the formation of the fetus in the womb, he considers how he himself was formed. He says that he was 'fearfully and wonderfully made' [Psalm 139:14]....
526. "The formation of a child is indeed fearful and wonderful. It is a work of God which, the more one knows about it, the more one is impelled toward more sincerely praising the Lord."

### J. Gresham Machen: the Spirit begets man at his conception

527. In 1930, the great American Theologian and Founder of Westminster Theological Seminary - Rev. Professor Dr. J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937) - wrote his famous book *The Virgin Birth of Christ*. There, he very clearly stated<sup>58</sup> that "in the New Testament...the Spirit is...the Source...of the act of begetting - by which the body of the child is formed in the womb."
528. Accordingly, Christ the Son of man "possessed the Holy Spirit from His mother's womb (as was the case with John the Baptist)." Indeed, Christ uniquely "owed to the Holy Spirit" His human "conception" - and therefore "the very constitution of His being" as regards His human nature. For "if John was to be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb [Luke 1:15] - what is there more natural than that in the case of the One greater than John, the Holy Spirit in the womb of the mother should bring about the very existence of the child?"
529. What is the meaning of the original Hebrew or Aramaic idea behind the Greek word translated "you shall conceive" (in the Luke 1:31 promise that Mary would become pregnant)? Answers J.G. Machen:<sup>59</sup> "The original of it, in Hebrew or Aramaic, would be a participle.... If then the Semitic original is here restored, Mary's question" as recorded in Luke 1:34 - 'How shall this occur, seeing I do not engage in sexual intercourse with any man?' - becomes even more existentially relevant. For Mary "could not explain a **present** conception in her womb, in terms of her **future** union with Joseph."
530. Accordingly, the Greek word here translated 'you shall conceive' (*sulleempse*) in Luke 1:31 was presumably "referred by Mary...to an **immediate** future" - rather than "referred by Mary to the time of her [actual] **marriage** with Joseph" **only** in the more **distant** future. "The conception was represented by the angel as taking place in the **immediate** future" indeed - "but **not** [yet] at the **very** moment when the word 'you **shall** conceive' [*sulleempsee*] was [being] spoken."

### Machen: Christ's human personhood generated right at conception

531. As to just **when** the conception is to be put, note that the angel **next** says: "The Holy One Who is **now being generated**" (*gennoomenon* = **present** participle of *gennaoo*) - viz. "**within** you" or "**from** you"

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<sup>58</sup>. *Op. cit.*, pp. 302 & 55 & 281.

<sup>59</sup>. *Ib.*, pp. 145-47.

(thus many manuscripts) - "shall be called 'the Son of God.'" See our chapter C, at its **note 150**.

532. Mary, continues Machen,<sup>60</sup> "had indeed passed through a unique experience. Her son had been conceived in the womb, without human father, as none other had been conceived.... No doubt she ought to have deduced...in connection with the miracle of His conception, the full Chalcedonian doctrine of the two natures in one person of the Lord." Compare paragraphs 1477f.
533. "It is inconceivable that the reference to Elisabeth's conception in her old age [Luke 1:36] should be separated from the reference to Mary's conception [alias her conceiving] by the Holy Ghost [Luke 1:34].... Mary's visit to Elisabeth presupposes the [later] virgin birth" alias delivery from one till then a virgin - as well as the 'already-conceivedness' from the virgin Mary - of Jesus Christ the son of man.
534. "When the angel is represented...as pointing to the example of Elisabeth, evidently the motive is being given for the journey that Mary immediately undertakes. 'And Mary arose in those days, and went with haste into the hill country into a city of Judah' [Luke 1:39].
535. Continues Machen:<sup>61</sup> "Why did she go at all? And especially - why did she go **in haste**? Is it not perfectly clear that...at the time of the visit, the conception [of Jesus] is regarded as already having taken place? When Elisabeth says to Mary 'you have been blessed among women, and the Fruit of you womb has been blessed; and who am I that the **mother of my Lord** should come to me?' [Luke 1:42f] - her words seem overwrought **if** the conception [of Jesus] was **still** to come."
536. Machen concludes:<sup>62</sup> "The description of Mary in [Luke 1] verse 27, is very similar in form to that of the parents of John [the baptizer] in verse 5.... The Holy Spirit is mentioned in connection with the beginning of the earthly life of both John and of Jesus.... The two accounts are specifically linked together, by the words 'in the sixth month' in Luke 1:26....
537. "It is not true that that note of time is important only for Elisabeth and not for Mary." To the contrary: "Look, your cousin Elisabeth has **also** conceived a son, in her old age!" Luke 1:36. The words "also conceived" here imply that Mary too had just **conceived** [perfect tense]. So, this fruitfulness "could be observed [also] by the leaping [up] of the child [John] in the womb" of Elisabeth. Luke 1:44.

### **Honig: "the soul is created...with the zygote at the moment of fertilization"**

538. We close this section with a valuable quotation from the important Dutch Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. A.G. Honig (1864-1940). Among other good books, he authored also the valuable work *Creationism or Traducianism or Generationism?*
539. Wrote Honig:<sup>63</sup> "When God breathed the breath of life into man, He also gave him a soul [Genesis 2:7]. From the very first moment - the breath was a sign and proof of the presence of the soul. The following is exactly what happened:
540. "God with that breath gave man a soul, so that he became a living personality.... I too share the

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<sup>60.</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 133 & 138 & 150

<sup>61.</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 150f.

<sup>62.</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 154 & 166.

<sup>63.</sup> A.G. Honig: *Reformed Dogmatics*, Kok: Kampen, 1938, pp. 332f & 361-65 (citing also his *Creationism or Traducianism or Generationism?*).the breath of life.... In this way, the soul of man was created - directly by God...

opinion that Genesis 2:7 teaches us that God gave the rational and immortal soul to Adam together and simultaneously with

541. "**Originally**, the **Doctors** of the **Christian Church** advocated the view that the **soul** is created and **united** with the **zygote** at the moment of **fertilization**.... **Since the seventeenth century**, [**also**] **Romish** Theologians have **returned to this**, and most maintain that the reasonable soul is created by God at the first moment of conception itself....
542. "The Reformed Theologians of recent times...are also of the opinion that **the soul is created at the moment of conception**. That is our view, too.... Our body is the vehicle of the soul.... God creates the soul in connection with the body with which it is united - and in this way, [further also] in connection with the [human] race from which that human being will soon be born."

### **Conclusion: Protestantism affirms the full personality of all conceived**

543. Conclusion. Both Protestant creationism and Protestant traducianism are derivable from Scripture - and also link up with the similar Proto-Protestant embryology of the earliest Church Fathers immediately after the time of the Apostles. Creationism and traducianism both oppose Platonic pre-existentialism, Aristotelian post-formationism, and materialistic soullessness. Indeed, to Protestantism - both creationism and traducianism also affirm the simultaneous existence and contemporaneous conjunction and interacting collaboration of a furtherly-developable new body together with a furtherly-developable new soul - and all of it right from the very moment of conception itself.
544. For such is the overall teaching of leading Protestant authorities. Thus, such is the view of: Martin Luther, John Calvin, the *French Confession*, the *Scots Confession*, the *Belgic Confession*, the *English Confession* and its resultant *Thirtynine Articles*, the *Heidelberg Confession*, Zacharias Ursinus, the *Second Helvetic Confession*, and Bartholomew Keckermann.
545. Such is also the view of the *Canons of Dordt*, John Wollebius, the *Declaration of Thorn* or the *Polish Confession*, the *Westminster Standards*, John Owen, Francisco Turretini, and Leonard Riissen. Indeed, the same position is further upheld by: Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge, Robert Dabney, William Shedd, Franz Delitzsch, Benjamin Warfield, Abraham Kuyper Sr., Herman Bavinck, J. Gresham Machen, A.G. Honig, and J. Oliver Buswell Jr.<sup>64</sup> *etc.*

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<sup>64</sup>. See at paragraph 482.

## H. THE LAW OF GOD (ESPECIALLY ANENT TINY HUMAN BEINGS)

"God said: 'you shall not murder!' .. When men...strike a pregnant woman so that her unborn child is expelled, if a serious wound occurs, he who strikes shall repay - life for life; eye for eye; tooth for tooth; hand for hand; foot for foot; burning for burning; wound for wound; stripe for stripe.... Do not slay the innocent!" - Exodus 20:1,13; 21:22-25; 23:7.

546. Thus far, we have established from Holy Scripture and from Church History that human life begins at conception. We must now take a look at the bearing of the everlasting Law of God, instituted for all mankind at the very beginning of the race, especially on prenatal and other tiny human beings.
547. Successively, we shall here examine the Decalogue and particularly the issue of violating human life - immediately prior to, and right after, the fall. Then we shall consider: the thrust of especially God's Sixth Commandment for all - from the very beginning of human life; from the later prohibition of bloodshed after the great flood in the Noachic Covenant; from the place of the Decalogue within the Mosaic Law and the Prophets; from traces of the Decalogue in the intertestamental period (and in Philo and Josephus); from the Newer Testament's upholding of the Decalogue; and from the latter's influence on non-Biblical religions, and 'monotheistic' religions in particular.
548. We shall then observe the unanimous endorsement of the Decalogue in the patristic sources - such as the *Didache*, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Polycarp, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Theophilus, Athenagoras, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Early Christian Liturgies, the *Clementine Documents*, Tertullian, Origen, Hippolytus, Cyprian, Diodorus, Archelaus, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Lactantius, Constantine, Eusebius, Athanasius, Basil, Cyril, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, Cassian, Leo the Great, and Pope Gregory the Great.
549. Last, we shall see how the Decalogue was regarded by the great Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. It will then be seen that, in harmony with the holy Christian Church of all ages, especially the Calvinistic *Westminster Confession* and the *Larger Catechism* strictly uphold the Law of God in general and the Sixth Commandment in particular - as too do all true Calvinists and Presbyterians thereafter, even till this present day.

### **The Ten Commandments immediately prior to the fall of man**

550. From all eternity, God Himself has always been "righteous" - and the very Fountain of His Own Moral Law alias the Ten Commandments. Matthew 5:44-48; John 17:25. For He: (1) is "the one true God"; (2) is "Spirit"; (3) "swears by Himself"; (4) "has entered into His rest"; (5) is the "heavenly Father"; (6) is "the living God"; (7) is "pure"; (8) is "the Giver of every good gift"; (9) "cannot lie"; and (10) contentedly and liberally provides for all of our needs. John 17:3; 4:24; Hebrews 6:13; 4:3f; Genesis 2:2f; Matthew 6:9; Acts 16:15; James 1:1:4f; 1:17; 2:8-13; 4:2-12. First John 3:1; Titus 1:12; Jude 24f; & Revelation 4:11.
551. Right at his very creation, man was the very image of God. To reflect His glory, man therefore received God's Decalogue. Genesis 1:26-28; 2:9,17,20-25; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 2:14f & 5:12-14; Ephesians 4:24-28. All Ten Commandments were enshrined not only in the heart of man, but also in the tree of life in the very middle of the garden of Eden. Indeed, like a beautiful rainbow - the whole Decalogue was displayed also in and by man's primordial institutions of labour, marriage, the family,

and the sabbath.<sup>1</sup>

552. For the Decalogue was an integral part of the so-called covenant of works alias the promise of life to Adam and all his descendants - which he infringed, but could not abolish. Hosea 6:7-10. Once created as the image of God, Adam and all his descendants **could** never cease to exist. They **should** have spent their entire existence in obeying God's revealed will. Instead, every human being - in Adam and like Adam - from his or her very conception onward, transgressed the everlasting covenant and infringed its Decalogue.
553. Also anent Adam's descendants, Isaiah 24:5 insists: "The Earth also is defiled under its inhabitants - because they have **transgressed the laws**; changed the ordinance; **infringed the everlasting covenant**." Hosea 6:7-10 implicitly refers even to the Fifth Commandment ('honour your Father!') and the Eighth Commandment ('you shall not steal!') and the Sixth Commandment ('you shall not kill!') and the Seventh Commandment ('you shall not commit adultery!'). Even of Hosea's own contemporaries in the eighth century B.C., God declares: "They, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant....They have betrayed Me.... Like troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder by the wayside....They commit lewdness....There is the whoredom of Ephraim. Israel is defiled." Like Adam! Cf. too Job 31:33.
554. Now those Ten Commandments required and still require taking care of one's own children (implied by the Fifth Commandment "honour your father and your mother!"). Positively, they further included and still include an anti-abortive respect for also tiny human life (implied by the Sixth Commandment "you shall not murder!"). They also still involve(d) acceptance of the fruits of intra-marital intercourse (implied by the Seventh Commandment "you shall not commit adultery!"). Indeed, they further enjoined and still enjoin contentment (also with the size of one's family) as implied by the Tenth Commandment "you shall not covet your neighbour's wife!" or babies (or anything).

### The Ten Commandments right after the fall of man

555. Those Ten Commandments were stamped, indelibly, into human nature itself. Had man never sinned, he would never have died - and never have committed adultery *etc.* Much less would he ever have murdered. Abortion would have remained unthinkable, and even miscarriages would never have occurred. Created by the grace of God, and sustained by that grace, man stood in his original righteousness. He had life, and sinless fellowship with God. Men would have kept on living by serving God - even by observing His Commandments. Should man ever fall, he would do so precisely by breaking the entire Decalogue all at once. Cf. James 2:10f. For "whosoever commits **sin**, transgresses *the Law*. For sin **is** the transgression of the **Law!**" First John 3:4.
556. After man fell by transgressing the Law - should he then ever be restored, he would need a Second Adam to pay the penalty for the breach of those Ten Commandments. He Himself, the Son of man (our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ), would then also need: to keep them perfectly, and all at once; to receive the appropriate reward from God for doing so; and graciously to give that reward to those sinful transgressors on whose behalf He had acted.

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<sup>1</sup>. Gen. 1:28f; 2:1-3; 2:15-17; 2:20-25. See too F.N. Lee: *Ten Commandments Today!*, London: Lord's Day Observance Society, 1974 (citing many relevant works such as M'Crie's *Marrow of Modern Divinity* and Kuyper's *Doctrine of the Covenants*). See further the pullout table proving all of this, in F.N. Lee's Th.D. dissertation *The Covenantal Sabbath*, Bromley Kent: Lord's Day Observance Society, 1972, between pp. 24-25.



557. Hence, God told Satan right after the fall of mankind: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He will crush your skull, and you shall nick His heel." Genesis 3:15 *cf.* Romans 16:20. One reads also in the Gospel according to Isaiah (28:16-18) that sinners "have said, 'We have made a covenant with death and are at agreement with hell'.... [But] this is what the Lord God says: 'Look, I lay down a Foundation Stone in Zion...and your covenant with death shall be disannulled!'"
558. Now right after man's fall into sin, these Ten Commandments were again re-emphasized - to Cain and Abel; to the flood generation; and again to all mankind immediately after that great deluge.<sup>2</sup> Even since the subsequent dispersion of mankind into the various nations of humanity after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, God has continued to keep on revealing His Decalogue alias His Ten Commandments - including the one against murder - to all men everywhere. Indeed, He has done so precisely by writing that Holy Law on their hearts, and by inscribing it into their consciences.<sup>3</sup>
559. So, even pagan nations - all descended from our common ancestral pair and their posterity<sup>4</sup> - certainly know that breaches of the Decalogue are wrong. Indeed, most pagan societies have sought to punish many of the breaches of its provisions. Yet especially Christians and their societies - and also those countries long subject to Christian influences (such as particularly the Western nations in or colonized from Europe) - are morally obligated to teach the Decalogue, and to demand that its breach be avenged.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Ten Commandments between the fall of man and the great flood**

560. So, even after the fall and before the flood, the Decalogue was still known universally. For consciousness of it was still to be found in the lives of all of Adam's antediluvian descendants, both the regenerate and the unregenerate. Thus the pre-flood Noah is called a righteous alias a law-abiding man. He trusted God alone, and longed for the promised Messiah in terms of the First Commandment. Genesis 4:1; 5:29; 6:9.
561. In terms of the Second Commandment, Enoch the Sethite and Noah both walked with God and pleased Him. Genesis 5:24 & 6:9. In terms of the Third Commandment, the Sethites "began calling on the Name of the Lord"; but Lamech the Cainite swore an unholy oath. Genesis 4:23-26. In terms of the Fourth, Abel and Noah apparently kept the sabbath. Genesis 2:3; 4:3; 7:4-10; 8:6-12. And in terms of the Fifth, the Sethites were called "sons of God" their heavenly Father. Genesis 6:4 *cf.* Luke 3:36-38.
562. In terms of the Sixth Commandment, Cain sinned by killing Abel. Genesis 4:11-23 & First John 3:10-15. In terms of the Seventh, Lamech the Cainite was the first bigamist - and the faithless "daughters of men" or Cainite women immorally seduced the Sethite "sons of God." Genesis 4:19-23 & 6:1-5. In terms of the Eighth, Noah gave stored food to his family and to the animals in the ark. Genesis 6:21f. In terms of the Ninth, Cain lied to God. Genesis 4:9 & First John 3:10-15 *cf.* John 8:44. And in terms of the Tenth, the sons of God sinfully desired the daughters of men. Genesis 6:2.

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<sup>2</sup> Gen. 3:15-18; 4:5-13; 6:4-13; 9:5-7; Ex. 20:3-17; Dt. 5:7-21; Mt. 19:17f; 22:36f; Rom. 13:1-10; Jas. 2:8-12; Jude 14f.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 1:18-32; 2:12-16; Acts 14:15-17; 17:23-28; II Tim. 3:1-8; Job 31:33f; Hos. 6:7f.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 17:26f & Rom. 5:12f.

<sup>5</sup> *Cf.* Gen. 9:5f; Matt. 5:17-26; 26:52; Rom. 1:19-21; 2:14-16; 13:1-9; Jas. 2:11-13; Rev. 13:10; & chs. I to R below.

### The Decalogical Ten Commandments and the Noachic Covenant

563. Also as regards its decalogical obligations, God renewed His great covenant with Noah and all his descendants "for perpetual generations." This was later infallibly chronicled by Moses, in Genesis 6:18 & 9:12. Directly or indirectly, it involved also the binding nature of all Ten Commandments of the Decalogue. Genesis 9:1-12 *cf.* Acts 15:18-29.
564. Right after the Noachic flood, and some time before the human race dispersed into all the World,<sup>6</sup> as previously before the fall God now too once again said to all humanity: "Be fruitful and multiply!" He added: "I will exact your blood of your lives...at the hand of every man's brother. Whoever kills a human being, must himself be killed by man. For God made humans in His own image."<sup>7</sup>
565. It is extremely significant that not just inspired Holy Scripture in Genesis 9:1-12 (and also in Acts 15:19-29 as an explanation thereof) but also many uninspired ancient Jewish writings<sup>8</sup> insist that the above Noachic command against unrighteous bloodshedding - bind not just Jews but also all of the Gentiles to the keeping of God's Moral Law. Also, several ancient authorities consider that this universal Noachic prohibition against shedding human blood - necessarily condemns the killing also of tiny human beings (through abortion). Indeed, by implication, in specifying the maximum punishment for murder as that most heinous of all human crimes - Genesis nine further seems to be suggesting the appropriateness also of lesser punishments even for lesser crimes (such as robbery, theft and adultery *etc.*).
566. The implications of the Noachitic Covenant of Genesis 9:1-6 in the opinion of later Judaism, are well summarized in the important collection of Hebrew writings known as the *Mishnah*. The *Jewish Encyclopaedia* states that this collection represents the cumulative product of the commentarial scribes ever since the time of Ezra in B.C. 458f - even though the collection was finally written down only between A.D. 150 and 220. Very significantly, one of those Mishnaic tracts comments on the sins and crimes implicitly prohibited to all men and thus also to the Gentiles at Genesis 9:1-12. That tract, *Sanhedrin*, in this regard declares:<sup>9</sup> "Seven precepts were imposed on the descendants of Noah: civil justice, the prohibition of blasphemy, idolatry, incest, murder, theft, and the prohibition of eating flesh cut from a living animal." *Cf.* Acts 15:18-29 & 21:17-25.

### Comments on the Adamic/Noachic Commandments in the *Book of Enoch*

567. The *Book of Enoch* - antediluvianly anticipating also the Great Flood and the Decalogical Commandments of the Noachitic Covenant - was certainly a very ancient writing. It was highly regarded by intertestamental Hebrews; by the New Testament writer of the book of Jude; and also by many of the Early Church Fathers. Unfortunately, the original Hebrew text has been lost - even though there are extant copies of translations of one portion of it in Ethiopic, and of another portion of it in Slavonic - respectively to be dated at B.C. 130 and B.C. 30.
568. States the approximately B.C. 130f book of *Ethiopic Enoch*,<sup>10</sup> when the Messiah would come: "He shall be a staff to the righteous.... He shall be the Light to the Gentiles.... All who dwell on Earth, shall fall down and worship before Him.... All the children of men shall become righteous, and all nations

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<sup>6</sup> Gen. chs. 9 to 11 and Dt. 32:8f *cf.* Acts 17:24-29.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 9:1-6.

<sup>8</sup> *Cf.* nn. 9f, 18f, 32f, & 45f.

<sup>9</sup> *Sanh.* 56a.

<sup>10</sup> *Eth. Enoch* 10:21f; 48:2-7.

shall offer adoration."

569. Now *Ethiopic Enoch* also both anticipates and contains the so-called 'Noachian fragments.'<sup>11</sup> These throw light on the decalogical nature of the covenant described in Genesis 9:1-12 - essentially the same as that previously erected with Adam - and that kept by Adam's descendant, and Noah's ancestor, Enoch himself. *Ethiopic Enoch* is cited in the Bible by Jude (verses 14f); and also by the Early Church Fathers Justin,<sup>12</sup> Irenaeus,<sup>13</sup> Tertullian,<sup>14</sup> Clement of Alexandria,<sup>15</sup> Origen,<sup>16</sup> and Augustine.<sup>17</sup>
570. *Slavonic Enoch* was probably first written in Hebrew approximately B.C. 30f - but then, *via* an intermediate document transcribed into Greek, it has been preserved only in a Slavonic translation of that transcription. Of those in the antediluvian flood generation contemporary with Noah, the translation says God declared:<sup>18</sup> "**They have rejected My Commandments....** They have laden the whole Earth with untruths, offences, abominable lecheries...and all manner of other unclean wickednesses which are disgusting to relate. And therefore I will bring down a deluge upon the Earth and will destroy all men."
571. The translation then has Enoch the Sethite telling his children and their descendants (*cf.* Genesis 5:22f & Hebrews 11:5 & Jude 14f): "I swear to you...but not by any oath...[that] the Lord said 'There is no oath nor injustice but only truth in Me.' If there is no truth in men - let them swear by the words 'yea, yea'; or else 'nay, nay.' And I swear to you - yea, yea - that there has been no man in his mother's womb but that already before to each one there is a place prepared for the repose of that soul, and a measure fixed how much it is intended that a man be tested in this World!"<sup>19</sup>
572. God Himself then enjoins: "My children, spend the number of your days in patience and meekness [or **law-abidingness**], so that you inherit endless life! ... Blessed is he who opens his lips, blessing and praising God.... Blessed is he who keeps the foundations of his fathers, made firm from the beginning.... Blessed is he who implants peace."<sup>20</sup>
573. *Slavonic Enoch* continues:<sup>21</sup> "For Adam's sake...man brings clean animals to make sacrifice for sin.... He who works the killing of a man's soul, kills his own soul and kills his own body and there is no cure for him.... He who...speaks evil against any soul, will not make justice."
574. This book of *Slavonic Enoch* then finally concludes:<sup>22</sup> "Children, keep your hearts from every injustice.... Many mansions are prepared for men.... Blessed are those who enter the good houses [*cf.* John 14:2].... Every proud and magniloquent man is hateful to the Lord - and every false speech clothed in untruth. It will be cut with the blade of the sword of death; and be thrown into the fire; and

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<sup>11</sup> See its chs. 54:5 & 55:2 & 60 & 65-69:25 & 106-107.

<sup>12</sup> *Apol.* 2:5.

<sup>13</sup> *Heresies.* IV:30 & IV:16:2.

<sup>14</sup> *Idol.* 15.

<sup>15</sup> *isc.* p. 550 (ed. Sylburg).

<sup>16</sup> *Princ.* IV:35; *Hom. in Num.* 34; *Cels.* 5.

<sup>17</sup> *City of God* 15:23.

<sup>18</sup> *Slav. Enoch* 34:1f.

<sup>19</sup> *Ib.* 49:1f.

<sup>20</sup> *Slav. En.* 50:3 & 52:3f.

<sup>21</sup> *Slav. En.* 58:2; 59:2f; 60:1; 60:4.

<sup>22</sup> *Slav. En.* 61:1f; 63:4; 66:3-8.

shall burn for all time....

575. "Bow down to the true God, not to dumb idols! ... Walk, my children, in longsuffering; in meekness; in honesty; [and]...in truth! Blessed are the just who shall escape the great judgment. For they shall shine forth more than the sun, sevenfold." *Cf.* Genesis 9:1-12.

### **Noachic Law binds all persons and nations: thus also Abraham's household**

576. The decalogical provisions of God's covenant with Noah bound all of his descendants. This means that even after the subsequent destruction of the Tower of Babel and the dispersion of the human race into various nations, also the latter were and are still bound by the provisions of that covenant. Genesis 9:1-12; 11:1-11; Deuteronomy 32:8f; Acts 15:18-29; 17:23-28.
577. Not long after Abraham's ancestors left the ruins of the Tower of Babel after its destruction on account of the antinomianism of its builders, the Israelites (alias the descendants of Abraham's grandson Jacob or Israel) often referred to what they called the universal "Noachic laws." By that they meant the decalogical obligations of God's covenant with Noah - which also the Abrahamites and the Israelites regarded as being binding not only upon themselves but also upon all peoples of all nations for all time.
578. Now Abraham was the father of all Christians. Galatians 3:27-29 *cf.* Romans 4:1-25. However, also Judaists asserting descent from Abraham's son Isaac (the father of Israel) - as well as Moslems alleging an affinity to Abraham's son Ishmael (the predecessor of Mohammed) - claim to be followers of the God of Abraham. It is therefore important to note that especially Abraham and all his descendants were required to observe the decalogical laws of the Noachic Covenant.
579. Subsequent to the Noachic flood and soon after the dispersion of mankind into nations after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, God promised that not only all nations but even all families of the Earth would be blessed in Abraham and his Seed.<sup>23</sup> So against the background of God's condemnation of the homosexuality of Sodom<sup>24</sup> - He declared: "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him.... **He will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.**"
580. This divine declaration was repeated also to Abraham's son Isaac. For to him also, God declared:<sup>25</sup> "I will perform the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. And I will make your seed to multiply like the stars of Heaven, and will give to your seed all these countries; and **in your seed shall all the nations of the Earth be blessed - because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My Commandments, My statutes, and My Laws.**"

### **God's Law bound also the non-Abrahamic yet pre-Mosaic Job and Shechem**

581. It was not only the Abrahamites but also all other pre-Mosaic persons who were obligated to observe God's Moral Law. This is seen clearly in the life of the apparently pre-Abrahamic Job. He reminds himself that he too had "made a covenant with his eyes" not to sin against the Lord. "Why then," he

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<sup>23</sup> Gen. 22:18 & Gen. 12:3.

<sup>24</sup> Gen. 18:16-20.

<sup>25</sup> Gen. 26:3-5.

asks, "should I think upon a maid? ... Is not destruction to the wicked - and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity? Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps? ... I did not cover my transgressions like Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom.... My desire is that the Almighty would answer me.... The Spirit of God has made me, and...given me life.... [Like Adam,] I too have been formed out of the clay." Job 31:1-4 & 31:33-35 & 33:4-6.

582. There is also the cardinal case of Shechem, who desired to marry Dinah the daughter of Jacob. However, Abraham's grandson Jacob or Israel and his family regarded Shechem and his kindred as Pagans - with whom they themselves should not have miscegenated matrimonially. Yet it is also very significant that the Israelites nevertheless held the Shechemites fully accountable for their ongoing transgression of God's Moral Law. Genesis 34:1-31.
583. Dr. Martin Luther was no Puritan, and lacked the more consistent appreciation of the Moral Law so prominent in the thought of his greater contemporary Dr. John Calvin (and also in the later Calvinistic *Westminster Larger Catechism*). Yet also Dr. Luther rightly remarks<sup>26</sup> on the above passage: "I think that rape was forbidden and a capital offence not only in Jacob's house, but also in that whole area.... The rape of a virgin is a capital crime of itself - by all law, divine and civil.... In all ages, this crime has been punished in a fearful manner."
584. So, then, all persons and all nations - not just Abraham and his household and their descendants, but indeed also all people that on Earth do dwell - were and still are required to keep God's Moral Law. Genesis 11:6f; 12:3-17; 13:13; 18:18f; 19:4-15f; 20:3f; Leviticus 18:24-27; Deuteronomy 7:1f; 12:1-32; Second Samuel 22:1-50; Ezra 7:11-28; Psalm 2:1-12; 94:10f; 98:2f; 100:1-5; 103:19f; 105:14; Proverbs 6:23f; 14:34f; 16:12f; Ecclesiastes 12:13f; Jeremiah 1:10f; 25:12f; 27:5f; Daniel 4:25-32; 5:2-28; Jonah 1:2f; 3:1-10; Malachi 1:11f; 2:14f; 3:8f; and 4:4-6.
585. Also the Newer Testament teaches exactly the same. See: Matthew 8:11f; 21:40-43f; 28:18-20; Romans 2:14f; 13:1-14; First Timothy 2:1f; First Peter 2:13f; Revelation 2:26f; 12:5f; 15:4; 19:15f; 20:11-15; 21:24-27; and 22:2-15. Indeed, what is true for all nations and all persons in this regard - must also be true, *a fortiori*, especially for Abraham the father of all believers *par excellence*. Galatians 3:6-8; 3:16-17; 3:27-29.

### The Mosaic Law at Sinai upholds the universal Pre-Mosaic Moral Law

586. It should be obvious that whatever national particularities the Mosaic Law indeed enacted for the Israelites alone, and only until Calvary, it also upheld God's ongoing universal and pre-Mosaic Moral Law over absolutely all nations - and indeed further, throughout all future history. For the Mosaic Decalogue was republished also as a vindication against Pagan Egypt - and indeed even before the eyes of the watching World.
587. Thus God commanded Moses to "tell the children of Israel: 'you have seen what I did to the Egyptians.... Now, therefore, if you will obey My Voice indeed and keep My Covenant - then you shall be a peculiar treasure to Me above all people. For all the Earth is Mine.... I am the Lord your God Who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, away from the house of bondage. [Therefore] you shall have no other gods before Me" *etc.* Exodus 19:3-5f & 20:2f.
588. It is significant that the Hebrew *Midrash on Psalm 68:11-18* - of pre-Christian antiquity at least as to its roots - records the Hebrew tradition that the Mosaic **Decalogue went out from Sinai not just to the**

<sup>26</sup> M. Luther: *Commentary on Genesis 34:7 & 34:17* (in his *Works*, St. Louis: Concordia, 1961, Vol. VI).

**Israelites but also to the seventy nations of the Ancient World.** That Midrash commemorated Sinai - and predicted the post-Calvary ascension of the Messiah and His resultant outpouring of God's Holy Spirit just ten days later. See: Genesis 9:27f; 10:1-32f; 11:1-9f; Numbers 11:16f; 15:16; Psalm 68:11-18; Acts 2:1f; Ephesians 4:4-11.

589. For the *Midrash* states<sup>27</sup> in respect of Sinai's Decalogical Commandments alias the 'ten words' that "when the Word went forth from Sinai, it became seven voices. And from the seven voices it was divided into seventy tongues. As sparks leap from the anvil, there came a great host of proclaiming voices."
590. Also the B.C. 30f Alexandrian Jew Philo<sup>28</sup> confirms the above. At the republication of God's Moral Law on Mount Sinai, explains Philo, an invisible Voice (Exodus 20:1f *cf.* Acts 2:2f) was formed by God in the air - and shaped into a flame which spoke intelligibly to everyone in the Universe. During the time described at Exodus chapter 19 and 20, "the ten words or oracles - in reality laws or statutes - were delivered by the Father of all.... Flaming fire sounded forth like the breath through a trumpet - an articulate voice so loud that it appeared to be equally audible to the farthest as well as the nearest....
591. "Each single person, when he is law-abiding and obedient to God, is equal in worth to a whole nation, even the most populous - or rather to all nations and...even to the whole World.... When He praises a certain just man, he says 'I am your God' - though He was also the God of the World.... From the midst of the fire that streamed from Heaven - there sounded forth to their utter amazement a Voice. For the flame became articulate speech in the language familiar to the audience."

### **The Post-Mosaic Prophets uphold the universal Pre-Mosaic Moral Law**

592. Many messages of the post-Mosaic Prophets in the Older Testament are largely correctives against departures from God's Moral Law. "**Fear God and keep His Commandments...., for God shall bring every work into judgment...., whether it be good...or evil!" Ecclesiastes 12:13. It is very significant that some of those prophecies apply not just against wayward Israel, but indeed also against the surrounding Pagans. Thus, the latter too are thus seen to be held accountable by Almighty God - also for their own departures from His Decalogue, in terms of the Adamic and Noachic Covenants.**
593. In Isaiah 30:1f, God berates His people the Israelites for wishing to rely upon the idolatrous Egypt - while themselves rebelling and lying and "not wishing to hear the Law of the Lord." Predicting the soon demise also of sinful Assyria, Isaiah points out that also the Egyptians are but "men and not God" - and that Assyria is guilty of robbery and treachery and blasphemy, and Edom of drunkenness and cruelty. Isaiah 31:3f; 33:1f; 34:4f; 37:4f. He also condemns even Babylon - for her pride, her idolatry, her immorality, and her sorcery. Isaiah 46:1f; 47:1f.
594. In Isaiah 56:2f, God rebukes Israel for her sabbath desecration and her gluttony. In Isaiah 57:3f, He rebukes her for her adultery and her lies. In Isaiah 58:4f, He rebukes her for her strife and her debate and again for her sabbath desecration. Indeed, in Isaiah 59:3f He rebukes her: for her bloodshedding; her lies; and her apostasy.
595. In Jeremiah 46:2f, that Prophet rebukes Israel for being bloodthirsty and oppressive. In Jeremiah 47:1, God rebukes the cruel Philistines; in 48:1, the idolatrous and proud Moabites; in 49:1f, the apostate

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<sup>27</sup> *Mid.* on Ps. 68:11-18, as cited in D. Walker's *The Gift of Tongues* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1906, p. 50).

<sup>28</sup> Philo: *The Decalogue*, 9:32f; 10:37f; 11:46f.

and idolatrous Ammonites; in 49:7f, the treacherous Edomites; in 49:23f, the cruel Syrians; in 49:28f, the Arabians; in 49:34f, the Elamites - and in 50:1f, the Babylonians, because of their whoredom and their cruelty and their idolatry.

596. In Daniel 3:1f to 5:27f, God punishes Babylon for her idolatry and her pride and her blasphemy. In Amos 2:1f & 4:4f & 5:11f & 8:5f, God punishes Moab for her cruelty; Judah for rejecting the Law of the Lord through lies and immorality and drunkenness; and Israel for idolatry and theft and bribery and sabbath desecration. In Jonah 1:2f & 3:5 and Nahum 1:1f & 2:2f & 3:1f, God rebukes Assyria's Nineveh for her wicked idolatries and thefts and cruelties and whoredoms and sorceries.
597. Yet in Ezra 7:11-28, God commends the Persians for encouraging Israel to keep and to teach the Law of God. Indeed, in Malachi 1:11 to 4:6 - right at the very close of the Older Testament - God rebukes Israel for breaking His Law, while also predicting that (upon their conversion to the promised Messiah) also the Gentiles will more and more come to keep it.

### The Decalogical Law of God during the Intertestamental Period (B.C. 400f)

598. We have already referred to Talmudic evidence in the *Mishnah*,<sup>29</sup> after Ezra's time and still during the hegemony of Persia, that God requires also the Gentiles to comply with His Moral Law in terms of the Noachic covenant. See Genesis 9:1-12. We have also seen that the *Book of Enoch*<sup>30</sup> - possibly deriving from and certainly describing even the pre-Noachic situation - does exactly the same. We shall now see that other intertestamental documents too make these same assumptions - and also predict that even the pagan nations, the Gentiles, would yet become righteous.
599. Thus, in the B.C. 108 *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*,<sup>31</sup> it is said of the advent of Messiah: "Then shall the Lord raise up a new Priest.... He shall execute a righteous judgment upon the Earth.... In His Priesthood, the Gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the Earth and enlightened through the grace of the Lord.... And Satan shall be bound by Him...."
600. "A Star of Peace shall arise, and He shall walk with men in meekness and righteousness.... And you shall be His children by adoption, and you shall walk in His Commandments, first and last. Then a Branch shall go forth from Me, and the sceptre of My Kingdom shall shine forth. And from your root shall a Stem arise, and from it the rod of righteousness shall grow up unto the Gentiles - to judge and to save all who call upon the Lord.... Every spirit of deceit shall be trodden down. And He shall bring back all the Gentiles into zeal for Him...."
601. "Do you therefore, My children, observe the Commandments of the Lord, and honour Levi and Judah! For from them shall arise unto you the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the World - One Who saves all the Gentiles and Israel....He shall save all the Gentiles.... And in His Priesthood the Gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the Earth, through the grace of the Lord.... Until the consummation of the age, He shall be in the synagogues of the Gentiles. And among their rulers, [He shall be] as a strain of music in the mouths of all."
602. Suggests the B.C. 107f Jewish *Book of Jubilees* anent the Messianic Age:<sup>32</sup> "In those days the children

<sup>29</sup> See para. 566.

<sup>30</sup> See paras. 567f.

<sup>31</sup> Test. Levi 18:2-12; Test. Jud. 24:1-6; Test. Zeb. 9:8; Test. Jos. 19:11f; U.C. Ewing's *The Prophet of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1963, pp. 31-43.

<sup>32</sup> Jub. 23:26-29 cf. 7:20f. 33. CDC in Ewing's *op. cit.*, p. 25; and *Dead Sea War Scroll*, 27:6-14.

shall begin to study the Laws, and to seek the Commandments, and to return to the path of righteousness. And the days shall begin to grow many and increase among those children of men, till their days draw nigh to one thousand years.... For all their days shall be days of blessing and healing."

603. The B.C. 65 *Dead Sea Scrolls* predicted<sup>33</sup> of the Messiah, that God "raises up for them a 'Teacher of Righteousness' to lead them in the way.... They shall prevail over all the sons of the World....
604. "Take Your captivity captive - O Man of glory! And take Your spoils, O valiant One! Sit your hand on the neck of Your enemies, and Your foot on the heap of the slain! Strike the nations that are My adversaries.... And their kings will serve You!"
605. The *Odes of Solomon*,<sup>34</sup> which were used to a degree also in Early Christian Worship, said of the Messianic son of David: "Gird Him with strength - so that He may shatter unrighteous rulers.... He shall destroy the godless nations with the Word of His mouth.... And He shall have the heathen nations to serve Him, under His yoke....
606. "Nations shall come from the ends of the Earth - to see His glory.... And He shall be a righteous King, taught by God, over them.... For all shall behold their King, the Anointed of the Lord.... He may direct every man in the works of righteousness by the fear of God - so that He may establish them all before the Lord."

### **The B.C. 30f Philo's *Decalogue* on the universally-binding Ten Commandments**

607. The great Jewish Scholar Philo of Alexandria, B.C. 30 to A.D. 50, wrote four weighty books specifically on the Decalogue and its Special Laws. Those works run to some 750 pages, and seem to anticipate the format of Dr. John Calvin's own approach to God's Decalogical Law as set out in his own unforgettable *Harmony of the Pentateuch*.
608. Philo had previously grounded his own approach, already in his various other tracts. Those range from his *On the Creation*, right through to his *Interpretation of Laws* - and from his *Abel and Cain*, through to his tract called *Moses*. Especially his books *The Decalogue* and *The Special Laws* are relevant. Yet here, we mention only those places therein which are universally applicable not just to the Jews but also to the Gentiles.
609. "The ten words or oracles," explains Philo,<sup>35</sup> "were delivered by the Father of all.... They sounded forth...to the farthest as well as the nearest.... He says 'I am your God' - though he was also the God of the World" as a whole. "They can claim to be children of the one common mother of mankind - nature.
610. "There is an account recorded in the story of the creation.... The World was made in six days.... On the seventh, God ceased from His works.... Therefore He bade those who should live as citizens under this Worldorder, [to] follow God in this as in other matters."
611. He goes on:<sup>36</sup> "We see that parents by their nature stand on the borderline between the mortal and the immortal side of existence, the mortal because of their kinship with men....; the immortal because

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<sup>33</sup> Odes Sol. 17:23-25,32-38 & 18:6-9.

<sup>34</sup> Philo: *Decalogue*, 9:32f; 10:38; 10:42; 20:97f.

<sup>35</sup> *Ib.*, 22:107f.

<sup>36</sup> *Ib.*, 22:107f



the act of generation assimilates them to God the Generator of all.... Those who disregard parents...are therefore the foes of both sides of the law, the godward and the manward.... Nature has bestowed on parents in relation to their children an estate of a special kind which cannot be subject to the law of exchange."

612. Philo then continues<sup>37</sup> by showing the connection between the Fifth Commandment "honouring parents" and some of the subsequent Commandments in the Decalogue. God, says Philo, "begins with adultery, holding this to be the greatest of crimes.... It has its source in the love of pleasure, which enervates the bodies of those who entertain it; relaxes the sinews of the soul; and wastes away the means of subsistence - consuming like an unquenchable fire all that it touches, and leaving nothing wholesome in human life.... Indeed, it makes havoc of three families: of that of the husband who suffers from the breach of faith...; of the adulterer; and the woman.... If their connexions include a large number of persons through intermarriages and widespread associations, the wrong will travel all round...the whole State."
613. Philo goes on:<sup>38</sup> "Do no murder! For nature, which created man the most civilized of animals, to be gregarious and sociable - has called him to shew fellowship.... Let him, then, who slays another - know full well that he is subverting the laws and statutes of nature so excellently enacted for the wellbeing of all."

### **Philo's *Special Laws* on the family and sexual morality in the Decalogue**

614. In his work *The Special Laws*, Philo first deals with the First Table of the Decalogue - placing the Fifth Commandment there. "Regulations as to marriage are intended to promote the generation of children" - he explains.<sup>39</sup>
615. There is also "the absolute sovereignty by which the Universe is governed; the prohibition against making any image or likeness of God and against perjury or vain swearing in general; and the doctrine of the sacred seventh day.... Parents are midway between the natures of God and man.... Parents, in my opinion, are to their children what God is to the World - since just as He achieved existence for the non-existent, so they in imitation of His power as far as they are capable immortalize the race."<sup>40</sup>
616. Philo is very outspoken on the subject of sexual morality. He insists<sup>41</sup> that "those who sue for marriage with women whose sterility has already been proved with other husbands, do but copulate like pigs.... Those persons who make an art of quenching the life of the seed as it drops [*cf.* Genesis 38:8f], stand confessed as the **enemies of nature**....
617. "Much graver than the above is another evil which has ramped its way into the cities, namely pederasty [Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13]. In former days, the very mention of it was a great disgrace - but now it is a matter of boasting not only to the active but [also] to the passive partners who: habituate themselves to endure the disease of effemination; let both body and soul run to waste; and leave all embers of their male sex-nature to smoulder....
618. "These persons are rightly judged worthy of death - by those who **obey the law** which ordains that

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<sup>37</sup> *Ib.*, 24:122f.

<sup>38</sup> *Ib.*, 25:132f.

<sup>39</sup> *Special Laws I*, 23:112.

<sup>40</sup> *Special Laws II*, 38:224f.

<sup>41</sup> *Special Laws III*, 6:36f; 7:37f; 8:43f.

the man-woman [alias the effeminate sodomite] who debases the sterling coin of nature, should perish unavenged; suffered not to live for a day or even an hour - as a disgrace to himself, his house, his native land, and the whole human race. And the lover of such, may be assured that he [too] is subject to the same penalty [*cf.* Genesis 19:4-25]....

619. "Even worse than this, is the conduct of some who have emulated the lusts of the Sybarites.... These persons begin with making themselves experts in dainty feeding, wine-bibbing and the other pleasures of the belly and the parts below it.... They conceive a frantic passion no longer for human beings male or female, but even for brute beasts [Exodus 22:19 and Leviticus 18:23 & 20:15f].... Whence - possibly the Hippo-centaurs and Chimeras and the like - forms of life hitherto unknown and with no existence outside mythology, will come into being....
620. "Actually, so great is the provisions made in the law to ensure than men should admit no unlawful matings - that it ordains that even domesticated animals are not to be crossed with others of a different species [*cf.* Deuteronomy 22:9-11]. No Jewish shepherd will allow a he-goat to mount a ewe or a ram a she-goat, or a bull a mare. Or, if he does - he will be punished as an offender **against the decree of nature**....
621. "Moses, recognizing that...this...**contravenes nature**, stringently forbade it under the wider order by which he refused permission for animals of either sex to breed with those of an unlike species. In making this provision, he considered what was in accord with decency and **conformity to nature**. But beyond this, he gave us as from some far-off commanding height a warning to men and women alike that they should learn from these examples to abstain from unlawful forms of intercourse. Whether, then, it is the man who uses a quadruped for this purpose, or the woman who allows herself to be used - the human offenders must die, and the beast also."

### **Philo's *Special Laws* on murder and abortion and infanticide in the Decalogue**

622. "The murderer," continues Philo,<sup>42</sup> "must be regarded as an offender against piety and holiness - both of which are violated in the highest degree by his action. For his merciless conduct, he must be put to death [Genesis 9:6; Exodus 21:12; Leviticus 24:17-21; Numbers 35 16-31]....
623. "If a man comes to blows with a pregnant woman and strikes her on the belly and she miscarries [Exodus 21:22 LXX]..., if the result of the miscarriage is unshaped...he must be fined both for the outrage and for obstructing the Artist...from bringing [forth] into life the fairest of living creatures - man. But if the offspring is already shaped...he must die. For that which answers to this description, is a human being - which he has destroyed in the laboratory....
624. "The **exposure of infants** [is] a sacrilegious practice which among many other nations...has **come** to be regarded with complacency" - but which was obviously not so 'from the beginning.' Indeed: "If the guardians of the children cut them off from these blessings; if at their very birth they deny them all share in them - they must rest assured that they are **breaking the the laws of nature**, and stand selfcondemned on...the worst abomination of all, **murder of their own children**."
625. "For they are pleasure-lovers when they mate with their wives not to procreate children and perpetuate the race. But [they are more] like pigs and goats in quest of the enjoyment which such intercourse gives. Men-haters too - for who could deserve the name ['men-haters' more] than these

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<sup>42</sup> *Ib.*, 15:84; 19:108f; 20:117f.

enemies, these merciless foes, of their offspring? For no one is so foolish as to suppose that those who have treated dishonourably their own flesh and blood - will deal honourable with strangers!"

626. Philo continues:<sup>43</sup> "So Moses then, as I have said, implicitly and indirectly forbade the exposure of children - when he pronounced **the sentence of death** against those who **cause the miscarriage of mothers** in cases **where the foetus is formed.... Infanticide undoubtedly is murder....** Those who gird themselves up to conspire against such as these [infants] - **must be judged to be the cruellest** and most ruthless of men. **The Holy Law detests them**, and has pronounced them **worthy of punishment.**"

### God's Decalogue in the *Antiquities* of the A.D. 37f Judaist Josephus

627. The non-Christian Judaist and Historian Flavius Josephus lived just after the death of Christ, and wrote about the past even while the Newer Testament itself was being inscripturated. In his work *Antiquities*, he indicates<sup>44</sup> "that God is the Father and Lord of all things, and sees all things; and that thence He bestows a happy life upon those who follow him; but plunges such as do not walk in the paths of virtue, into inevitable miseries...."
628. "God took dust from the ground and formed man.... But when He saw that Adam had no female companion; no society (for there was no such created); and that he [Adam] wondered at the other animals which were male and female - He [God] laid him [Adam] asleep, and took away one of his ribs; and out of it formed the woman.... The name of this woman was Eve, which signifies 'the mother of all living'...."
629. "God planted a paradise...flourishing with all sorts of trees.... Among them was the tree of life, and another of knowledge whereby was to be known what was good and evil.... God therefore **commanded** that Adam and his wife should eat of all the rest of the plants, but to abstain from the tree of knowledge; and foretold to them that, if they touched it, it would prove their destruction...."
630. "Adam and Eve had two sons....Cain brought the fruits of the earth, and of his husbandry; but Abel brought milk, and the first-fruits of his flocks.... Cain was very angry...and he slew his brother.... God convicted Cain as having been the murderer of his brother.... He also cast him, together with his wife, out of that land...."
631. "When Cain had travelled over many countries, he with his wife built a city...He augmented his household substance with much wealth, by rapine and violence....Even while Adam was alive, it came to pass that the posterity of Cain became exceedingly wicked.... They were intolerable in war, and vehement in robberies, and...bold in profligate behaviour...."
632. "But Noah," continues Josephus,<sup>45</sup> "was very uneasy at what they did.... God loved this man for his **righteousness**. Yet He not only condemned those other men for their wickedness, but determined to destroy the whole race of mankind.... Noah alone was saved" with his family, in the ark.
633. After the Great Flood, "Noah...besought God that nature might hereafter go on its former orderly course.... He also entreated God...that men...might not be deprived of any of those good things which they enjoyed before the Flood.... When Noah had made these supplications, God - Who loved the man for his

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<sup>43</sup> *Ib.*, 20:117.

<sup>44</sup> Flav. Jos.: *Antiquities*, Preface 4; and I:1:2f & I:2:1f.

<sup>45</sup> *Ib.*, I:3:1f; I:3:7f.

righteousness [Second Peter 2:5 & Genesis 6:9 & 8:15f] - granted entire success to his prayers.... 'The injuries,' said He, which 'they offered to My holiness and virtue - forced Me to bring this punishment upon them.... However, I require you to abstain from shedding the blood of men, and to keep yourselves pure from murder, and to punish those that commit any such thing.'"

634. It is very significant that Josephus connects the Decalogue (re)-promulgated by God through Moses on Mount Sinai - with its earlier publication by the same God first to Adam and then to Noah, as described above. For according to Josephus,<sup>46</sup> at Mount Sinai, Moses told the Israelites: "O Hebrews! **As He has formerly done**, [God has]...suggested a happy method of living for you....You must not put a low value on what I am going to say!" For: "The Author of these institutions is...He Who obliged the Nile to run bloody for your sakes, and tamed the haughtiness of the Egyptians by various sorts of judgments; He Who provided a way through the sea for us; He by Whose means Adam was made to partake of the fruits both of the land and of the sea; He by Whose means Noah escaped the Deluge....
635. "He it is Who conveys these instructions to you by me as His interpreter. And let them be to you venerable, and contended for more earnestly by you - than your own children and your own wives! For if you will follow them, you will lead a happy life. You will enjoy the land fruitful, the sea calm, and **the fruit of the womb born complete** - as nature requires."
636. Now "the First Commandment teaches us that there is but one God, and that we ought to worship Him only. The Second commands us not to make the image of any living creature, to worship it. The Third, that we must not swear by God in a false matter. The Fourth, that we must keep the seventh day by resting from all sorts of work. The Fifth, that we must honour our parents. The Sixth, that we must abstain from murder. The Seventh, that we must not commit adultery. The Eighth, that we must not be guilty of theft. The Ninth, that we must not bear false witness. The Tenth, that we must not admit of the desire of anything that is another's....
637. "When he [Moses] had said this, he showed them the two tablets, with the Ten Commandments engraven upon them.... And the writing was by the hand of God.... As for adultery, Moses forbade it entirely....He also abhorred men's lying with their mothers.... He also forbade a man...[sexually] not to come near brute beasts; nor to approve of the lying with a male.... To those who were guilty of such insolent behaviour, he ordained death for their punishment....
638. "Nature does not rejoice in the union of things that are not in their own nature alike. Nor are you to permit beasts of different kinds to gender together. For there is reason to fear that this unnatural abuse may extend from beasts of different kinds, to men - though it takes its first rise from evil practices about such smaller things....
639. "Let death be the punishment for stealing a man.... **He who [by accident] kicks a pregnant woman so that the woman miscarry - let him pay a fine** in money, as the judges shall determine, as having diminished the multitude by the destruction of what was in her womb. And let money also be given to the woman's husband, by him who kicked her. **But if she die of the stroke [if deliberate] - let him also be put to death**, the law judging it equitable that life should go for life [Exodus 21:22f].... **Let nobody...keep any poison [such as an abortifacient] that may cause death**.... But if he be **caught with it - let him be put to death!**"

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<sup>46</sup> *Ib.*, III:5:3-8 & III:12:1 & IV:8:20-34.

### Josephus's rejection of abortion and infanticide in his *Against Apion*

640. In his work *Against Apion* (the Pagan Greek), the Jewish Historian Josephus states:<sup>47</sup> "We have...twenty-two books [in the Old Testament] which contain the records of all the past times - which [records] are justly believed to be divine. And of them, five belong to Moses - which contain his laws, and the traditions of the origin of mankind.... The laws we have [had] given to us, are disposed after the best manner: for the advancement of piety; for mutual communion with one another; for a general love of mankind."
641. Josephus continues: "Those who have been admirers of good order and of living under common laws, and who began to introduce them, may well have this testimony - that they are better than other men, both for moderation and such virtue as is agreeable to nature. Indeed, their endeavour was to have everything they ordained - believed to be very ancient.... Now I venture to say that our legislator [Moses] is the most ancient of all the legislators whom we have anywhere heard of....Moreover, he represented God as unbegotten and immutable through all eternity...."
642. "God contains all things, and is a being every way perfect and happy, self-sufficient, and supplying all other beings; the Beginning, the Middle, and the End of all things. He is manifest in His works and benefits, and more conspicuous than any other being whatsoever.... All men ought to follow this Being, and to worship Him in the exercise of virtue...."
643. "But then, what are our laws about marriage? That law owns no other mixture of sexes but that which nature has appointed, of a man with his wife - and that this be used only for the procreation of children. But it abhors the mixture of a male with a male; and if any one do that, death is his punishment.... A husband, therefore, is to lie only with his wife whom he has married.... To have to do with another man's wife, is a wicked thing; which, if any one venture upon, death is inevitably his punishment...."
644. "The law, moreover, enjoins us to bring up all our offspring, and forbids women to cause abortion of what is begotten, or to destroy it afterward. And if any woman appears to have done so, she will be a murderess of her child, by destroying a living creature and diminishing humankind...."
645. "The greatest part of offences with us, are capital - as if any one be guilty of adultery; if any one force a virgin; if any one be so impudent as to attempt sodomy with a male; or if, upon another's making an attempt upon him, he submits to be so used.... God has made this grant to those that observe these laws - even though they be obliged readily to die for them, that they shall come into being again and at a certain revolution of things receive a better life than they had enjoyed before...."
646. "When any persons would compel us to break our laws, then it is that we choose to go to war (though it be beyond our ability to pursue it) - with much fortitude.... Our Law continues immortal.... Our laws are most excellent.... Whereas, therefore, length of time is esteemed to be the truest touchstone in all cases - I would make that a testimonial of the excellency of our laws, and of that belief thereby delivered to us concerning God.... There is not any city of the Grecians nor any of the barbarians nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the sabbath day has not come...."
647. "As God Himself pervades all the World, so has our Law passed through all the World also.... Our nation are a people...exceedingly ancient.... As to the laws themselves, more words are unnecessary. For they

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<sup>47</sup> Flav. Jos.: *Against Apion*, I:8 & II:15-42.

are visible in their own nature, and appear to teach not impiety but the truest piety in the World.

648. "They do not make men hate one another, but encourage people to communicate what they have to one another freely. They are enemies to injustice. They take care of righteousness.... They are inexorable in punishing malefactors.... God is the Inspector and Governor!"

### Josephus's vindication of God's Law in John and in Jesus

649. It is very remarkable that the Non-Christian Judaist Josephus was a good enough Historian to recognize the vindication of God's Law and its accompanying punishments in the lives and deaths of John the Baptizer and Jesus Christ - and also in the Roman General Titus's destruction of the ungodly Jerusalem within that very same generation, in A.D. 66f. Himself writing in about A.D. 93, and referring back to the twentieth year of the reign of the Roman Emperor Tiberius Caesar<sup>48</sup> (in A.D. 33), Josephus notes:<sup>49</sup>
650. "About this time Aretas...and Herod had a quarrel... When they had joined battle all Herod's army was destroyed.... Some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly - as a punishment for what he did against John called the *Baptizer* [see Matthew 14:1-12f]. For Herod slew him who was a good man - him who had commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism...supposing still that the soul had been purified thoroughly beforehand by righteousness....
651. "Herod...feared lest the great influence John had over the people, might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion.... [Herod] thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause - and not bring himself into difficulties by sparing a man who might make him repent.... Accordingly, he [John] was sent to prison...and put to death. Now, the Jews had an opinion that the destruction of this army [of King Herod of Judaea by King Aretas of Arabia] - was sent as a punishment upon Herod, and a mark of God's displeasure....
652. "Now there was about this time, Jesus: a wise man - if it be lawful to call him a man! For He was a doer of wonderful works - a Teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us [such as Herod], had condemned Him to the cross - those that loved Him at the first, did not forsake Him. For He appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine Prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him. Indeed, the tribe of 'Christians' - so named from Him - are not extinct at this day" (93 A.D.).

### Josephus's vindication of the Law in the A.D. 70 Fall of Jerusalem

653. Finally, in his work *The Wars of the Jews*, the Judaist Josephus gives a most dramatic description of the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 66-70, and the reasons why God then allowed the Pagan Roman General Titus to overrun that city - *viz.* to punish them for their heinous sins. The Historian Josephus had pleaded with his own ungodly countrymen in Jerusalem to surrender to the Romans. For Josephus the Judaist himself too had addressed and also strongly urged them:<sup>50</sup> "Will you not repent and look back, and consider whence it is that you fight with such violence - and how great a Supporter

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48. Flav. Jos.: *Ant.*, XVIII:4:6.

49. *Ib.*, XVIII:5:1f & XVIII:3:3.

50. Flav. Jos.: *The Wars of the Jews*, V:9:4.

you have profanely abused? ... You fight not only against the Romans - but against God Himself! ... It is plain madness to expect that God should appear as well-disposed towards the wicked as towards the righteous, since He knows when it is proper to punish men for their sins immediately....

654. "You are impious.... You show off your transgressions in a pompous manner, and contend one with another as to which of you shall be more wicked than another - and you make a public demonstration of your injustice, as if it were virtue! ... God is easily reconciled to those who confess their faults, and repent of them. O hard-hearted wretches as you are! ... Return from your wicked ways! ... Have pity upon your families and set before every one of your eyes your children and wives and parents - who will gradually be consumed, either by famine or by war!"
655. However, the Judaists in Jerusalem ignored those pleas of their own co-religionist and fellow-countryman Josephus. Even yet, they hardened themselves in their rebellion against God and His Law. So He then increased their famine. Records Josephus:<sup>51</sup> "Children pulled the very morsels that their fathers were eating, out of their very mouths. And what was still more to be pitied, so did the mothers do as to their infants.... When those that were most dear were perishing under their own hands, they were not ashamed to take from them the very last drops that might preserve their lives....
656. "Nor was there any commiseration shown either to the aged or to infants. But they lifted up children from the ground, as they hung upon the morsels they had gotten - and shook them down upon the floor.... It is impossible distinctly to go over every instance of these men's iniquity.... No other city ever suffered such miseries. Nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was, from the beginning of the World. Finally, they brought the Hebrew nation into contempt.... They admitted what was true - that they were the slaves, the scum, and the spurious and abortive offspring of our nation.....
657. "Of those that perished by famine in the city, the number was prodigious and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable.... Their hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew everything.... I am going to relate a matter of fact the like to which no history relates, either among the Greeks or Barbarians. It is horrible to speak of it, and incredible....
658. "There was a certain woman.... Snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said: 'O you miserable infant! For whom shall I preserve you in this war, this famine, and this sedition? ... Come! You be my food!' ... As soon as she had said this, she slew her son - and then roasted him and ate the one half of him; and kept the other half by her, concealed.... This horrid action of eating one's own child, ought to be covered [or atoned] - with the overthrow of their very country itself.... Men perish by those miseries which they madly and voluntarily bring upon themselves!" See Leviticus 26:14-29f and Deuteronomy 28:15-68!!!
659. To the above, we can only add the words of the Messiah in A.D. 33 - and of the ex-Judaist, His Apostle Paul, around A.D. 51. Said Jesus: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me! But weep for yourselves, and for your children. For look, the days are coming in which they shall say - 'Blessed are the barren; and the wombs that never bare; and the breasts that never gave suck!' Then they shall begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' - and to the hills, 'Cover us up!'" Luke 23:28f.
660. Said Paul: "The Jews...killed the Lord Jesus; and their own Prophets; and have persecuted us.... They do not please God - and they are against all men. They forbid us to speak to the Gentiles, so that they

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<sup>51</sup> *Ib.*, V:10:3f & VI:3:3f & VI:5:4.

might be saved. They always keep on filling up their sins, for the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost." First Thessalonians 2:14f.

### **The Decalogical Law of God and Newer Testament Christianity**

661. Coming now to the Newer Testament of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is clear that He was the righteous One (First John 2:1). In terms of the First Commandment, He declared Himself to be God (John 8:58 & 20:28). In terms of the Second, He was and is the unique and essential image of the unseen God (Colossians 1:13-15 & Hebrews 1:1-3). In terms of the Third, there is apart from His no other Name by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). In terms of the Fourth, He is the Lord of the sabbath (Mark 2:28). In terms of the Fifth - He is one with the Father (John 10:30). In terms of the Sixth, He is the Living One (Revelation 1:18). In terms of the Seventh, He is the Faithful One (Revelation 19:11). In terms of the Eighth, He is the Giver of the Comforter (John 14:16). In terms of the Ninth, He is the Truth (John 14:6). And in terms of the Tenth, He is the Desire of all nations (Haggai 2:7).
662. No different were and are Christ's teachings. For first, He says the righteous should love the Lord their God (Matthew 22:37). Second, He says they should worship God in spirit (John 4:24). Third, He says they should never blaspheme (Matthew 12:31). Fourth, He says they should keep the sabbath (Luke 4:16 & 23:56f and Matthew 24:20). Fifth, He says men should honour their parents (Matthew 15:4f). Sixth, He says men should not murder (Mark 10:19). Seventh, He says men should not commit adultery (Matthew 5:27f). Eighth, He says men should not steal (Luke 18:20). Ninth, He says men should not swear at all (Matthew 5:34). And tenth, He says men should not lustfully desire (Matthew 5:28).
663. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus urges His disciples to keep the Decalogue much better than did the Pharisees. Matthew 5:17-33. In His discourse with the rich young ruler, He urged him to keep the Ten Commandments if he would enter into life. Matthew 19:17-19. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus enjoins His disciples: "If you love Me, keep My Commandments." John 14:15 *cf.* 15:10f. Indeed, in His Great Commission, He enjoins His Ministers to disciple all nations and then to keep on "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." Matthew 28:18f.
664. Also after Calvary, Christ's Apostles urge Christians to worship "only one God" (First Corinthians 8:4-6, *cf.* First Commandment). They are to "flee from idolatry" (First Corinthians 10:14, *cf.* Second Commandment). They must "not swear" (James 5:12, *cf.* Third Commandment). They must acknowledge "there remains a keeping of the sabbath to the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9 & 10:25, *cf.* Fourth Commandment). They are to honour their fathers and their mothers (Ephesians 6:3, *cf.* Fifth Commandment). They must not, as do murderers, hate their brethren (First John 3:15, *cf.* Sixth Commandment). They must not be God's enemies, as adulterers are (James 4:4, *cf.* Seventh Commandment). They must "steal no more" (Ephesians 4:28, *cf.* Eighth Commandment). They must "not lie to one another" (Colossians 3:9, *cf.* Ninth Commandment). And they must not even name the sin of covetousness (Ephesians 5:5-12 & First John 2:16, *cf.* the Tenth Commandment).
665. Consequently, Newer Testament Christians will obey Christ's teachings about the obligatoriness of keeping the Ten Commandments today and indeed throughout the future too. For also the Newer Testament teaches that Christians have been justified and made righteous by Christ's own lawkeeping. By grace and through faith in Christ's own substitutionary lawkeeping alone, the merits of His obedience to the Law are imputed to His children - as if they themselves had kept it impeccably.
666. Indeed, when Christ's children are regenerated He gives them His own Holy Ghost - the Spirit of God the



Son. That Spirit then indwells them. While writing His laws on their hearts, by His sanctifying grace He gives them an ever-greater desire to keep the Ten Commandments to the glory of God - as a token of their gratitude for so great a salvation graciously donated to them on the basis of the matchless merits of the life and the death of their law-abiding Saviour. See, for example: Romans 3:31-36; 6:1-2; 7:6,9,11-14,22,25; 8:1-4; 13:8-14; Second Corinthians 3:3-18; Hebrews 8:10; James 2:8-13; Revelation 12:17; 14:12; 21:7f; 22:14f. Out of gratitude for so great a salvation freely bestowed upon them, Christians therefore now strive to observe all the Commandments of God's most holy Moral Law - and increasingly so!

### The Decalogical Law of God and the christianizing of all nations

667. Frankly, also **all nations** should keep the Ten Commandments. Indeed, they will yet do so - namely as they too become christianized. Jesus Himself predicted that all nations will yet embrace the faith which loves to obey. "I tell you," He said to the Roman centurion, "that many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven!" Matthew 8:8-11.
668. Jesus also said: "When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. And before Him shall be gathered all **nations**. And He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.... Then shall the **righteous** answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed You - or thirsty, and gave You drink? When did we see You as a stranger, and took You in - or naked, and clothed You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to You?' Then the King shall answer and say to them, 'Inasmuch as you **have done this** to one of the least of these brethren of Mine - you have done it to **Me!**'" He added that "these...**righteous**" - viz. these **righteous nations** - "shall go away...into **life eternal**." Matthew 25:31-46.
669. That is why Jesus required His Ministers to teach, or rather to 're-teach' - **all nations** His Ten Commandments. He "spoke to them, saying: 'All power in Heaven and Earth has been given to Me! Therefore, you must go forth and make **all nations** into disciples, baptizing **them** into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit - teaching them to **observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you**. And look, I am with you always - even to the end of the World!" Matthew 28:18-20.

### The Decalogical Law of God at the A.D. 49 Synod of Jerusalem

670. An inspired reference to the Decalogical Commandments within the Noachitic Covenant of Genesis 9:1-12, as well as a further comment on the international prediction of Amos 9:9-11f, are clearly given in Acts 15:14-29 (*cf.* 7:38 & 21:17-25). In Genesis 9, God forbade murder (and by implication also all lesser crimes) - to all nations, for all time. In Amos 9, Jehovah predicted: "I will sift the House of Israel [namely the **Newer Testament's Christian Church as the continuation of the Older Testament's Hebrews**] among all nations.... I will re-erect the ruined tabernacle of David....I will raise up its ruins, and will build it up...so that they may **take possession** of the remnant of Edom and of **all the Gentiles** who are called by My Name."
671. At the First General Assembly of His Church, Christ's Apostles and His Ministers and Elders required all Christians to observe specifically the First and the Second and the Sixth and the Seventh Commandments - and implicitly also the Fourth Commandment - of God's most holy Decalogue. Indeed, they did so - apparently in terms of precisely the above-mentioned Genesis 9:1-12 and Amos 9:9-12.

672. Stated the Moderator, the Apostle James, at the First General Assembly of the Christian Church around A.D. 49: "It is written: 'Afterward, I will return and again build up the dilapidated tabernacle of David; and I will rebuild its ruins, and will re-erect it - **so that the rest of mankind might seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My Name is called out'.... Known to God are all His works - from the beginning of the World. Therefore my opinion is, that we not trouble those among the Gentiles who are turning to God - but that we write to them that they **abstain** from pollutions of **idols**, and from **fornication**, and from **stranglings**, and from **blood[shed]**. For Moses from olden times has those who preach him in every city - being read in the synagogues **every sabbath day**." Acts 15:15-21.**
673. "Then this pleased the Apostles and Elders...to send chosen men from their own company.... They wrote letters...after this manner: 'The Apostles and Elders...send greeting to the Brethren which are from the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia! Forasmuch as we have heard that certain men...have troubled you with words, subverting your souls [by] saying 'you must be circumcised'..., it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater **burden** than these **necessary** things - that you abstain from foods offered to **idols**; and from blood[shed]; and from stranglings; and from fornication. From which, if you keep yourselves, you shall do well!" Acts 15:22-29.
674. "They came to Antioch. And when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.... When they had read it, they rejoiced.... And he [Paul] went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.... And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, which had been ordained by the Apostles and Elders who were in Jerusalem. And so the churches were established in the faith, and increased in number daily." Acts 15:30f & 15:41 & 16:4f.
675. Very important too are the statements in Acts 21:18-25. There, even the Apostle Paul heeded the good advice of James and his Elders in Jerusalem. Judaizing elements had accused Paul, though quite falsely, of teaching both Jews and Gentiles to ignore God's Moral Law. So James and all his Elders now advised Paul: "Therefore do what we are now telling you..., so that all may know that those things concerning you of which they were [mis]informed - are nothing.... **You yourself too** keep on **walking orderly**, and **continue observing the Law**.... As regards the **Gentiles who believe**, we have written and concluded that they are...only to **keep themselves** from things dedicated to **idols**, and from **blood[shed]**, and from **stranglings**, and from **fornication**."
676. No wonder then, that shortly after the above Paul himself wrote in A.D. 51f: "To the Jew I became like a Jew, so that I might gain the Jews....To them who are outside the law" - namely to the Gentiles who were never outside of the Adamic Law nor the Noachic Law of the Ten Commandments, but who were indeed outside of the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law - I became "as outside the law" of Moses. Yet throughout all of that time, Paul was "**not without Law to God - but under the Law to Christ**." First Corinthians 9:20f.

### **The Decalogical Law of God in the *Epistle of James***

677. Converts to Christ not just from the Gentile nations but also those from the Hebrew nation were and are still to be required to observe the Decalogue. Thus James wrote to the twelve tribes of Israel that "whosoever keeps on looking into **the perfect Law of Liberty** - and keeps on continuing therein - is...a **doer** of the work, who shall be blessed in his deed." Such Law of Liberty involves *inter alia* also "**bridling his tongue**" (*cf.* specifically the Ninth Commandment) and "**visiting the fatherless**" (*cf.* specifically the Fifth Commandment). James 1:1f & 1:25f.

678. Indeed, James then gives even further details, in terms of specifically the Seventh and the Sixth Commandments. He states: "If you keep **fulfilling the Royal Law** according to the Scripture 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself!' - **you do well**. But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin - and are convicted by the Law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole Law but yet offend in one point - is guilty of all. For He Who said '**do not commit adultery!**' also said '**do not murder!**' Now [even] if you commit no adultery, yet if you murder - you have become a transgressor of the Law. So must you speak, and so should you do - as they who shall be judged by **the Law of Liberty!**" James 2:8-12.
679. Finally, James again refers to *the Law* and its *Lawgiver* - this time in terms of specifically the Tenth and the Sixth and the Seventh and the Ninth Commandments. Here he warns his Christian addressees: "**You lust... You kill and...fight... You adulterers and adulteresses!** Do you not know that the friendship of the World is the enmity of God? ... **Do not keep on speaking evil of one another**, brethren! He who keeps on speaking evil of his brother and keeps on judging his brother - keeps on **speaking evil of the Law**, and keeps on judging the Law. But if you judge the Law - you are not a doer of the Law, but a judge. **There is one Lawgiver**, Who is able to save - and to destroy! Who are you, who keep on judging another?" James 4:2-12.

### **The Decalogical Law of God in the *Book of Revelation***

680. Last, we need to look at the Law of God both personally among Christians as well as corporately among the nations in the final book of the Holy Bible - Revelation, alias the Apocalypse. There, Christ tells His followers - "he who overcomes and keeps My works to the end, to him I will give power over the nations; and he shall rule them." Revelation 2:26f. We are there pointed also to Christ's seed - to those "**who keep the Commandments of God, and who have the testimony of Jesus."** Revelation 12:17.
681. In Revelation 14:12, our attention is drawn again to "they who **keep the Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."** In Revelation 15:3f, we are told that those who have gotten the victory "sing the song of Moses the servant of God **and** the song of the Lamb - saying: 'Great and marvellous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, You King of saints! Who shall **not** fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your Name? For You alone are holy. For **all nations shall come and worship before You**. For Your **judgments** are made **manifest**.'"
682. In Revelation 21:7-24, God declares: "he who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But the fearful and unbelieving and the abominable and **murderers** and **whoremongers** and **sorcerers** and **idolaters** and all **liars** - shall have their part in the lake which keeps on burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." However, as regards the holy city of New Jerusalem: "**The nations of them which are saved** shall keep on walking in its light.... There shall no way enter into it anything which defiles or perpetrates any kind of abomination or lie - but [only] they who are written in the Lamb's book of life."
683. In Revelation 22:2-15, we are told that on the renewed Earth, "there shall be no more curse.... He who is unjust - let him become still more unjust! And he who is filthy - let him become still more filthy! But he who is **righteous** - let him become **still more righteous**; and he who is **holy** - let him become **still more holy!** And look, I come quickly and My reward is with Me - to give every man **according as his work** shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. **Blessed are they that do His Commandments** - so that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city. For outside are dogs [or **sodomites**], and **sorcerers**, and

**whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loves and makes a lie.**

684. "I, **Jesus**, have sent My messenger to **testify to you these things in the churches**.... For I testify to every man who hears the words of the forthtelling of this book - if any man shall add to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book! And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this forthtelling - God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book!" Revelation 22:16-19.

### **God's Decalogue and all the so-called 'monotheistic religions'**

685. So then, the Decalogue was written by the Triune God on the heart of Adam for all humanity. Thereafter, it was republished: to Noah; to Moses; to and by the Lord Jesus; and, after Calvary, to and by His Apostles. See: Genesis 2:17f; 4:5-11; 6:5-18; 9:1-12; Exodus 20:2-17; Ecclesiastes 7:29; 12:13f; Matthew 5:17-33f; 15:3f; 19:17f; Luke 4:16; 23:56; Acts 15:18 to 16:5; Romans 2:14-16; 13:8f; Ephesians 4:24-28f; James 2:8-12; First John 3:11-22f; 5:2f; Revelation 12:17; 14:12; 21:7f; 22:11-14f.
686. It is sadly true that Post-Christian Judaism and Islam, in their misunderstanding of the Trinity, have gone and rejected the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the one and only Saviour - and therewith also departed from the one true Triune God of the Older Testament and the Newer Testament. Yet blessedly, it is also true that - because of God's abiding **Law of Nature** even in spite of the fall of man - they have nevertheless held on to considerable other portions of the teachings of the Holy Bible: including its implicit but clear condemnation of abortion, adultery, theft, and murder, *etc.*
687. As we wrote in our doctoral dissertation on *The Roots and Fruits of Common Law*,<sup>52</sup> "the presbyterial First General Assembly of the Christian Church clearly endorsed the 'decalogical' Noachic Covenant and its consequent **Law of Nature**. Acts 15:18-28 *cf.* Genesis 9:1-27. More importantly, Paul insisted that the **Law of Nature** alias the **Law of God** was written on every person's heart: even in spite of the fall of man. Romans 1:18-20 *cf.* 2:14-16."

### **God's Decalogue in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (alias the Didache)**

688. There is no trace of liberalistic antinomianism whatsoever, in the decalogical teaching of either the Lord Jesus Christ or His Apostles. See: Matthew 5:17-21f; 15:3-6f; 19:4-19; 22:36-40; Romans 2:14-22; 3:31; 7:12-22; 13:1-10; James 2:8-12; First John 3:4-23; 5:2-21; Revelation 12:17; 14:12; 21:8f; 22:11-16f. Understandably, this therefore carried over: to the Apostolic Fathers; to the Apologists; to the Controversialists; and to the great Patristic Doctors - of the Early Christian Church. It also carried over into both the Mediaeval Church and the Reformational Church (whether Lutheran or Calvinist) - even though the Anabaptists, like their modern stepchildren especially in the United States, sometimes lapsed into Antinomianism.<sup>53</sup>
689. Thus the first-century *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* states: "**You shall not commit murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not commit paederasty; you shall not commit fornication; you shall not steal; you shall not practise magic; you shall not practise witchcraft; you shall not **murder a child by abortion nor kill that which has been conceived**!"<sup>54</sup> It then immediately adds:<sup>55</sup> "You shall**

<sup>52</sup> .N. Lee: *The Roots and Fruits of Common Law* (D.C.L. dissertation), Lakeland Fla.: Rutherford Law School, 1994, p. 182.

<sup>53</sup> F.N. Lee: *The Anabaptists and their Stepchildren?* (Dallas: Blue Banner, 1992).

<sup>54</sup> *Did.* 2:1.

not covet the things of your neighbour; you shall not forswear yourself; you shall not bear false witness!"

### The Decalogical Law of God in the *Epistle of Barnabas*

690. Probably before the end of the first century A.D., the *Epistle of Barnabas* - possibly written by the Apostle of that name (mentioned in Acts 14:14) - warns<sup>56</sup> Christians to keep the "Law of our Lord Jesus Christ." It adds: "You shall not forsake the Commandments of the Lord!"
691. It then specifies those Commandments: "You shall not commit fornication; you **shall not commit adultery**; you shall not be a corrupter of youth! ... You shall not let the Word of God issue from your lips with any kind of impurity! ... You shall not take the Name of the Lord in vain! ... You **shall not slay the child by procuring abortion** - nor, again, shall you destroy it after it is born! ... You shall not be of a...double tongue!"

### The Decalogical Law of God in Clement of Rome

692. Perhaps around 95 A.D., the Apostle Paul's colleague Presbyter Clement of Rome [*cf.* Philippians 1:1 & 4:3] wrote from the Church of God in Rome to the Church of God in Corinth:<sup>57</sup> "The Commandments...of the Lord were written upon the tablets of your hearts [Proverbs 7:1-3].... Envy has alienated wives from their husbands; and changed that saying of our father Adam, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh' [Genesis 2:23].... Noah preached repentance [First Peter 3:20 & Second Peter 2:5]....
693. "Abraham, styled 'God's friend' [James 2:23]" - continues Clement of Rome<sup>58</sup> - "was found faithful.... He rendered obedience to the words of God.... For what reason was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith?" Romans 4:1f & James 2:21. "Let us be imitators also...of Job [*cf.* James 5:10f].... 'Job was a righteous man, and blameless, truthful, God-fearing, and one that kept himself from all evil' [Job 1:1]....
694. "The Creator and Lord of all, Himself rejoices in His works.... He formed man, the most excellent [of His creatures].... For thus says God: 'Let Us make man in Our image, and after Our likeness!' So God made man; male and female He created them.... He approved them and blessed them, and said, 'Increase and multiply!' [Genesis 1:26-28]. We see, then, how all **righteous men** have been adorned with **good works** - and how the Lord Himself, adorning Himself with His works, rejoiced. Having therefore such an example - let us without delay accede to His will, and **let us work the work of righteousness with our whole strength!**"<sup>59</sup>
695. Clement of Rome then concludes:<sup>60</sup> "Concerning His Son, the Lord spoke thus: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the Gentiles for Your inheritance - and the uttermost parts of the Earth for Your possession!' [Psalm 2:7f & Hebrews 1:3]. And again He says to Him, 'You sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool!' [Psalm 110:1 & Hebrews 1:13]. But who are His enemies? All the wicked, and those who set themselves to oppose the will of

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<sup>55</sup> *Did.* 2:2.

<sup>56</sup> *Barn.* 2:8 & 19:1f.

<sup>57</sup> *Clem. Rom.*: *1st Ep. to Cor.* 1:2; 2:11; 6:3; 7:6.

<sup>58</sup> *Ib.*, 10:1; 31:3f; 17:1-3.

<sup>59</sup> 33:3f.

<sup>60</sup> 6:6f & 37:1.

God. Let us then, men and brethren, **with all energy act the part of soldiers - in accordance with His Holy Commandments!**"

### The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Ignatius of Antioch

696. Ignatius, the Presbyter of Antioch, was a pupil of the Apostle John. Before being martyred in 107 A.D., he wrote in his *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*<sup>61</sup> that the mockers of Christianity were "the offspring of that spirit who is the author of all evil - who led Adam by means of his wife to **transgress the Commandments, [and] who slew Abel** by the hands of Cain."
697. Indeed, in his *Epistle to the Tarsians*, Ignatius adds:<sup>62</sup> "Neither **adulterers, nor sodomites, nor lesbians, nor fornicators, nor revilers, nor drunkards, nor thieves, can inherit the Kingdom of God** [First Corinthians 6:8].... Lay aside, every one of you, all malice and beastlike fury, evil-speaking, calumny, filthy speaking, ribaldry, whispering, arrogance, drunkenness, lust, avarice, vainglory, envy and everything akin to these.... Husbands, love your wives; and, you wives, your husbands! Children, reverence your parents! Parents, 'bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord' [Ephesians 6:1-4 cf. Exodus 20:12-14f]."
698. In his *Epistle to the Antiochians*, Ignatius further urges:<sup>63</sup> "Let the husbands love their wives, remembering that **at the creation one woman and not many was given to one man**. Let the wives honour their husbands! ... Let them also be chaste, reckoning their husbands as their only partners! ...Children, 'honour your parents, that it may be well with you! ... As to the practice of magic or **the impure love of boys; or murder** - it is superfluous to write...to you, since **such vices are forbidden to be committed even by the Heathen!**" Deuteronomy 5:8-18f cf. First Corinthians 5:1f.
699. Also attributed to Ignatius, is the *Epistle to Polycarp*. The latter, just like Ignatius, was a pupil of the Apostle John who later became a Presbyter. In the *Epistle*, it seems that Ignatius was enjoining his fellow-Presbyter Polycarp not to flinch in his commitment to God and His Decalogue.
700. "Stand firm and immovable," enjoins the *Epistle to Polycarp*,<sup>64</sup> "like an anvil when it is beaten upon! It is the part of a brave combatant to be wounded, but yet to conquer.... **Be every day better! ... Flee evil arts!** ... Exhort my brethren, in the Name of Jesus Christ, that **they love their wives** even as the Lord the Church! ... It behooves all **such as are married**, whether men or women, **to come together**...so that their marriage may be according to godliness and **not in lust**.... **Labour together** with one another! ... Please him...from Whom you **receive wages!** Let **none** of **you** be found a **deserter!**"

### The Decalogical Law of God in the *Shepherd of Hermas*

701. The Apostle Paul's friend Presbyter Hermas of Rome (Romans 16:14) is apparently the author of at least a portion of that document known as the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Thus Origen and Eusebius and Jerome. Indeed, Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria considered 'Hermas' even to be inspired.<sup>65</sup>
702. In this *Shepherd of Hermas*, there are three books. The end of Book One, the whole of Book Two, and

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<sup>61</sup> Ign.: *Ep. Smyrn.*, 7:1-2 (long rec.).

<sup>62</sup> Ign. *Ep. Tars.*, 7:3; 8:2; 9:1-2.

<sup>63</sup> Ign.: *Ep. Ant.*, 9:1-5 & 11:2-5.

<sup>64</sup> Ign.: *Epistle to Polycarp*, 1:13f & 2:6 (in *The Lost Books of the Bible*, New York: Collins, 1976 rep., pp. 190f).

<sup>65</sup> *A.N.F.* (Eerdmans) II p. 6.

large parts of Book Three are all concerned with **God's Commandments**. Book One ends<sup>66</sup> with Hermas saying: "I had been praying at home, and...there entered a man of glorious aspect [*cf.* Revelation 1:10-19f].... I said to Him, 'Who are You? For I know Him to Whom I have been entrusted!' He said to me, 'Do you not know Me? ... I am that Shepherd to Whom you have been entrusted.... Receive strength from the Commandments which I am going to give you!' ... **Write down My Commandments!**"

703. Book Two commences:<sup>67</sup> "First of all, believe that there is one God Who created and finished all things and made all things out of nothing.... Keep these Commands, and **you will...live to God if you keep this Commandment.**"
704. It goes on:<sup>68</sup> "Speak evil of no one.... Let nothing but truth proceed from your mouth.... Whosoever shall hear this Commandment and depart from that great wickedness falsehood, shall live to God.... I charge you to guard your chastity, and let no thought enter your heart of another man's wife or of fornication.... You will be saved, you and all who keep these Commandments....**All shall be forgiven who keep these My Commandments....**
705. "'You have now these Commandments. Walk in them!' ... I said to him, 'Sir, these Commandments are great and good and glorious'.... He said...: 'There is nothing easier or sweeter or more manageable than these Commandments.... Ask of the Lord that strength may be given so that you may be subject to these Commandments.... Practise righteousness the rest of your days.... **Keep His Commandments, and you will live to God....** You will keep them, if your heart be pure towards the Lord!'"
706. In Book Three Hermas is told:<sup>69</sup> "'The adulterer and the drunkard and the backbiter and the liar and the covetous man and the thief and he who does things like these, gratifies his peculiar propensity.... All these acts of luxury are hurtful.'" Hermas replies: "**I shall be blessed if I walk in these Commandments**, and every one who walks in them will be blessed."
707. Hermas is then further told:<sup>70</sup> "**The Law of God...was given to the whole World....** This Law is the Son of God.... The great and glorious Angel Michael is He Who has authority over this people [the Christian Church] and governs them. For this is He Who gave them the Law into the hearts of believers. He accordingly superintends them to whom He gave it, to see if they have kept the same.... They who returned their branches green as they had received them, are...**they who have walked carefully in a pure heart and have kept the Commandments of the Lord....**
708. "'Life is the possession of all who keep the Commandments of the Lord.... [They] will receive healing from the Lord for their former transgressions, if they do not hesitate at these Commandments; and they will live unto God. But do you walk in My Commandments, and live!' ... 'The whole creation is supported by the Son of God.... **These who are called by Him and bear the Name of the Son of God, walk in His Commandments.**"
709. The *Shepherd of Hermas* then ends:<sup>71</sup> "They who believed...are as infant children...because **they**

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<sup>66</sup> *Herm.* I:5:1f.

<sup>67</sup> *Ib.*, II:1:1f.

<sup>68</sup> *Ib.*, II:2:1f, 3:1f, 4:1f, 12:3f.

<sup>69</sup> *Ib.*, III:6:5f *cf.* III:5:3f.

<sup>70</sup> *Ib.*, III:8:3f & III:8:6f & III:8:11f & III:9:14 *cf.* III:9:18 & III:9:21.

<sup>71</sup> *Ib.*, III:9:29f.

defiled in nothing the Commandments of God.... For all infants are honourable before God and are the first persons with Him."

### The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Polycarp of Smyrna

710. Presbyter Polycarp of Smyrna was yet another pupil of John, and also a friend of his colleague and fellow-pupil Ignatius. Polycarp wrote his *Epistle to the Philippians* around 120 A.D. There, he clearly presupposes the binding obligation of the Ten Commandments also upon Christians.
711. For there, concerning Jesus Christ, Polycarp assures the Christians in Philippi:<sup>72</sup> "He Who raised Him up from the dead will raise us up also - if we do His will and walk in His Commandments and love what He loved; keeping ourselves from all unrighteousness, covetousness, love of money, speaking evil, [and] false witness.... Let us arm ourselves with the armour of **righteousness**; and let us first of all **teach ourselves to keep on walking in the Commandments of the Lord**. Next, **[teach] your wives** [to keep on walking] in the faith given to them, and in love and purity tenderly loving their own husbands....
712. "I exhort you therefore that you abstain from covetousness [Exodus 20:17]; and that you be chaste [*cf.* Exodus 20:14]; and truthful [*cf.* Exodus 20:16].... I trust that you are well versed in the Sacred Scriptures.... May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ Himself - Who is the Son of God and our everlasting High Priest - build you up in faith and truth and in all meekness [or **law-abidingness**], gentleness, patience, long-suffering, forbearance, and **purity!**"

### The Decalogical Law of God in Aristides's *Apology to Hadrian*

713. In 125 A.D., the Christian Philosopher Aristides of Athens presented his *Apology* (alias his *Defence of the Christian Faith*) to the Roman Emperor Hadrian - when the latter then visited Greece.<sup>73</sup> It is very significant that as Aristides there and then inveighed against the pagan gods of Ancient Greece (largely taken over also by the Ancient Romans), he also showed that those gods were alleged to have transgressed the very same laws which even the Ancient Greeks rightly upheld. Indeed, they had inherited those laws from the Noachitic Covenant. Genesis 9:1-12; 9:27f; 10:1-4f; 11:9f.
714. "Let us then proceed to the Greeks," Aristides wrote Hadrian,<sup>74</sup> "so that we may see whether they have any discernment concerning God...in alleging that many gods have come into being.... The Greeks themselves represented them to be **adulterers and murderers**, wrathful and envious and passionate, slayers of fathers and brothers, thieves and robbers....
715. "But how did the wise and erudite men of the Greeks not observe that inasmuch as they make laws for themselves, they are judged by their own laws? For if **the laws are righteous, their gods are altogether unrighteous** - as they have committed transgressions of laws in **slaying one another** and practising **sorceries** and **adultery** and **thefts** and **intercourse with males**....In fact, **the laws are good and just**, commending what is good and forbidding what is bad. **But the deeds of their gods are contrary to law**. Their gods, therefore, are lawbreakers - and all **liable to the punishment of death**....If the stories about them be mythical, the gods are nothing more than mere names; and if the stories be founded on nature, still they who did and permitted these things are no longer gods....

<sup>72</sup>. Polyc.: *Ep. Philipp.*, 2:3; 4:2-4; 11:2f; 12:4.

<sup>73</sup> See *Ante-Nic. Fath.* (Eerdmans), X pp. 259f.

<sup>74</sup>. *Ib.*, pp. 268f & 275 & 277 (citing the *Apology of Aristides* as preserved in *History of Barlaam and Josaphat* VIII & XIII & XV).



716. "But the Christians...have the Commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself graven upon their hearts. And they observe them, looking forward to the resurrection of the dead and life in the World to come. They do not commit adultery nor fornication, nor bear false witness, nor covet the things of others. They honour father and mother, and love their neighbours."

### The Decalogical Law of God in Justin Martyr's *First Apology*

717. The Early-Christian Apologist Justin Martyr of Samaria flourished around 150 A.D. In his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, Justin shows that the Old Testament Law pointed to Christ - and that also Christians are to keep the **pre-Mosaic** and the **post-Mosaic** Moral Law of God.
718. In his *First Apology* alias his *First Defence of Christianity* to the Pagan Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius (and to other Heathens), and at least implicitly also in his other writings, Justin expands on this - universally. For there he suggests: that God requires all men (and thus even the Pagans) to keep His Moral Law; that the Pagans continue to break it; that Christ kept it perfectly for those who become Christians; and that Christians thereafter increasingly keep it, out of gratitude for that finished work of Christ.
719. In his *Dialogue*, Justin states:<sup>75</sup> "There will be no other God, O Trypho, nor was there from eternity any other existing...but He Who made and disposed this whole Universe. Nor do we [Christians] think that there is one God for us [and] another for you [Jews], but that He alone is God Who led your fathers out from Egypt with a strong hand.... Nor have we trusted in any other (for there is no other), but in...the God of Abraham.... For I have read [in Jeremiah 31:31f] that there shall be a final Law, and a covenant the chiefest of all, which it is now incumbent on all men to observe....
720. "God proclaimed a new covenant which was to be instituted...for a light of the nations. We see and are persuaded that men approach God, leaving their idols and other unrighteousness - through the Name of Him Who was crucified, Jesus Christ.... **He is the new Law**....
721. "Draw near hither, you **lawless** children - seed of the **adulterers**, and children of the **whore!** ... Against Whom have you opened the mouth, and against Whom have you **loosened the tongue?** For other nations have not inflicted on us [Christians], and on Christ, this wrong - to such an extent as you [Judaists] have.... Wash, therefore, and be clean now, and put away iniquity from your souls! ... God bids you be washed in this laver [of baptism], and be circumcised truly....
722. "Christ the Son of God...was proclaimed as about to come to the World to be **the everlasting Law and the everlasting Covenant**.... We who have approached God through Him have received...spiritual circumcision which Enoch and those like him observed. And we have received it through baptism - since we were sinners.... The Mosaic Law is naturally godly and pious and righteous.... Those who did that which is universally, naturally and eternally good - are pleasing to God. They shall be saved through this Christ in the resurrection...equally with those righteous men who were before them, namely Noah and Enoch [and Abel and Adam].... Those righteous Patriarchs who lived before Moses...[have] the inheritance of the blessed....
723. "It is written in the Mosaic Law, 'Cursed is everyone that does not continue in everything written in the book of the law to do it' [Deuteronomy 27:26].... If those who are under this law appear to be under a

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<sup>75</sup> Just. Mart.: *Dial. Tryph.* (chs. 11,16-18,43,45,66,95,110,122f).

curse for not having observed all the requirements - how much more shall all the nations appear to be under a curse, who practise idolatry; who seduce youths; and commit other crimes?"

724. Justin continues: "The Christians have learned the true worship of God from the Law.... God announced **beforehand** that He would send...an everlasting Law and Commandment.... We from Christ, Who begat us unto God - like Jacob and Israel and Judah and Joseph and David - are called and are the true sons of God, and keep the Commandments of Christ."
725. In Justin's *First Apology [or Defence of the Christian Faith] to Pagans*, he insists<sup>76</sup> that Christians had abandoned false gods - and that they now mistrusted misleading magicians. He condemns the Pagans' grievous mistreatment of their own children. "As for **us**," he then explains of the early Christians, "to expose newly-born children is the part of wicked men.... [We Christians fear to expose our children] lest some of them...die - and [we should thus] become murderers. For when **we** [Christians] marry - we bring up [or nourish] **our** children."<sup>77</sup>

### Place of the Decalogue in Justin's various Christian Liturgies

726. It is sometimes claimed that the earliest extant traces of what now remains of the earliest liturgies used by Christians, are to be found in Justin Martyr. Apart from the yet-earlier use of the previously-mentioned *Odes of Solomon* even in the apostolic churches, the claim has some substance. So we shall now briefly investigate all traces of liturgies in Justin's *First Apology* and his *Second Apology* - with specific reference to the Christian use of the Ten Commandments in services of worship.
727. Explains Justin of those Early Christians:<sup>78</sup> "I will also relate the manner in which we dedicated ourselves to God when we had been made new through Christ.... As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and **undertake...to live accordingly**, are **instructed**.... In the Name of God - the Father and Lord of the Universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit - they then receive the washing with water.... Those who have sinned and **repent**, shall escape their sins.... They who **learn** these things, are illuminated in their **understandings**....
728. "We, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has **assented** to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called **brethren are assembled**, in order that we may offer hearty prayers...**so that we may be counted worthy** - now that we have learned the truth - **by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the Commandments**.... On the day called Sunday, all...gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles **or** the writings of the Prophets are read.... The **President** verbally instructs and **exhorts to the imitation of these good things**. Then we all rise together and pray.... Bread and wine and water are brought" *etc.*
729. In his *Second Apology*, Justin expresses<sup>79</sup> the Christians' abhorrence of **adultery, fornication, murder, theft, robbery, suicide**: the actions of those who "**transgress good Commandments**." Finally, in his *Discourse to the Greeks*, Justin condemns<sup>80</sup> their pagan theogonies and mythologies; their overeating; and their unchastity.

<sup>76</sup> Just. Mart.: *1st Apol.* ch. 18, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*.

<sup>77</sup> *Id.*, chs. 25f & 28f.

<sup>78</sup> *Ib.*, chs. 61 & 65 & 67.

<sup>79</sup> Just. Mart.: *2nd Apol.* chs. 2,4 & 9.

<sup>80</sup> Just. Mart.: *Disc. to Greeks*, chs. 2-3.

### Importance of the Decalogue in Theophilus's *Defence to Autolyucus*

730. The 170 A.D. Theophilus, Presbyter of Antioch, condemned<sup>81</sup> the idolatry of his friend the Pagan Autolyucus; and the cannibalism, infanticide, murder, incest and lust of the gods of the Heathen Greeks whom the latter had 'made' in their own depraved image. Such, he concludes, "obey not the truth, but are obedient to unrighteousness.... They are filled with adulteries and fornications and filthiness and covetousness and unlawful idolatries. There shall be anger and wrath, tribulation and anguish. And, at the last, everlasting fire shall take possession of such men....
731. "**God has given us a Law and holy Commandments**; and everyone who keeps these, can be saved.... Therefore said Adam to Eve, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.... For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and **they two shall be one flesh**' [Genesis 2:24]; which **also** itself has its fulfilment in **ourselves**. For whosoever marries lawfully, leaves mother and father and his whole family connection and all his household - cleaving to and becoming one with his own wife, fondly preferring her....
732. "When, then, Satan saw Adam and his wife not only still living but also begetting children...; when he saw that Abel was well-pleasing to God, he wrought upon the heart of his brother called Cain, and caused him to kill his brother Abel.... The Father and Creator of the Universe did not abandon mankind, but gave a Law.... The divine Law, then, not only forbids the worshipping of idols - but also of the heavenly bodies.... The holy Law says: 'you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not desire your neighbour's wife!' [Exodus 20]....
733. "We also confess that God exists...and **we have learned a holy Law**.... We have as Lawgiver Him Who is really God, Who teaches us to act righteously and to be pious and to do good. And concerning piety he says, 'you shall have no other gods before me! You shall not make for yourself any graven image! ... **Honour your father** and your mother! ... 'You shall **not commit adultery!** You **shall not murder!** You shall not steal! You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour! You **shall not covet!**"
734. Continues Theophilus: "Of this divine Law, then, Moses - who also was God's servant - was made the Minister **both to all the World and chiefly to the Hebrews...who were the righteous seed of godly and holy men - Abraham and Isaac and Jacob...whom He also settled again in the land of Canaan...and gave them a Law and taught them these things [Genesis 18:18f & 26:5]. Of this great and wonderful Law, which tends to all righteousness, the ten heads are such as we have already rehearsed [Exodus 20:1-17]....**
735. "And when the people transgressed the Law which had been given to them by God - God being good and pitiful, unwilling to destroy them, in addition to His giving them the Law afterwards sent forth also Prophets to them from among their brethren to teach and remind them of the contents of the Law and to turn them to repentance so that they might sin no more.... Many therefore - yea rather, countless - are the sayings in the Holy Scriptures regarding repentance, God being always desirous that the race of men turn from all their sins....
736. "The voice of the Gospel teaches still more urgently concerning chastity.... And the Gospel says: 'Love your enemies, and pray for them that spitefully [ab]use you!' ... Consider, therefore, whether those who teach such things can possibly live indifferently and be commingled in unlawful intercourse or...become

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<sup>81</sup> Theoph.: *To Autol.*, I chs. 1 & 9 & 14; II chs. 27-29 & 34f; III chs. 9f & 13-15.

partakers and abettors of murders.... Far be it from **Christians** to conceive any such deeds! For **with them**, temperance dwells; selfrestraint is practised; monogamy is observed; chastity is guarded; iniquity exterminated; sin extirpated; righteousness exercised; **Law administered**; worship performed; God acknowledged!"

### The Decalogical Law of God in the Christian Philosopher Athenagoras

737. In 177 A.D., Athenagoras the Christian Philosopher of Athens sent an apology (called *A Plea for the Christians*) to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus (successively the Heathen Emperors of the Pagan Roman Empire). Athenagoras there insists:<sup>82</sup> "We who are called Christians...are of all men most piously and righteously disposed towards the Deity.... No Christian is a bad man, unless he falsely profess our doctrines.... Our doctrine acknowledges one God, the Maker of this Universe....
738. "Our doctrine is from the teaching of God.... We have a Law which makes the measure of rectitude to consist in dealing with our neighbour as ourselves.... We give the honour due, to fathers and mothers....In respect of those to whom we apply the names of 'brothers' and 'sisters' and other designations of relationship, we exercise the greatest care that their bodies should remain undefiled.... Each of us reckons her [alone who his wife - whom he has married according to the laws laid down...for the purpose of having children.... 'For whosoever puts away his wife,' says He, 'and marries another - commits adultery' [Matthew 19:9].... Because in the beginning, God made one man and one woman...for the intercourse of the race [Genesis 1:26-28 & 2:20-25] ....
739. "Such is our character.... Why should I speak of things unfit to be uttered? The things said about us are an example of the proverb, 'The harlot reproves the chaste.' For those who have set up a market for fornication and who have established infamous resorts for the young for every kind of vile pleasure - who do not abstain even from males (males with males committing shocking abominations, outraging all the noblest and comeliest bodies in all sorts of ways, so dishonouring the fair workmanship...of God) - these men, I say, revile us for the very things which they are conscious of themselves....
740. "Who of **them** can accuse **us** of **murder**? ... Those **women** who use drugs to bring on **abortion**, commit **murder** - and will have to give an account to God for the abortion. On what principle should **we** commit murder? The **same** person would not regard the very **fetus** in the womb as a created being (and therefore as an object of God's **care**), and...then **kill** it...**Those** who **expose** them [**foetuses** or **newlyborn babes**], are chargeable with **childmurder!**"
741. In his *Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead*, Athenagoras pre-supposes that all men are bound by God's Law of Nature - and will be either rewarded for the keeping of it or punished for the breaking of it, in their resurrection bodies. Foreshadowing even the current Red Chinese practice of eating human fetuses, he explains:<sup>83</sup> "For men to partake of the flesh of men, is a thing most hateful and abominable, and...is against nature.... To those [creatures] who bear upon them the image of the Creator Himself..., He has assigned perpetual duration in order that...**obeying law and justice** they [*viz.* human beings alone] may pass their whole existence free from suffering.... All human beings who die, rise again.... **Very young children** [including also human fetuses]...rise again.... **All are to rise again**; those who have died in infancy [even through abortion *etc.*] as well as others....
742. "It will be well to prove our proposition by...the reward or punishment due to each man, in accordance

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<sup>82</sup>. Athenag.: *Apology*, chs. 1-4 & 32-35.

<sup>83</sup> Athenag.: *Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead*, chs. 7 & 12 & 14 & 18f & 23 & 25.

with righteous judgment.... Many atheists and persons who practise every iniquity and wickedness, live on.... The robber or ruler or tyrant who has unjustly put to death myriads on myriads - could not by one death make restitution for these deeds.... The man who holds no true opinion concerning God but lives in all outrage and blasphemy; despises divine things; breaks the laws; commits outrage against boys and women alike; razes cities unjustly; burns houses with their inhabitants; and devastates a country and at the same time destroys inhabitants of cities and peoples and even an entire nation - how in a mortal body could he endure a penalty adequate to these crimes?" To do so, he needs - and will yet receive - an immortal body!

743. "Man must...bear the recompense for the sins committed...such as adultery, murder, theft, rapine, dishonour to parents, and every desire in general that tends to the injury and loss of our neighbours.... This follows of necessity - there must by all means be a resurrection of the bodies which are dead or even entirely dissolved.... The same men must be formed anew, since the Law of Nature ordains no absolute end nor the end of any men whatsoever...who passed through the previous life....The reward or punishment of lives ill- or well-spent, is proportioned to the merit of each." Revelation 20:11-15; 21:7f; 22:11-16f.

### The outspoken anti-antinomianism of Irenaeus Presbyter of Lyons

744. Around 185 A.D., the celebrated Christian Presbyter and Theologian Irenaeus - the acquaintance of Polycarp (the pupil of the Apostle John) - wrote his famous work *Against Heresies*. This was the first major Christian polemic against false teachings such as those of the Antinomians.
745. Discussing the wicked and blasphemous doctrines of antinomian heretics, Irenaeus rightly remarks<sup>84</sup> they are "refuted by the teaching of the Lord, with Whom not only is the adulterer rejected, but also the man who desires to commit adultery; and not only is the actual murderer held guilty of having killed another to his own damnation, but the man also who is angry with his brother without a cause [Matthew 5:21f]....
746. "All things ever revealed to believers, have been shown by one and the same **God through the Word** - He at one time conferring with His creature, and...**propounding His Law**...and adopting him as a son.... For the purpose of bringing man to perfection, He formed him for **growth and increase**. As the Scripture says: "**Increase and multiply!**" Genesis 1:28f.
747. "**In the beginning God formed Adam.... God promulgated a Law...by means of natural precepts** - which, from the beginning, He had **implanted in mankind...by means of the Decalogue....**The righteous **Patriarch had the meaning of the Decalogue written in their hearts** and souls.... For at the beginning, God had respect to the gifts of Abel - because he offered with singlemindedness and **righteousness.**"
748. Yet, at the time of the incarnation of Christ, "the tradition of the Judaistic 'Elders' themselves - which they **pretended** to observe from the Law - was [actually] **contrary** to the Law given by Moses (Matthew 5:17-22).... The Elders were in the habit of mingling a watered[-down] tradition with the simple **Command[ments] of God**.... As also the Lord [Jesus Christ] made plain, when He said to them: '**why do you transgress the Commandment of God, for the sake of your tradition?**' [Matthew 15:3]....

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<sup>84</sup> Iren.: Ag. Her., II:32:1f; IV:11:1, 14:1f, 15:1, 16:3, 18:3, 12:1-5, 13:1, 16:3f, 37:4.

749. "The **Commandment of the Law...is the love of God...** And Paul in like manner declares: '**love is the fulfilling of the Law**' [Romans 13:10]....As in the Law...and in the Gospel - the first and greatest Commandment is to love the Lord God with the whole heart and...to love one's neighbour as one's self.
750. "The Author of the Law and the Gospel is shown to be one and the same.... The Law did beforehand teach mankind the necessity of following Christ....**The Lord did not abrogate the natural [precepts] of the Law....He extended and fulfilled them....** He remarks...'Do not commit adultery! ... I say to you that everyone who has looked upon a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart' [Matthew 5:27f].... 'You shall not kill! ... Every one who is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment' [Matthew 5:21f]. 'I say to you, do not swear at all!' [Matthew 5:33]....
751. "The righteous fathers had the meaning of the Decalogue written in their hearts and souls [Romans 1:16-20f & 2:13-15f].... To all alike did the Lord [Jesus] Himself, in His own Person, speak the words of the Decalogue. And therefore, in like manner, they remain permanently with us [Christians]. For they receive - by means of His advent in the flesh - extension and increase: but not abrogation!"
752. Consequently, concludes Irenaeus, also after Calvary - and indeed also and specifically to Christians - God's Decalogue is still binding. "He says: 'you must speak every man truth with his neighbour' [Ephesians 4:25]. And 'let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth; neither filthiness; nor foolish talking; nor scurrility' [Ephesians 4:29]....
753. "'For you were at some time in darkness; but now you are light in the Lord. Walk honestly as children of the light; not in rioting and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness; not in anger and jealousy! And such were some of you; but you have been washed.... You have been sanctified in the Name of our Lord' [First Corinthians 6:11]."

### **God's Law in Clement of Alexandria's *Exhortation* and in his *Instructor***

754. Clement the Chief Catechist of Alexandria and the Pioneer of Eastern Theology (around A.D. 190f), grounded his ethics in the Decalogue - and rooted that, in turn, in man's pre-fall dominion mandate. Indeed, exclaims Clement<sup>85</sup> when in Genesis 1:28 the Lord said to Adam: "Increase and multiply!" - this means that both he and all his descendants "should do so in no other way than by sexual intercourse." Clearly, the Bible-believing Clement would stoutly have opposed - *AID*, *AIH*, and *IVF*.
755. This is so, because what God commanded Adam - He commanded, in Adam as the ancestor of the entire human race, also to all of his descendants (whether Heathen or Christian). Hence, in his *Exhortation to the Heathen*, Clement reminded even them:<sup>86</sup> "If you enrol yourself as one of God's people - Heaven is your country; **God your Lawgiver!**
756. "And what are the Laws? 'You shall not kill!'; 'you shall not commit adultery!'; 'you shall not seduce boys!'; 'you shall not steal!'; 'you shall love the Lord your God!' [Exodus 20:13-16 & Deuteronomy 6:5]. And the complements of these, are those laws of reason and words of sanctity which are inscribed on men's hearts: 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself!' [Leviticus 19:18 & Matthew 19:19 & 22:39.

<sup>85</sup> Clem. Alex.: *Epistles* 48. See in Dr. & Mrs. J.C. Willke (M.D.): *Handbook on Abortion*, Cincinnati: Hiltz, 1972, p. 88.

<sup>86</sup> Clem. Alex.: *Exhort. to the Heath.*, ch. 10.

757. In his work *The Instructor* (namely the Lord Jesus Christ Himself), Clement of Alexandria states:<sup>87</sup> "When it is formed into a compact consistency in the womb by the natural and warm Spirit by which the embryo is fashioned, it becomes a living creature.... Thus also He Who is our great General (the Word, the Commander-in-Chief of the Universe), by admonishing those who throw off the restraints of His Law - so that He may effect their release from the slavery and error and captivity of the adversary, brings them peacefully to the sacred concord of citizenship...."
758. "The Instructor does not permit us to give utterance to anything unseemly - fortifying us, at an early stage, against licentiousness. For He is admirable always at cutting out the roots of sins such as 'you shall not commit adultery!' - by 'you shall not lust!' [Exodus 20:14 & 20:17]...."
759. "Those who are joined in matrimony have been given the prospect of acquiring children.... For He said: 'Multiply!' [Genesis 1:27f]. Whence, this too needs to be obeyed: 'Man is for this reason the image of God, inas-much as man co-operates in generating men'.... Therefore it is clearly not an enigma that Moses prohibited: 'you shall not fornicate!'; 'you shall not commit adultery!'; 'you shall not bring dishonour upon boys!'" Exodus 20:14 & Leviticus 18:22.
760. "We have the Decalogue [Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5] given by Moses, which...defines the designation of sins in a way conducive to salvation: 'you shall not commit adultery!'; 'you shall not worship idols!'; 'you shall not corrupt boys!'; 'you shall not steal!'; 'you shall not bear false witness!'; 'honour your father and your mother' - and so forth. **These things are to be observed** - and whatever else is commanded in reading the Bible."<sup>88</sup>

### God's Law in Clement of Alexandria's *Miscellanies* and in his *Rich Man*

761. In his famous *Miscellanies* (alias his *Stromata*), Clement of Alexandria teaches<sup>89</sup> that 'the good Commandment'...according to the Scripture 'is a lamp; and the Law is a light to the path. For instruction corrects the ways of life' [Proverbs 6:23].... Whether, then, it be the Law which is connate and 'natural' [the 'Law of nature'], or that given afterwards [in the 'Mosaic Decalogue'] which is meant - it is certainly of God. And both the Law of nature and that of Instruction [the Decalogue] are one....
762. Indeed, the Mosaic Law is the fountain of all ethics and the source from which also the Ancient Greeks had drawn theirs. Thus Clement says:<sup>90</sup> "Observance of the Commandments, which is the innoxious keeping of them, is the attainment of a secure life...."
763. "From the Commandments spring both wisdom...and...righteousness." Consequently: "The beginning of wisdom, then, is piety. And the knowledge of holy things, is understanding. And to know the Law, is the characteristic of a good understanding [Proverbs 9:10]...."
764. "The Law," continues Clement of Alexandria, "proclaims at once the righteousness and goodness of God.... It forbids intercourse with a female captive so as to dishonour her.... He who seeks God, shall find knowledge with righteousness." **In forbidding the simultaneous sacrificing of ewes and their lambs**, and the seething of kid goats in their mothers' milk, **the Law prohibits the exposure of human infants too - and further also the abortion of human fetuses.**"

<sup>87</sup> Clem. Alex.: *Instructor*, I:6 & I:8 and II:6 & II:10.

<sup>88</sup> *Ib.*, III:12.

<sup>89</sup> Clement of Alexandria: *Miscellanies*, I:29.

<sup>90</sup> Clem.: Alex.: Heading to *Misc.* II:18, and *Misc.* II:18 itself. See further his *Exhortation to the Heathen*, ch. 6. Both are in the Eerdman's ed. of the *Ante-Nic. Fath.*

765. Clement's *Miscellanies* further inveigh against the sexual community of women as practised by antinomian heretics such as Carpocrates and Epiphanes. Here Clement refers<sup>91</sup> to texts like: "you shall not commit adultery!" [Exodus 20:14]; 'he who gapes with concupiscence, has already committed adultery' [Matthew 5:28]; and 'you shall not covet!' [Exodus 20:17]; and 'if a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die!'" Deuteronomy 22:22.
766. Later, after offering an explanation as to why there are precisely **ten** Commandments (in the Decalogue), Clement lists nearly all of them. Thus he states:<sup>92</sup> "The First Commandment of the Decalogue shows that there is only one Sovereign God.... The Second Word [alias Commandment] intimates that men ought not to take and confer the august power of God...and transfer His title to things created.... The Fourth Word is that which intimates that the World was created by God, and that He gave us the seventh day as a rest....
767. "The Fifth in order, is the Command[ment] on the honour of father and mother....Then follows the Command[ment] about murder.... This is followed by the Command[ment] respecting adultery.... After this is the Command[ment] respecting theft.... And the Tenth is the Command[ment] respecting all lusts."
768. Finally, there is Clement of Alexandria's tract *Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?* There, he draws attention to Christ's words to the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-31. "You know the Commandments. Do not commit adultery! Do not kill! Do not steal! Do not bear false witness! Do not defraud! Honour your father and your mother!" Clement then himself adds the words of Paul - that "the Commandment is holy."<sup>93</sup> Romans 7:12.
769. Thereafter Clement of Alexandria concludes:<sup>94</sup> "A man who is a blasphemer and dead by nature, would say...'Follow me and join with me in wickedness, and do not obey the Law of Christ!'.... On the other side, hear the Saviour: 'I regenerated you who were illborn by the World unto death. I emancipated, healed, ransomed you'.... So the Master, when asked 'which is the greatest of the Commandments?' - says 'you shall love the Lord your God with all your soul and all your strength' [Matthew 22:26-28].... The second in order (and not any less than this), He says, is - 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself!'" Matthew 22:39.

### **Early Christian Liturgy inherited the Decalogue from Old Testament Worship**

770. Before dealing with the *Clementine Liturgy* (at paragraphs 786-90 & 901f), we note that the *Odes of Solomon* were used in early Christian Worship even by the apostolic churches; and that Justin Martyr emphasized the importance of the Ten Commandments in Christian Worship no later than 160 A.D. See paragraphs 605f & 722-29. From that time onward, the evidence increases that the Decalogue in Christian Worship was traced to the time before Solomon and his father David - and even prior to the time of Moses, back to Adam himself.
771. Thus the so-called *Revelation of Moses*, itself originally of pre-Christian antiquity, was yet-later updated by Christians and finally accredited among the many writings valued also by the Patristic

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<sup>91</sup> Clem. Alex.: *Misc.* III:2.

<sup>92</sup> *Ib.*, VI:16.

<sup>93</sup> Clem. Alex.: *Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?* (4 & 9).

<sup>94</sup> *Ib.*, 23 & 27.



Church.<sup>95</sup>In this document, one is confronted with a purported "account and life of Adam and Eve the first-created - revealed by God to His servant Moses when he received from the hand of the Lord the tablets of the Law of the Covenant instructed [or drawn up] by the Archangel Michael" alias the pre-incarnate Christ.

772. According to that document: "**Eve did not keep the Commandment of God....** God called Adam, saying: 'Adam, where are you hidden?' ... God said to him...: '**you have forsaken My Commandment which I gave you to keep....** Since you have **disobeyed My Commandment and obeyed your wife** - cursed is the ground in your labours!' ... The Lord God says: 'Adam, why have you done this? ... Nevertheless...I will turn your grief into joy and...I will establish you in your kingdom'....
773. "Having thus spoken, the Archangel Michael [alias the uncreated Son of God] went up into Heaven glorifying and saying the Alleluia [*cf.* Revelation 4:9f & 19:1-4f] - 'Holy, holy, holy Lord' - to the glory of God the Father. Because to Him is due glory and adoration, with His unbeginning and life-giving Spirit - now and ever, and to ages of ages. Amen."
774. With documents like the above as a decalogical bridge from Adam to Moses, other liturgical writings conveyed that same Decalogue from Moses *via* Samuel and then through David down to the Apostles - and thenceforth even into the Patristic Church. According to the most erudite American Episcopalian Bishop Rev. Dr. A. Cleveland Coxe,<sup>96</sup> "we shall better comprehend the era of which (under God) Samuel was the author - by noting the immense importance of that specific Mosaic ordinance which...governed the whole Law of Moses.... All this *provision* and *prevision* was part of the great Messianic system which reached its crisis in the time of David as prophetic of 'the Son of David'....
775. "Hippolytus [*circa* 230 A.D.] in a few terse sentences has pointed out<sup>97</sup> the epoch of David, in its vast import, as the dawning of Christianity itself." Samuel prepares for the Christian era, introducing the 'Schools of the Prophets' and the Synagogue Service, which God raised up David to complete by furnishing the Psalter. Compare Acts 3:24, where Samuel's position in the 'goodly fellowship' is marked.<sup>98</sup>
776. "It was the office of Samuel," continues Coxe,<sup>99</sup> "to take the Mosaic ordinances just there, and to shape them for the advent of the Lamb of God, for His sacrifice upon Calvary, and for the setting-up of His universal Kingdom. The institutions of Samuel, therefore, were *in essence* institutions for the Gospel-day, and they were completed by the anointing of David as king, and by his prophetic mission to provide the Psalter....
777. "Now let us note the institutions of Samuel. The localizing of the Temple-worship [in due course of time] made way for the clearer revelation of spiritual sacrifices.... A liturgical system...was to be brought to every man's door by the establishment of the Synagogue, for the villages of Israel [Psalm 74:4-8 & 83:12].
778. "The Synagogue-worship became, therefore, the education and preparation of the faithful for the simple and spiritual worship of the **New Law**. This our Lord Himself expounded, in the grand catholicity of His words to the outcast Samaritans: 'The hour comes, when you shall neither on this

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<sup>95.</sup> *Ante-Nic. Fath.*, Eerdmans ed., VIII p. 358. *Revelation of Moses*, 1f.

<sup>96</sup> A.C. Coxe: *Introductory Notice to Early Liturgies* (in *Ante-Nic. Fath.*, Eerdmans, VII p. 530)

<sup>97</sup> Hippol.: *Preface to his Exposition of the Psalms* (in *Ante-Nic. Fath.* Eerdmans, V p. 170 n. 2).

<sup>98.</sup> Thus Coxe at *id.*

<sup>99.</sup> *Introd. Not. Earl. Lit.* (in *A.N.F.* VII pp. 530-32).

mountain [of Gerisim] nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.... But the hour comes, and is now, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth' [John 4:21-23]....

779. "We find the Prophet Samuel instituting 'Schools of the Prophets' - out of which grew the Synagogue System supplying the Rabbinical education to Israel and furnishing Chiefs to the Synagogues. See Acts 3:24 - and compare First Samuel 10:5 & 19:20 and First Chronicles 9:22.... *The reading of the Law* and the Prophets was now set in order.... Not only was the temple supplied with Teachers, but also the villages in every tribe.... Thus the Christian Church was provided with a system of worship from the hour of its institution."

### The decalogical content of extant Early Christian Liturgies

780. According to Coxe,<sup>100</sup> "the spirit of the Ante-Nicene Fathers" is effective at "elucidating the primitive epoch and its principles - alike in doctrine and worship." Indeed, he adds, the Ante-Nicene Fathers are even "better" at doing so - than are other writings.
781. Furthermore, according to Neale in his *General Introduction to the History of the Holy Eastern Church*.<sup>101</sup> "These liturgies...were the legitimate development of their unwritten tradition.... The *Liturgy of St. James* is of earlier date, as to its main fabric, than A.D. 200."
782. That *Liturgy of St. James*, the bulk of which dates from well before 200 A.D., is the ancestor<sup>102</sup> of some forty Syro-Jacobite offices or liturgies; of the Caesarean office or *Liturgy of St. Basil* with all of its off-shoots; of that of Chrysostom; and of the Armeno-Gregorian. This *Liturgy of St. James* starts off.<sup>103</sup>
783. "O Sovereign Lord our God, condemn me not, defiled with a multitude of sins.... Looking only to Your goodness, I direct my voice to You. God, be merciful to me, a sinner! I have sinned against Heaven and before You, and am unworthy to come.... Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit! ... May I not be cast out as a slave of sin" - which is the **transgression of the Law**. First John 3:4.
784. "You made man from the ground, according to Your image and likeness. You did give him the joy of paradise. And when **he transgressed Your Commandment** and fell away, You did not disregard nor desert him. Afterwards, You sent forth into the World Your only-begotten Son Himself - our Lord Jesus Christ - so that He by His coming might **renew and restore Your image**."
785. The *Liturgy of St. James* then goes on: "Make the end of our lives Christian, acceptable, blameless, and...**without shame and transgressions**.... Sanctify also...our souls...and cast out from us...every **impure feeling**..., all **envy**..., all **lying**..., all **covetousness**..., all **passion**, all **anger**..., all **blasphemy**!"

### The decalogical Law of God in the *Clementine Documents*

786. The *Clementine Documents* (so called), include: the *Clementine Recognitions*; the *Clementine Homilies*; and the *Clementine Office*. The *Recognitions* mention the extension of the Roman franchise

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<sup>100.</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 529 & 533.

<sup>101</sup> Neale: *General Introduction to the History of the Holy Eastern Church* (cited in *A.N.F.*, Eerdmans, VIII, p. 533, at n. 3).

<sup>102</sup> *Ib.*, p. 534 at n. 2.

<sup>103</sup> *Liturgy of St. James*, I-II, XXIV, XXIX & XXXVI & XXXVIII.

to all nations within the Empire, which occurred in 211 A.D. Indeed, a passage from the *Recognitions* is quoted by Origen<sup>104</sup> in 231 A.D.

787. The *Recognitions* imply<sup>105</sup> that Adam was a Prophet - a forthteller of God's Word (such as His Ten Commandments). "The first man prophesied.... It is certain that he was also anointed."
788. The *Clementine Homilies* insist<sup>106</sup> that when God made His image man, the latter was "fashioned by His hands, to possess...His great and Holy Spirit....He who insults the image and the things belonging to the eternal King, has the **sin** reckoned as committed against Him in Whose likeness the image was made. But then, says he, the Divine Spirit left him when he **sinned**.... Our father was not ignorant....
789. "The only good God having made all things well, and having handed them over to man who was made after His image, he who had been made...a true Prophet...[was] to love God and to be loved by Him.... The one God and **Lord of all...appointed a perpetual Law...which can be read by all**.... By obedience to the Law, all things were in abundance - the fairest of fruits, fullness of years, freedom from grief and from disease."
790. Asserts Dr. Coxe:<sup>107</sup> "The *Clementine Office* [now preserved in the Eighth Book of the *Apostolical Constitutions*] is at least no later than 260." We shall, however, defer consideration of that *Office* until the appropriate place under the *Constitutions* themselves. See our subsequent paragraphs 901f for the decalogical implications of that *Office*.

### God's Law in the Early Writings of Carthage's Presbyter Tertullian

791. Presbyter Tertullian of Carthage was the leading Theologian of the Church from just before A.D. 200 until his death around 230. He was indeed also the 'Founder of Western Theology.' Not only was he the pioneer of the term 'Trinity' - but he also clearly upheld God's Moral Law.
792. Thus, in his *On Idolatry*, he states<sup>108</sup> that "the principal crime of the human race...is **idolatry**.... Each single fault...is marked off under the *general* account of idolatry.... The idolater is likewise a **murderer**. Do you inquire whom he has slain? ... His own self.... You may recognize in the same crime, **adultery** and **fornication**. For he who serves false gods, is doubtless an *adulterer* of **truth**, because all falsehood is adultery..... Thus it is that the Holy Scriptures [*cf.* Ezekiel chapter 23] use the designation of fornication, in their upbraiding of idolatry....
793. "Idolatry does **fraud** to God.... In it also are the **concupiscences** of the World.... In it are **lasciviousnesses** and **drunkennesses**.... In it is **unrighteousness**.... It is **mendacity**.... The Divine Law proclaims: 'you shall make **no idols!**'" Exodus 20:4; Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 5:8."If you **reverence the same God**, you have His Law 'you shall make no similitude' [Exodus 20:4f]. If you also look back to the precept enjoining the subsequently-made similitude - **you too should imitate Moses**. Do not make any likeness, in opposition to the Law!"
794. Further, continues Tertullian, "**covetousness is...called idolatry** [Colossians 3:5].... Also in the first part of the Law, He says: 'you shall **not use the Name of the Lord your God in a vain thing**'

<sup>104</sup> See Orig.: *Comment. on Gen.*, and *A.N.F.* (Eerdmans) VIII p. 74.

<sup>105</sup> *Clem. Recog.*, I:47.

<sup>106</sup> *Clem. Hom.*, III:17f & VIII:10.

<sup>107</sup> See *A.N.F.* (Eerdmans), VII p. 533 at n. 3 and p. 532 at nn. 8 & 15.

<sup>108</sup> Tert.: *On Idolatry*, chs. 1 & 4 & 5 & 11 & 24.

[Exodus 20:7] - that is, in an idol. Whoever therefore honours an idol with the Name of God, has fallen into idolatry." Indeed, the Apostle Paul declares: "you know that **no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man - who is an idolater - has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.**" Ephesians 5:5.

795. Significantly, Tertullian then draws attention to the decrees of the First General Assembly of the Christian Church (Acts 15:1-31). "The Holy Spirit did, when the Apostles at that time were consulting, [decree]...that we might be free to devote ourselves to the shunning of idolatry. This shall be our Law.... **This Law must be set before such as approach unto the Faith [viz. Christianity], and inculcated on such as are entering it** - so that in approaching, they may deliberate; in observing it, they may persevere; [and] in **not observing it, they renounce their name**" of Christians.
796. In Tertullian's work *Shows*, he states categorically:<sup>109</sup> "It is plainly laid down [viz. in Exodus 20:14], 'you shall not kill!'; 'you shall not worship an idol!'; 'you shall not commit adultery or fraud!'" Indeed, his work *Chaplet* adds:<sup>110</sup> "Everything which is against nature, deserves to be branded as monstrous among all men. But with us [Christians] it is to be condemned also as sacrilege against God, the Lord and Creator of nature.
797. "Demanding then a Law of God, you have that common one prevailing all over the World, engraven on the natural tablets to which the Apostle too is wont to appeal...as when to the Romans, affirming that the Heathen do by nature those things which the Law requires [Romans 2:14], he suggests both Natural Law and a law-revealing nature. Yes, and also in the first chapter of the Epistle [Romans 1:26] he authenticates nature - when he asserts that males and females changed among themselves the natural use of the creature into that which is unnatural, by way of **penal retribution for their error.**"
798. In his *Unveiling of Virgins*, Tertullian gives his philosophy of history. There, he speaks<sup>111</sup> of "the **advancement** toward **better** things.... Look how **creation itself advances little by little to fructification**...."
799. "So, too, **righteousness** - for the God of righteousness and of creation is the same! - was first in a rudimentary state, having a natural fear of God. From that stage it **advanced**, through the Laws and the Prophets, to infancy. From that stage it passed, through the Gospel, to the fervour of youth. Now, through the Paraclete, it is settling into **maturity.**"
800. Also the *Apology* of Tertullian is full of instruction. There, Tertullian declares:<sup>112</sup> "Murder being once for all forbidden - **we may not destroy even the foetus** in the womb.... To hinder a birth, is merely a speedier **man-killing**. There is no difference - whether you take away a life that has **been** born, or destroy one that is **coming** to the birth." For the human fetus should be spared to advance and to increase - first toward infancy; next, toward youth; and then toward **maturity**.

### **The Law of God in Tertullian's *Answer to the Jews***

801. In his *Answer to the Jews*, namely to such of them who then opposed Christianity, Tertullian wanted those unitarianized Judaists to realize that the Decalogue had never been specifically 'Jewish' - but had in fact been revealed not just pre-Mosaically and even pre-Abrahamically but indeed also to **all**

<sup>109</sup> Tert.: *Shows*, 3.

<sup>110</sup> Tert.: *Chaplet*, chs. 5f.

<sup>111</sup> Tert.: *On the Unveiling of Virgins*, I.

<sup>112</sup> Tert.: *Apology*, ch. 9.

peoples in Adam and in Noah. Says he:<sup>113</sup> "Why should God, the Founder of the Universe, **the Governor of the whole World**, the Fashioner of humanity and the Sower of universal nations - be believed to have **given a Law through Moses** to one people, and **not be said to have assigned it to all nations?**"

802. Why? Why indeed! Tertullian then brilliantly answers his own question, as follows. "In the beginning of the World, **He gave to Adam himself and [to] Eve - a Law:** that they were not to eat of the fruit of the tree planted in the midst of paradise....
803. **"In this Law given to Adam, we recognize 'in embryo' all the precepts which afterwards sprouted forth when given through Moses** - that is, 'you shall love the Lord your God...[and] you shall love your neighbour as yourself!'; you shall not commit **adultery!**'; 'you shall not **steal!**'; '**false witness you shall not utter!**'; **honour your father and mother!**'; and 'that which is another's, **you shall not covet!**' [Exodus 20:12-17 & Romans 13:9].
804. "For the **Primordial Law** was given to Adam and Eve in paradise -as 'the womb' of all the precepts of God. In short, if they had continued to love the Lord their God, they would not have contravened His precepts....
805. "They would not...have committed **murder** upon themselves, by falling from immortality.... From **theft** also, they would have abstained - if they had not stealthily tasted of the fruit of the tree.... Thus, they would not have offended God...Who had fashioned them from [the] clay of the ground as from the womb of a mother....
806. **"In this general and Primordial Law of God** - the observance of which in the case of the tree's fruit He had sanctioned," explains Tertullian, "**we recognize enclosed all the precepts specially of the Posterior Law** - which germinated when **disclosed** at their proper times.... In short, **before** the Law of Moses written on tablets of stone - I contend that there was a **Law Unwritten**, which was habitually understood according to **human nature** and which was habitually kept by the Fathers" alias the **Pre-Mosaic Patriarchs**.
807. Tertullian then asks: "How could Noah 'be found righteous' [see Genesis 6:9 & 7:1 *cf.* Hebrews 11:7] - if in his case the righteousness of a 'Natural Law' had not **preceded** [the Mosaic Law]? ... How could Abraham be accounted 'a friend of God' [Isaiah 41:8 & James 2:23 *cf.* Genesis 18:19 & 26:4f], if not on the ground of **equity** and righteousness of a 'Natural Law'?"
808. From all the above, Presbyter Tertullian of Carthage then draws the correct conclusion: "Hence, we understand that God's Law was anterior even to Moses and was not first (given) in Horeb nor in Sinai and in the desert but was more ancient; (existing) first in paradise; subsequently reformed for the Patriarchs; and so again for the Jews..... The primitive Law...God has set forth to the Gentiles too."

### **The Decalogue in Tertullian's *Against Marcion* (the Antinomian)**

809. In *Against Marcion* (the antinomian heretic), Tertullian adds<sup>114</sup> that God Himself "said not only 'Be fruitful and multiply!' [Genesis 1:28] but also 'you shall not commit adultery!' [Exodus 20:14] and 'you shall not covet your neighbour's wife!' [Exodus 20:17]." God further "threatened with death the unchaste, sacrilegious and monstrous abomination both of adultery and unnatural sin with man and

<sup>113</sup> Tert.: *Answer to the Jews*, ch. 2.

<sup>114</sup> Tert.: *Against Marc.* I:29 & II:18 & IV:36.

beast [Leviticus 20:10-15]....

810. "What parts of the Law can I defend as good, with a greater confidence than those [which in Exodus 21:24]...require eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and stripe for stripe? Now there is not here any smack of a permission to mutual injury; but rather...a provision for restraining violence."
811. This, explains Tertullian, was not changed by Jesus."When afterwards a certain man asked Him - 'Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' - Jesus inquired whether he *knew*...the Commandments of the Creator, in order to testify that it was by the Creator's precepts that eternal life is acquired [Luke 18:18-20]....
812. "Well now, Marcion, and all you...associates in hatred with that heretic - what will you dare say to this? Did Christ rescind the forementioned Commandments - 'Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour your father and your mother?' Or did He both keep them, and then add what was wanting to them? ... This verity of the Gospel then stands unimpaired: 'I have not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets but rather to fulfil them!'" Matthew 5:17.
813. With an appeal to Romans 2:12-16, Tertullian then concludes<sup>115</sup> his argument against Marcion. "If then God will judge the secrets of men - both of those who have sinned without Law (inasmuch as they who know not the Law yet do by nature the things contained in the Law) - surely the God Who shall judge is He to Whom belong both the Law and that nature which is the rule to them who know not the Law....
814. "Hence His invective against the transgressors of the Law, who teach that men should not steal - but yet practise theft themselves." Cf. Romans 2:21. This invective He utters "in perfect homage to the Law of God.... He was forbidding men to steal." Exodus 20:15.

### Tertullian's other anti-antinomian writings on the Law of God

815. Tertullian also refers to Exodus 21:22-25 - in his great treatise *On the Soul*. There he notes<sup>116</sup> that "**the Law** of Moses indeed punishes with due penalties the man who shall cause **abortion**, inasmuch as **there exists already the rudiment of a human being**."
816. In his tract *On Monogamy*, Tertullian again lashes out at the anti-nomians. Comparing Genesis 1:26-28 & 2:24 & 6:19f & 7:3-7 and First Peter 3:20f with Matthew 19:6, he notes<sup>117</sup> that "the reformation of the second human race is traced from monogamy as its mother. Once more, **two** (joined) into one flesh' undertake (the duty of) 'growing and multiplying' - (*viz.*) Noah and his wife and their sons, in single marriage.
817. "Even in the very animals, monogamy is recognized; for fear that even beasts should be born of 'adultery.' 'Out of all beasts,' said (God), 'out of all flesh, **two** shall you lead into the ark, that they may live with you, male and female.... Thus far the testimony of things primordial, and the sanction of our origin, and the pre-judgment of the divine institution, which of course is a law.... We find ourselves directed to the beginning, by Christ [Matthew 19:6]....
818. "**Some**...assert they have nothing to do with the Law, which Christ [**we** insist] has not dissolved but

<sup>115</sup> *Ib.*, V:13.

<sup>116</sup> Tert.: *On the Soul* 37.

<sup>117</sup> Tert.: *On Monog.*, chs. 4-7.

fulfilled [Matthew 5:17]. **They** sometimes catch at such parts of the Law as **they** choose.

819. "Plainly do **we** too assert that the Law has deceased - **in this sense** that its burdens (according to the sentence of the Apostles) which not even the fathers were able to sustain [Acts 15:10], have wholly ceased. Such, however, as relate to **righteousness** - not only **permanently remain reserved**, but [are] **even amplified**;<sup>118</sup> in order to be sure that **our** righteousness may be able to redound **above** the righteousness of the scribes and of the Pharisees." Matthew 5:20 *cf.* Exodus 20:5f.
820. Lastly, in his *On Modesty*, Tertullian delivers<sup>119</sup> a strong rebuff against Antinomianism. Linking adultery to the transgression also of the rest of the Ten Commandments in God's Decalogue, he declares: "Of how deep guilt...**adultery** (which is...a matter of fornication, in accordance with its criminal function) is to be accounted - the **Law of God** first comes to hand to show us....
821. "After interdicting the superstitious **service of alien gods**; and the **making of idols** themselves; after commending (to **religious observance**) the **veneration of the Sabbath**; after commanding a religious **regard toward parents** second (only to that) toward God - (that Law) laid, as the next substatum in strengthening and fortifying such count, no other precept than '**you shall not commit adultery**'.... Adultery is **bordering on idolatry**.... Further: promising 'you shall not commit adultery' - [the Law] adjoins '**you shall not kill**' [Exodus 20:13f *cf.* James 2:8-12]...in the very forefront of the most holy Law....
822. "We are just now beginning with the Law, in demonstrating (the nature of) adultery. It is, justly, with that phase of **the Law - which Christ has 'not dissolved but fulfilled'** [Matthew 5:17].... 'Liberty in Christ' [Galatians 2:4 & 5:1-13] has done no injury to innocence.
823. "**The Law** of piety, sanctity, humanity, truth, chastity, justice, mercy, benevolence, modesty - **remains in its entirety** - in which [Moral] Law 'blessed (is) the man who shall meditate by day and by night' [Psalm 1:1f]. About that (Law), the same David (says) again: 'The Law of the Lord (is) unblameable, converting souls' [Psalm 19:7].... Thus too the Apostle: 'And so **the Law indeed is holy...and most good**' [Romans 7:12] - 'you shall not commit adultery,' of course....
824. "'Are we then making void the Law through faith? Far from it! But we are establishing the Law' [Romans 3:31] - forsooth, in those (points) which, being even now interdicted by the New Testament, are prohibited by an **even more** emphatic precept.... 'You shall not commit adultery!' [Exodus 20:14 *cf.* Matthew 5:27]. 'Whoever shall have seen with a view to concupiscence, has already committed adultery in his own heart' [Matthew 5:27f].... 'You shall not kill!' [Exodus 20:13 *cf.* Matthew 5:21]. 'Whoever shall have said to his brother 'Racha!' - shall be in danger of hell' [Matthew 5:22]. Ask (yourself) whether the law of not committing adultery be still in force - to which has been added that of not indulging concupiscence!"
825. "Do we not, in **the Apostles also, recognize the form of the Old Law** with regard to the demonstration of **adultery**, how great (a crime) it is - lest perchance it be esteemed more trivial in the new stage of disciplines than in the old? ... This is the first rule which the Apostles, on the authority of the Holy Spirit, [**in Acts 15:28f**] send out to those who were already beginning to be gathered to their side, out of the nations:

<sup>118</sup> *Id.* See too Tertullian's *On Prayer* ch. 11: "The Lord, '**amplifying** the Law' [Matthew 5:17], openly adds *the prohibition of anger* against a brother to *that of murder* [Matthew 5:21f]."

<sup>119</sup> Tert.: *On Modesty*, chs. 5f & 12 & 19.

826. "'It had seemed (good),' say they, 'to the Holy Spirit and to us to cast upon you no ampler weight than (that) of those (things) from which it is necessary that abstinence be observed from sacrifices [to idols] and from fornications and from blood[shed] - by abstaining from which you act rightly, the Holy Spirit carrying you'.... In this place withal **there has been preserved to adultery and fornication the post of their own 'honour' between idolatry and murder. For the interdict upon 'blood' - we shall understand to be (an interdict) much more upon human blood**.... In what light do the Apostles will those crimes to appear - which alone they select **from the pristine Law**, in the way of careful guarding against? ... There is no restoration of peace granted by the churches - to 'idolatry' or to 'blood'....
827. "To the Angel [or Preacher] of the Thyatirenes, the Spirit sends a message that He [*viz.* Jesus] 'has it against him that he kept (in communion) the woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophet[ess] and teaches and seduces My servants unto fornicating and eating of idolsacrifices. And I gave her bounteously a space of time, so that she might enter upon repentance. Nor is she willing to enter upon it - on account of fornication. Behold, I will cast her down upon a bed, and her adulterers with her, into greatest pressure - unless they shall repent of her works!' [Revelation 2:18f].... Let her, I grant, repent - but with a view to **ceasing** from adultery....
828. "This Apocalypse, in its later passages, has assigned 'the infamous and fornicators' - as well as 'the cowardly, and unbelieving, and murderers, and sorcerers, and idolaters' who have been guilty of any such crime while professing the faith - to 'the lake of fire' [Revelation 21:8].... 'To the cowardly, and unbelieving, and infamous, and fornicators, and murderers, and sorcerers, and idolaters - (shall be) a share in the lake of fire and sulphur, which is the second death'.... Dogs, sorcerers, fornicators, murderers - **outside**" of the heavenly New Jerusalem! Revelation 22:14f.

### **The Law of God in Alexandria's Chief Catechist Origen's *On the Principles***

829. Around 220 A.D., Clement's Successor - Origen the Chief Catechist in the School of Alexandria - set forth his own work *On the Principles*. There, he aimed<sup>120</sup> to "refute those who think that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a different God from Him Who gave the answers of the Law to Moses.... The practice of the Saviour or His Apostles, frequently quoting illustrations from the Old Testament, shows that they attribute authority to the ancients....
830. "The Saviour Himself - when He was asked which was the greatest Commandment in the Law - replied, 'you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second is just like it, you shall love your neighbour as yourself.' And to these He added: 'On these two Commandments, all the Law and the Prophets depend' [Matthew 21:37-40].... He commends to him whom He was instructing and was leading to enter on the office of a disciple, this Commandment about all others - by which undoubtedly love was to be kindled in him toward the God of that Law....
831. "In other passages also Paul embraces the promises of the Law - where he says 'honour your father and your mother, which is the first Commandment with promise; so that it may be well with you, and so that your days may be long upon the land, the good land, which the Lord your God will give you' [Ephesians 6:2f *cf.* Exodus 20:12]. By which he undoubtedly makes known that the Law, and the God of the Law, and His promises, are pleasing to Him....

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<sup>120</sup>. Origen: *On the Principles*, II:4:1f; II:5:4f; III:1:6; IV:1:19; VI:6:1.



832. "If the Law be found to be good, then undoubtedly He Who gave it is believed to be a good God.... The Apostle Paul makes use of no circumlocution when he says, 'the Law is good and the Commandment is holy and just and good' [Romans 7:12].... 'What does the Lord require of you, except that you should do justice and love mercy and be ready to walk with the Lord your God' [Micah 6:8].... Also the Saviour says: 'I tell you..., whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery already with her in his heart' [Matthew 5:28].... Therefore we are rendered rightly liable to condemnation if we transgress those Commandments which we are able to keep....
833. "Who would not maintain that the Commandment to 'honour your father and your mother so that it may be well with you' [Exodus 20:12 & Ephesians 6:2f], is sufficient of itself without any spiritual meaning - and necessary...especially when Paul also has confirmed the Commandment by repeating it in the same words.... What need is there to speak of the prohibitions: 'you shall not commit adultery!'; 'you shall not steal!'; 'you shall not bear false witness!' [Exodus 20:13-16] - and others of the same kind? .. With respect to the precepts enjoined in the Gospels, no doubt can be entertained that very many of these are to be observed literally, as *e.g.* when our Lord says 'but I say to you, do not swear at all' [Matthew 5:34].... He says, 'whosoever looks upon a woman to lust after her - has committed adultery with her already, in his heart' [Matthew 5:28]....
834. "The **highest good**...is also called the **end** of all blessings.... God said: 'Let Us make man in Our Own image, and after Our likeness!' And then he [Moses himself] adds the words: 'So God created man in His Own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female; and He blessed them' [Genesis 1:26-28].
835. "Now the expression 'He created him in the image of God'...conveys no other meaning than this - that man received the dignity of God's image at his first creation, but that the perfection [alias the completion]...has been reserved for his consummation.... He might acquire it for himself, by the exercise of his own diligence in the imitation of God - the possibility of attaining to perfection being granted him at the beginning through the dignity of the divine image, and the perfect realization of the divine likeness being reached in the end by the fulfilment of the (necessary) **works**....
836. "The Lord [Jesus Christ] Himself in the Gospel...declares that these **same** results are future.... They are to be brought about by His own intercession. He Himself deigns to obtain them from the Father of His disciples, saying: 'Father, I will that where I am going, they also may be with Me' [John 17:21-24].... In this, the divine likeness itself already appears to **advance**." Also note: Genesis 1:26-28f; 3:15-22f; Hosea 6:1-11; Romans 5:12-21; First Corinthians 15:22-28 & 15:45-48 & 15:58; Revelation 14:12-13.

### The Law of God in Alexandria's Chief Catechist Origen's *Against Celsus*

837. Origen's great apology *Against Celsus* the famous infidel, is also very instructive as to the abiding importance of the Decalogue. Writing in about A.D. 177f, Celsus had authored the first extant philosophical and religious critique of Christianity. Decades later, Origen published his reply.
838. There, argues Origen:<sup>121</sup> "It is no surprise that **the same God should have sown in the hearts of all men**, those truths which He taught by the Prophets and through the Saviour - in order that at the divine judgment every man may be without excuse, having the 'requirements of the Law [*to bouleema tou Nomou*] written upon his heart'...alluded to by the Bible...where it represents God as having **with**

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<sup>121</sup>. Orig.: *Against Celsus*, I:4 & I:16f & V:40 & VII:49.

His own finger written down the Commandments....

839. "The Druids of the [Gaelic] Gauls and the [Scythian] Getae [were] most learned and ancient tribes, on account of the resemblance between their traditions and those of the Jews.... Compare these with Moses' laws.... The works of Moses have stirred up many...to the belief that, as these writings testify, the First Who enacted these laws and delivered them to Moses was the God Who was the Creator of the World. For it behooved the Creator of the Universe - after laying down laws for its government - to confer upon His words a power which might subdue all men in every part of the Earth....
840. "Laws are kings of all men. For in every nation, some law is king.... Although there are some individuals who, having like robbers abandoned the Law, deny its validity and live lives of violence and injustice. We Christians, then, who have come to the knowledge of the Law which is by nature 'king of all things' and which is the same with the Law of God - endeavour to regulate our lives by its prescriptions....
841. "These truths are investigated fully by all who wish to attain a perfect knowledge of Christianity, and who know that 'the mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of judgment; the Law of his God is in his heart' [Psalm 37:30f]. But even in regard to those who...have not gone into these deep questions, we find that they believe in the Most High God and in His Only-begotten Son the Word" (even if lacking in theological precision).
842. "They often exhibit in their character a high degree of gravity, of purity, and integrity. While those who call themselves wise - have despised these virtues and have wallowed in the filth of sodomy; in lawless lust, 'men with men working that which is unseemly' [Romans 1:27]."
843. Origen opposes the Antinomianism of Celsus with the 'Decalogism' of the Apostles. Referring to the decrees of the First General Assembly of the Christian Church, Origen declares:<sup>122</sup> "It seemed good to the Apostles of Jesus and the Elders assembled...and also...to the Holy Spirit - to write a letter to the Gentile believers, **forbidding** them to partake of those things from which alone they say it is **necessary** to abstain, namely: 'things offered to idols; things strangled; and blood'" - and fornication.
844. "For that which is offered to idols, is sacrificed to demons - and a man of God must not join the table of demons! As to things strangled - we are forbidden by Scripture.... It is not therefore simply on account of some traditions of our fathers that we refrain...but for other reasons.... **We are bound to abstain from all vice and wickedness.**"

**Origen: same Providence punishing murder under the Law gave the Gospel**

845. Origen's comments also on the political use of the Law, are highly instructive. He explains<sup>123</sup> that "in the case of the Ancient Jews, who had a land and a form of government of their own, to take from them the right of making war upon their enemies; of fighting for their country; of putting to death or otherwise punishing adulterers [and] murderers or others who were guilty of similar crimes - would be to subject them to sudden and utter destruction whenever the enemy fell upon them. For their very laws would in that case restrain them, and prevent them from resisting the enemy."

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<sup>121.</sup> *Ib.*, VIII:29f.

<sup>123.</sup> *Ib.*, VIII:226 & 225.

846. Now "that same Providence which of old gave the Law, and has now given the Gospel of Jesus Christ - not wishing the Jewish State to continue longer - has destroyed their city and their temple" in 70 A.D. Yet in like manner "it has extended the Christian Religion day by day, so that it is now preached everywhere with boldness - and that, in spite of the numerous obstacles which oppose the spread of Christ's teaching in the World."
847. Now it is perfectly true, continues Origen, that there is indeed a "difference between the constitution which was given to the Jews of old by Moses - and **that which the Christians now wish to establish under the direction of Christ's teaching.**" For "it must be impossible for the legislation of Moses, **taken literally**, to harmonize with the calling of the Gentiles and with their subjection to the Roman Government" - at least **prior** to the latter's later christianization.
848. Indeed, "it would be impossible [even] for the Jews to preserve their civil economy unchanged - [also] supposing that they should embrace the Gospel." For "the Jews themselves, however desirous of carrying out their Law, are not able to inflict these **punishments**" of the Mosaic Law - **because they are still under the control of the Pagan Roman Government.**
849. However, concludes Origen, the New Testament's application of the Law is still to be **developed** - and precisely from the **Mosaic** Law. For in theory, and indeed even programmatically, the Anti-Christian Celsus was wrong.

### **Origen: "no discrepancy between the God of the Gospel and the God of the Law"**

850. Celsus is wrong, explains Origen, where he "produces the objections which he has heard from those who wish to make a difference between the God of the Gospel and the God of the Law." For "there is **no** discrepancy between the God of the Gospel and the God of the Law."
851. There is no discrepancy between the Gospel and the Law, insisted Origen - not "even when we take literally the precept regarding the blow on the face" at Matthew 5:39 in the Gospel. For compare with this the similar "Lamentations 3:27-30" - *viz.*: "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke while he is young.... He gives his cheek to him that smites him. He is filled full of reproach."
852. Furthermore - argues Origen - "the Father, in sending Jesus, did not 'forget the Commandments which He had given to Moses'" (as Celsus had alleged). Indeed: the Father did **not** "change His mind, condemn His Own Laws; nor send counterinstructions by His Messenger [Jesus]."

### **The Law of God in Origen's *Commentary on Matthew***

853. Last, in Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*, he refers<sup>124</sup> to Jesus' magnification (in Matthew 15:3f) of "two most imperative Commandments of God. The one of which was the Fifth in the Decalogue, being as follows: 'honour your father and your mother, so that it may be well with you, and so that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you' [*cf.* Exodus 20:12]. And the other was written thus in Leviticus [20:9], 'if a man speaks evil of his father or his mother - let him die the death!'....
854. "We must consider the nature of the charge which the Saviour brings against the Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem.... He says that they transgress the Commandment of God, because of their

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<sup>124</sup>. Orig.: *Commentary on Matthew*, XI:9f.

tradition....

855. "God said, 'honour your father and your mother' [Exodus 20:12] - teaching that the child should pay the honour which is due to his parents. Of this honour to parents, one part was to share with them the necessities of life - such as food and clothing.... But the Pharisees and scribes promulgated a tradition in opposition to the Law....
856. "Let us return to the subject before us in which the Saviour...expounded two Commandments from the Law - the one from the Decalogue in Exodus, and the other from Leviticus." Said Jesus to the Pharisees: "you, by **one** of your traditions, make void **two** Commandments of God! And then you are not ashamed to accuse My disciples, who transgress no Commandment!" For they walk "in all His Commandments and ordinances blamelessly [*cf.* Luke 1:6]"....
857. "Transgress a tradition of the Elders, so as **not** to transgress a Commandment of God! And if you had held this aim before you - you would have kept the Commandment about the honour due to father and mother; **and** that which said 'he who speaks evil of father and mother, let him die the death!' But the tradition of the Elders, which is opposed to these Commandments - you would **not** have kept!" Thus Origen on the Commandments of Jesus Himself - in the light of the Saviour's own 'updating' (for New Testament conditions) of those very same Commandments which He Himself formerly gave through Moses.

### The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Hippolytus of Pontus

858. In A.D. 230, Hippolytus was Presbyter of Pontus (near Rome). In the extant fragments from his *Commentaries*, he declares:<sup>125</sup> "In the Name of God eternal; everlasting; most mighty; merciful; compassionate - by the help of God we begin to describe **the Book of the Law** and its interpretation, as the holy...and most excellent fathers have interpreted it. The following, therefore, is the interpretation of...**the book of the creation.**"
859. Presbyter Hippolytus of Pontus then further explains:<sup>126</sup> "Those who keep the Commandments and do not disclaim the ordinances of the Law, enjoy rest both in them and in the doctrine of our Lord.... As the Lord [Jesus] says, 'I have not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to fulfil them' [Matthew 5:17]. For even our Lord in the fact that He keeps the Commandments - does not destroy the Law and the Prophets but fulfils them, as He says **in the Gospels.**"
860. In his *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*,<sup>127</sup> Hippolytus cites Paul's statement in Romans 1:17. This is the statement that "the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and **unrighteousness** of men who hold [down] the truth of God in unrighteousness."
861. Finally, Hippolytus also cites against the transgressors of the Moral Law one of the very last verses in the whole Bible - to much the same effect. "John says, 'Outside [the heavenly city] are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers and murderers and idolaters and whosoever makes and loves a lie - for your part is in the hell of fire!'" Revelation 22:15.

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<sup>125</sup> Hippol.: *Fragments from Commentaries* - 'The Law' Sect. I (in *Ante-Nic. Fath.* V p. 196).

<sup>126</sup> Hippol.: *Fragments from Commentaries* - On Gen. 49:12-15 (in *Ante-Nic. Fath.* V p. 165).

<sup>127</sup> Hippol.: *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* 65 (in *A.N.F.* V pp. 218f).

## The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Cyprian of Carthage

862. Around 250 A.D., in his *Epistles*, Cyprian urges<sup>128</sup> his readers to "fulfil the Law of Christ [Galatians 6:1f].... 'He who commits fornication, sins against his own body' [First Corinthians 6:18].... 'No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man whose guilt is that of idolatry - has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God' [see Ephesians 5:5]....
863. "**The Apostles taught us those things which they themselves also learnt from the Lord's precepts and the heavenly commands.** The Lord Himself strengthened us in that way [Luke 18:20-30].... **Righteous men were slain for righteousness' sake**.... The nativity of Christ witnessed...the martyrdom of infants.... Those two years old and under were slain for His Name's sake. An age not yet fitted for the battle, appeared fit for the crown. That it might be manifest that they who are slain for Christ's sake are innocent - **innocent infancy was put to death** for His Name's sake [Matthew 2:16-20]....
864. "Do you think that Christ grants impunity to the impious and profane? [Do you think...] that He puts away their sins in baptism - of whom it is evident that after being baptized they still heap up evil words upon the Person of the Father, and sin with the unceasing wickedness of a blaspheming tongue? Can a Christian, can a servant of God, either conceive this in his mind or believe it in faith or put it forward in discourse?
865. "And what will become of the precepts of God's Law which says 'honour your father and your mother' [Exodus 20:12]? If the name of father which in man is commanded to be honoured, is violated with impunity in God - what will become of what Christ Himself lays down in the **Gospel** and says 'he who curses father or mother, let him die the death!'" Matthew 15:4. Would "He Who bids that those who curse their parents...should be punished and slain - Himself quicken those who revile their heavenly and spiritual Father?"
866. In his *Treatises*, Cyprian says:<sup>129</sup> "Adultery, fraud, [and] manslaughter are mortal crimes.... Neither is the sanctified body and temple of God polluted by adultery; nor is the innocence dedicated to righteousness stained with the contagion of fraud; nor, after the Eucharist has been tasted, is the hand spotted with the sword and blood.... 'Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness; not in lusts and wantonness; not in strifes and jealousy' [Romans 13:12f]....God alone must be worshipped....It is written...in Exodus [20:3], 'you shall have no other gods beside Me'.... God is so angry against idolatry, that He has even enjoined those to be slain who persuade others to sacrifice and serve idols."
867. In another *Treatise*, Cyprian declares that "in Micah [4:2f], 'the Law shall go forth out of Zion'.... Also in Isaiah [2:3f]..., 'from Zion shall the Law go forth'.... 'From where the sun rises to where it sets, My Name shall be glorified among the Gentiles' [Malachi 1:10f]....The Church which had previously been barren," explains Cyprian,<sup>130</sup> "should have more sons from among the Gentiles than the synagogue had had before....'All the tribes of the Earth shall be blessed' [Genesis 12:3]....
868. "Christ our God would come, the Enlightener and Saviour of the human race.... 'Blessed are they that do His Commandments, so that they may have power over the tree of life' [Revelation 22:13f].... We

<sup>128.</sup> Cyprian: *Epistles* 51(55):18,26f; 55(58):2-6; 71(72):19.

<sup>129</sup> *Treatises*, 9:14 & 10(12):10 & 11(13) Exhortation to Martyrdom 2 & 5.

<sup>130</sup> *Ib.*, 12 - 1st Book (Testimonies 10, 16, 21); 2nd Book (Testimonies 7 & 22) and 3rd Book (Heads 10, 12f, 61, 63, 70, 90; and 3rd Book (Testimonies 1 & 8f & 12 & 70 & 99 & 104 & 119)

must trust in God only.... We must not swear.... We are not to curse.... The lust of possessing, and money, are not to be desired.... Marriage is not to be contracted with heathen.... The sin of fornication is grievous.... We must obey parents.... We must not lie....

869. "If you wish to enter into life, keep the Commandments!" - says Jesus [Matthew 19:17f.... 'You have heard that it was said by the ancients, "you shall not kill" and "whoever shall kill, shall be guilty of the judgment" [Matthew 5:21f].... 'You must bear one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the Law of Christ!' [Galatians 6:1f].... 'Let your discourse be "Yes" [...and] "No" [Matthew 5:34-37].... In Exodus [20:7f, one reads] the same thing: 'you shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain'....
870. "We must obey parents. In the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians [6:1-3] - 'Children, be obedient to your parents! For this is right. Honour your father and your mother! - which is the first Commandment with promise - so that it may be well with you, and so that you may live long on Earth'.... Judgment will be according to the times: either of equity, before the [Mosaic] Law; or of law, after Moses.... We must not lie....
871. "Also in the Acts [15:28f] of the Apostles: 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to **impose** upon you...those things which are **of necessity** - that you should **abstain** from **idolatries**; from **shedding of blood**; and from **fornication**.' And whatsoever you would not to be done unto you - do not to others!" Cf. Matthew 7:12 & 22:39f and Luke 6:31f.
872. Finally, in the *Treatise on the Discipline and Advantage of Chastity*,<sup>131</sup> we are told: "The precepts of chastity, brethren, are ancient. Why do I say 'ancient'? Because they were ordained at the same time as men themselves.... Her own husband belongs to the woman.... It is said, 'two shall be in one flesh' [Matthew 19:5].... 'He who loves his wife, loves himself. For nobody hates his own flesh. But he nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ the Church' [Ephesians 5:28f]....
873. "Christ gave this judgment when, being inquired of, He said that a wife must not be put away—save because of adultery.... Hence arose the decree: 'you shall not permit adulteresses to live' [Leviticus 20:10].... The Apostle says: 'this is the will of God, that you must abstain from fornication' [First Thessalonians 4:3]. Hence also he says the same thing: 'that the Members of Christ must not be joined with the members of a harlot' [First Corinthians 6:15].... Adulterers do not attain the Kingdom of Heaven!"

### **Diodorus: Christ came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it**

874. Mesopotamia's Presbyter-Bishop Archelaus of Caschar in his A.D. 275 *Dispute with Manes*,<sup>132</sup> discusses the abiding political use of God's Law. Significantly, that dispute took place still almost half a century before even the very tiniest beginnings of the (however nominal) christianization of the as-then-still-pagan Roman State. As such, it represents Presbyter-Bishop Archelaus's support - for Rev. Presbyter Trypho of Diodorus's upholding of the Law of Moses by the Christian Church.
875. This Trypho of a village called Diodorus, also known as Presbyter Diodorus of Diodorus, had written to Presbyter-Bishop Archelaus that the apostate Manes - the founder of the Manichaeian heresy - "maintained that the Law of Moses...has no kinship with the new Law of Christ." Explained Diodorus to Archelaus: "When I heard such a sentiment propounded, I repeated to the people **that** sentence of the

<sup>131</sup> *Treatise on the Discipline and Advantage of Chastity* 5f (in *A.N.F.* V p. 589).

<sup>132</sup> Archelaus: *Dispute with Manes*, 39-41 (in *Ante-Nic. Fath.*).

Gospel [Matthew 5:17] in which our Lord Jesus said of Himself, 'I am not come to destroy the Law but to fulfil it!' The man [Manes], however, averred that He [Christ] did not utter this saying at all.... For he [Manes] held that...He [Christ] abrogated that same Law."

### **Archelaus upholds the Law because the Older Testament agrees with the Newer**

876. In his reply, Presbyter-Bishop Archelaus informs Presbyter Diodorus: "The man [Manes]...sought to introduce a **novel** kind of knowledge here, **different** from what is **apostolic** and **ecclesiastical**.... Not only did **we** establish [or reconfirm] the Law of Moses and all things which are written in it.... But we also proved that the whole Old Testament agrees with the New Testament, and is in perfect harmony with the same."
877. Archelaus significantly continues:<sup>133</sup> "I shall show that Jesus neither said nor did anything that was contrary to Moses. And first, as to the expression 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' (Matthew 5:38 *cf.* Exodus 21:22-24) - that is the expression of **justice**. And as to His injunction that a man when struck on the one cheek should offer the other also (Matthew 5:39 *cf.* Lamentations 3:27-30) - that is the expression of **goodness**."
878. "Well, then - are justice and goodness opposed to each other? Far from it! There has [here] only been an advance from simple justice to positive goodness.... Although my Lord Jesus Christ excelleth, it does not follow from this that the glory of Moses is to be scorned.... There, Moses smote down with the Word those who had set up the calf [Exodus chapter 32]. And here, the Lord Jesus said 'I came to send a sword upon the Earth and to set a man at variance with his neighbour' [Matthew 10:34] and so on...."
879. "However, you [Manes] - you who allege that the Law of Moses comes...not from the good God [but instead from a different and an evil deity] - tell me who those were who withstood Moses to the face? I mean Jamnes and Mabres [*cf.* First Timothy 3:8 Vulgate].... Do you observe how he [Paul] compares Jamnes and Mabres to men of corrupt mind, and reprobate concerning the faith - while he likens Moses, on the other hand, to the truth? But the holy John, the greatest of the Evangelists, also tells us...that we have received the Law of Moses out of the fullness of Christ." John 1:16f.

### **The Decalogical Law of God in the *Apostolic Constitutions***

880. Perhaps by A.D. 260, and certainly sometime during the second half of the third century,<sup>134</sup> the bulk of the document which is now known as the *Apostolic Constitutions* was finalized. It was composed from much earlier material - some of it probably even of apostolic antiquity, and the greater portion of it in any case reflecting apostolic doctrine.
881. The document begins in a way very reminiscent of the manner in which the First General Assembly of the Christian Church conveyed its written decrees to the churches of Antioch and Syria and Cilicia in Acts 15:23-29. For the document commences:<sup>135</sup> "The Apostles and Elders to all those who from among the Gentiles have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ." It then continues: "Abstain from all **unlawful** desires and **injustice**. For it is written in the Law, 'you shall not covet' [Exodus 20:17].... For He says in the Gospel, **recapitulating and confirming and fulfilling the Ten Commandments of**

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<sup>133</sup> *Ib.*, 42-45.

<sup>134</sup> Thus Von Drey and Schaff, see *Ante-Nic. Fath.* VII p. 388.

<sup>135</sup> *Apostolic Constitutions*, 1:1:1 & 1:2:3-7.

**the Law:** 'It is written in the Law, "you shall not commit adultery"' [Matthew 5:28 *cf.* Exodus 20:14]....

882. **"Let us, therefore, beloved, attend to these Commandments** - that we may be found to be 'the children of light' by doing them.... You shall find mercy with the Lord your God Who has said 'you shall not commit adultery' and 'you shall not covet' [Exodus 20:14-17].... The Scripture says to you: 'you shall meditate in His Law, day and night; when you walk in the field, and when you sit in your house, and when you lie down, and when you get up - so that you may have understanding in all things' [Deuteronomy 6:7 & Joshua 1:8 *cf.* Psalm 1:1-2].
883. "You have the glorious Law of the Lord God.... Propose to yourself to distinguish what rules were from the **Law of Nature** - and what were added afterwards.... That Law [of Nature] contains those precepts - that is, **the Ten Commandments** - which were spoken by the Lord God **before** the people fell into idolatry, and made a calf like the Egyptian Apis.... Our Saviour came for no other reason but that He might deliver those that were obnoxious thereto, from the wrath which was reserved for them - so that He might fulfil the Law and the Prophets [Matthew 5:17f].... Let us learn what the sacred Word says in the book of Wisdom [Proverbs 7:1f]: 'my son, keep my words and hide my Commandments with you!'"
884. The *Apostolic Constitutions* continue:<sup>136</sup> "The divine Word says concerning our parents according to the flesh - 'honour your father and your mother, so that it may be well with you' [Exodus 20:12]; and 'he who curses his father or his mother, let him die the death!' [Exodus 21:17]. How much more should the Word exhort you to honour your spiritual parents! ... The Lord says to you in the Gospel, 'unless your righteousness abounds more than than of the Scribes and Pharisees - you shall by no means enter into the Kingdom of Heaven!' [Matthew 5:20]....
885. **"Always remember the Ten Commandments of God** - to love the one and only Lord God! ... **You shall observe the Sabbath**, on account of Him Who ceased from His work of creation.... It is a **rest, for meditation of the Law**.... Reject every unlawful lust! ... Honour your parents! ... Avoid swearing falsely!"<sup>137</sup> *Cf.* Exodus 20:2-17.
886. "Consider even the judicatures of this [Pagan] World - by whose power **we see murderers, adulterers, wizards, robbers of sepulchres and thieves brought to trial**.... Those that preside, when they have received their accusations from those that brought them, ask the malefactor whether those things be so. And though he does not deny the crimes..., for several days they make inquiry about him with a full council.... Then he who is to pass the final decree and **suffrage of death against him**, lifts up his hands.... Though they be heathens..., they avoid such unjust judgments."<sup>138</sup>

### **The *Apostolic Constitutions* uphold the Noachitic Laws**

887. In the Sixth Book of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, there is a very valuable reference to the Noachitic Laws. That reference shows that also the First General Assembly of Christ's Church knew those Laws were binding upon the whole human race, and hence also upon Gentile Christians. Acts 15:13-29.
888. For the *Constitutions* there first approvingly cite<sup>139</sup> the view-point of the Moderator (the Apostle James), *viz.* "my opinion is that we not trouble those who from among the Gentiles turn to God - but **charge** them that they abstain from the pollutions of the Gentiles: from what is sacrificed to idols; and

<sup>136</sup> *Ib.*, II:4:33f.

<sup>137</sup> *Ib.*, II:4:36.

<sup>138</sup> *Ib.* II:6:52.

<sup>139</sup> *Ib.*, VI:3:12.



from blood[shed]; and from stranglings; and from fornication. **These laws were given to the ancients who lived before the Law [of Moses], under the Law of Nature** - Enos, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Job, and if there be any other of the same sort....

889. "Then it seemed good to us the Apostles...with the whole Church, to send men chosen from among our own selves...and wrote by their hand as follows: 'The Apostles and Elders...to the brethren of Antioch [and] Syria and Cilicia of the Gentiles, send greeting.... Judas and Silas...shall themselves **declare** the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no other burden upon you than these **necessary** things - that you **abstain from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication**. If you keep yourselves from those things, **you shall do well!**'" Acts 15:23f.

### **The Apostolic Constitutions uphold the primordial Law of Nature**

890. The *Constitutions* continue:<sup>140</sup> "You have known God through Jesus Christ and all His dispensation, as it has been from the beginning, that He gave a plain...Law of Nature [Isaiah 8:20 LXX]. Such a one as is pure, saving, and holy; in which His Own Name was inscribed [Deuteronomy 12:5]; perfect; which is never to fail; being complete in Ten Commandments; unspotted; converting souls [Psalm 19:7]....
891. "When the Hebrews forgot it, He put them in mind of it by the Prophet Malachi [4:4f], saying, 'you must remember the Law of Moses'.... This Law is so very holy and righteous, that even our Saviour...nowhere dissolved the Law.... For He says: 'One iota or one tittle shall not pass from the Law until all be fulfilled'.... He says, 'I have not come to dissolve the Law, but to fulfil it' [Matthew 5:17f].... Whence it is demonstrated that the Law is good and holy....
892. "**Now the Law is the Decalogue**.... The Law is righteous, and therefore **it is called 'The Law'** - **because judgments are thence made according to the Law of Nature**.... The Law is good [and] holy.... Of old, **Abel (beloved by God), and Noah and Abraham and those that succeeded...[were] moved of themselves by the Law of Nature**.... Concerning the Law, Moses says: 'you shall meditate on the Word which I command you, sitting in your house, and rising up, and walking in the way' [Deuteronomy 6:6]. And David says: 'his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in His Law will he meditate day and night' [Psalm 1:2]. For everywhere, He would have us be subject to His Laws, but not be transgressors of them. For He says: 'blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the Lord' [Psalm 119:1-2]."
893. The *Constitutions* clearly distinguish the stillbinding Moral Law of God for all men - from the no-longer-binding ceremonial laws of Ancient Israel. To all in general and especially to Christians, the *Constitutions* declare:<sup>141</sup> "He is your Lord, and the Lord of the Universe.... Neither the burial of a man; nor a dead man's bone; nor a sepulchre; nor any particular sort of food; nor the nocturnal pollution; can defile the soul of man - but only impiety towards God; and transgression; and injustice towards one's neighbour. I mean rapine; violence; or if there be anything contrary to His righteousness: adultery; or fornication. Therefore, beloved, avoid and eschew such observations! For they are heathenish....
894. "The sin of Sodom is contrary to nature, as is also that with brute beasts. But adultery and fornication

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<sup>140</sup> *Ib.*, VI:4:19-23.

<sup>141</sup> *Ib.*, VI:6:27f.

are against the Law; the one of which is impiety, the other injustice.... Fornication is the destruction of one's own flesh, not being made use of for the procreation of children but entirely for the sake of pleasure. This is a mark of incontinency, and not a sign of virtue. All these things are forbidden by the Laws.

895. "For thus say the Oracles: 'you shall not lie with mankind as with womankind' [Leviticus 18:22]. 'For such a one is accursed, and you shall stone them with stones; they have wrought abomination' [Leviticus 20:13]. 'Everyone that lies with a beast, you must slay; he has wrought wickedness in his people' [Exodus 22:19]. 'And if anyone defile a married woman, you must slay them both. They have wrought wickedness; they are guilty; let them die [Leviticus 20:10 & Deuteronomy 22:22]!'....
896. "These things the Laws have forbidden. But they have honoured marriage, and have called it blessed - since God Who joined male and female together, has blessed it [Genesis 1:28]. And wise Solomon somewhere says: 'a wife is suited to her husband by the Lord' [Proverbs 19:14]. And David says: 'your wife is like a flourishing vine at the sides of your house; your children like olive-branches round about your table. Look, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord!' Psalm 128:3f.

### Specific Commandments of the Decalogue upheld by the *Constitutions*

897. The Seventh Book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* says:<sup>142</sup> "'You shall not murder' [Exodus 20:13] - that is, you shall not destroy a man like yourself.... Not that all killing were wicked, but only that of the innocent. But the killing which is just, is reserved to the magistrates alone....
898. "'You shall not commit adultery' [Exodus 20:14].... 'You shall not corrupt boys' [Leviticus 18:22]. For this wickedness is contrary to nature, and arose from Sodom; which was therefore entirely consumed with fire sent from God [Genesis 19:1f].... 'You shall not commit fornication.' For He says 'there shall not be a fornicator among the children of Israel' [Deuteronomy 23:17]....
899. "You shall not use magic. You shall not use witchcraft. For He says, 'you shall not permit a witch to live' [Exodus 22:18]. **You shall not slay your child by causing abortion, nor kill that which has been begotten.** for 'everything that has been shaped, and has received a soul from God - if it be slain, shall be avenged, as being destroyed unjustly' [Exodus 21:23 LXX].... 'You shall not swear at all' [Matthew 5:34].... 'You shall not bear false witness' [Exodus 20:16].
900. "But the 'way of death'<sup>143</sup> is known by its wicked practices.... Thereby come murders, adulteries, fornications, perjuries, unlawful lusts, thefts, idolatries, magic arts, witchcrafts, rapines, falsewitness..., covetousness, obscene talk..., murderers of infants, destroyers of the workmanship of God.... May you, children, be delivered from all these! ... They who do such things, do not adhere to goodness.... You must abstain from things offered to idols [First Corinthians 10:20]."

### The Clementine Office in the Apostolic Constitutions on the Decalogue

901. We already said (in paragraph 790) that the *Clementine Office* is preserved in the Eighth Book of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and dates from no later than 260 A.D. It says:<sup>144</sup> "Lord God Almighty..., Father of Your only-begotten Son..., You appointed the rules of the Church...of which the Holy Ghost is the witness.... **You fore-ordained [righteous] Presbyters from the beginning, for the**

<sup>142</sup> *Ib.*, VII:1:2f.

<sup>143</sup> *Ib.*, VII:1:18.

<sup>144</sup> *Ib.*, VIII:2:5.

**government of Your people - Abel, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noah, Melchisedec and Job.**" Matthew 23:35; Luke 3:38; Jude 14f; Ezekiel 14:14-20; Genesis 6:9 & 9:1-12 & 14:18f; Hebrews 7:1f & 11:1-7; Job 1:1f.

902. Yet it was not only **Presbyters** who were to live righteously, in accordance with the Moral Law of God. So too were all Communicant Members of the Christian Church, who were to be catechized most carefully also as to the need for an observable holy walk before the Lord - a life of victory over idolatry and blasphemy and murder and adultery and theft and lies - **prior** to their being admitted to the Lord's Supper. Hence the *Clementine Office* also insists:<sup>145</sup> "Let us all pray to God for the **catechumens**, that He...reveal to them the Gospel of His Christ; give them illumination and understanding; instruct them in the knowledge of God; **teach them His Commandments and His ordinances**; implant in them His pure and saving fear; [and] open the ears of their hearts **so that they may exercise themselves in His Law day and night.**"
903. Further (in the 'Constitution of James the brother of John the son of Zebedee'), the *Clementine Office* goes on to remind Communicants about their duty to live a Law-abiding life **before** coming to the Lord's Supper - as did all holy men from the very beginning of history. Thus, the Chief Presbyter - having said: 'The grace of Almighty God and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all' - then, on behalf of the Communicants, prays to God:<sup>146</sup>
904. "[O Father,] You have not only created the World itself, but have also made man for a citizen of the World.... For You did say to Your Wisdom [and only-begotten Son, through the Person of Your Holy Spirit]: **Let Us make man according to Our image....** Therefore too You have...given him...rational knowledge, **the discerning of piety** and impiety, and **the observation of right and wrong....** For You, O God Almighty, by Your Christ, planted a paradise in Eden.... When **You made him [Adam], You gave him a Law implanted within him** - so that he might have at home, and within himself, the seeds of divine knowledge.... In the event he would **keep that Commandment**, he might receive the reward of it - which was immortality....
905. "Those who apostatized from You, You punished.... While You accepted the offerings of Abel as a **holy** person, You rejected the gift of Cain the **murderer** of his brother.... You accepted Seth and Enos, and translated Enoch. For **You are the Creator of men and the Giver of life** and the Supplier of want and **the Giver of Laws** and the **Rewarder of those who observe them and the Avenger of those who transgress them**. You brought the great flood upon the World, by reason of the multitude of the ungodly - but delivered **righteous** Noah from that flood by an ark [Genesis 4:25 to 9:12]....
906. "You kindled a fearful fire against the five cities of Sodom [*cf.* Genesis 19:1f].... You are He who delivered Abraham from impiety [Genesis 18:18f].... You beforehand ordained Melchisedec [the king of **righteousness**], a Chief Presbyter for Your Worship [Genesis 14:18f & Hebrews 7:1f].... You, O Lord, did not overlook Joseph; but granted him as a **reward** of his chastity for Your sake, the **government over the Egyptians....** When men had corrupted the **Law of Nature...You** did not allow them to keep on going astray, but raised up Your holy servant Moses - and by him **gave the written Law for the assistance of the Law of Nature....**
907. "Holy also is Your only-begotten Son - our Lord and God Jesus Christ.... **After the Law of Nature; after the exhortations in the Positive Law; after the prophetical reproofs...**He was pleased by Your good will to become man - [He] Who was man's Creator - **to be under the Laws....** He lived

<sup>145</sup> *Ib.*, VIII:2:6.

<sup>146</sup> *Ib.*, VIII:2:12.

**holily, and taught according to the Law...** We further pray to You, O Lord, 'for **the king and all in authority**' [First Timothy 2:2]; for the whole army, **that they may be peaceable** toward us - **so that, leading the whole time of our life in quietness and unanimity**, we may glorify You through Jesus Christ Who is our Hope."

908. The *Clementine Office* then continues:<sup>147</sup> "Concerning readers, I Matthew also called Levi - who was once a tax-gatherer - make a constitution.... 'O Eternal God..., **You Who instructed Ezra Your servant to read Your Laws** to the people [Nehemiah chapter 8] - **would You now also at our prayers instruct Your servant to read Your Laws!**"
909. Further, the *Clementine Office* also contains various canons of Paul the Apostle concerning those who offer themselves to be baptized - as to who should be received, and who should be rejected, for that purpose. Explains that *Office*:<sup>148</sup> "If they be unmarried, let them learn not to commit fornication but to enter into lawful marriage.... He who is guilty of sins not to be named - a sodomite, an effeminate person, a magician, an enchanter, an astrologer, a diviner, a user of magic verses, a juggler, a mountebank, one who makes amulets, a charmer, a soothsayer, a fortuneteller, an observer of palmistry; he who, when he meets you, observes defects in the eyes or feet of the birds or cats or noises or symbolical sounds - let these be tested for some time. For this sort of wickedness is hard to be washed away. And if they leave off those practices, let them be received. But if they will not agree to that, let them be rejected!"

### **Lactantius: God's Adamic and Noachic Law binds all men everywhere**

910. Perhaps around A.D. 315, the accomplished Theologian Lactantius Firmianus started writing his great work *The Divine Institutes* - which he no doubt expanded after later becoming the mentor of the first Christian Roman Emperor - Constantine the Great.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, Constantine himself would then and thereafter start christianizing the previously-pagan Roman Law<sup>150</sup> - and then apply his Christian legislation throughout his Empire.
911. "First of all," remarks Lactantius in his *Institutes*,<sup>151</sup> "God made the Heaven.... Then He founded the Earth...as a dwelling-place for man.... Having finished the World, He commanded that animals of various kinds and of dissimilar forms should be created...so that they might be of service to men.... When all things had been settled with a wonderful arrangement, He determined...to create innumerable souls upon whom He might bestow immortality.
912. "God, having made man in the manner in which I have pointed out, placed him in paradise so that...[he] might devote himself entirely to the service of God his Father. Then He gave to him fixed **Commandments**, by the observance of which he might continue immortal; or, if he **transgressed** them, be punished with death."
913. Both before and after the fall of man, explains Lactantius,<sup>152</sup> "children could not possible have been reared without some one to bring them up." Even when [Adam and Eve] our first parents' first two children [Cain and Abel] had grown up, and one had slain the other - "as yet it seemed unlawful to

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<sup>147</sup> VIII:3:22.

<sup>148</sup> *Ib.*, VIII:4:23.

<sup>149</sup> *Ante-Nic. Fath.*, Eerdmans, VII pp. 4-6f.

<sup>150</sup> See F.N. Lee: *Common Law - Roots and Fruits*, Part II chs. 3 & 4 and Part IV chs. 14 & 15.

<sup>151</sup> Lact.: *Div. Inst.*, II:10f; II:13.

<sup>152</sup> *Ib.*, II:12; II:10; II:14.

inflict capital punishment on any.... When, therefore, the use of those things in which the life of men consists was forbidden - it was deemed to be equivalent to the actual infliction of death on him who had been thus sentenced [compare Genesis 4:1-16].... We are a heavenly and immortal race [cf. Genesis 1:26f; 2:9-17; 3:17-22]....

914. "Afterwards God, when He saw the Earth filled with wickedness and crimes, determined to destroy mankind with a deluge.... However, for renewing the multitude, He chose one man [Noah] who - when all were corrupted - stood forth pre-eminent as a remarkable example of **righteousness** [cf. Genesis 6:9].... He himself was saved, together with his wife and three sons and as many daughters-in-law - when the water had covered all the loftiest mountains [Genesis 6:18f & 7:20f]."
915. In terms of God's covenant with Noah and all his descendants, after the deluge God re-erected His Law with all humanity. Genesis 8:20f & 9:1-12. So deeply is this Noachitic Law ingrained in all mankind - that even Stoics like the great (B.C. 106-43) Roman Philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero, were clearly aware of it.
916. Insists Lactantius:<sup>153</sup> "**The Law of God must be undertaken.**" This is "that sacred, that heavenly Law, which Marcus Tullius [Cicero] has described<sup>154</sup> in his third book respecting the [Roman] Republic.... [Said he:] 'There is indeed a true Law...agreeing with nature - diffused among all; unchanging; everlasting. It calls to duty by **commanding**; deters from wrong by **forbidding**.... It is not allowable to alter the provisions of this Law; nor is it permitted us to modify it; nor can it be superseded. Nor, truly, can we be released from this Law, either by the senate or by the people....
917. "'The same Law - everlasting and unchangeable - will bind all nations at all times.... There will be one common Master and Ruler of all, even God - the Framer, Arbitrator and Proposer of this Law.... He who shall not obey this, will flee from himself and - despising the nature of man - will suffer the greatest punishment through this very thing.'" Thus Cicero.
918. On the above, Lactantius comments: "**Who** that is acquainted with the mystery of God - could **so** significantly relate the Law of God? ... I consider that they [like Cicero] who speak true things unconsciously, are to be held in regard.... If [only] he had known or explained...in what **precepts** the Law itself consisted - as he [indeed] clearly saw the force and **purport** of the divine Law - he would not have discharged the office of a Philosopher but of a Prophet. But because he [Cicero] was unable to do this - it must be done [*viz.* prophesying alias forthtelling] by us [Christians] to whom the Law itself has been delivered by the one great Master and Ruler of all: God."

### Constantine becomes the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire

919. Since Nero, for 250 years Christianity had been a *religio illicita* or a forbidden religion within the bounds of the Pagan Roman Empire - and was periodically persecuted. Only in A.D. 313 did it become a legal religion - right after Constantine conquered and became the first Christian ever to rule the Empire. Soon thereafter, he started enacting Christian laws. This changed even the political character of the territories he now controlled.
920. As Rev. Dr. Cleveland Coxe has observed:<sup>155</sup> "The 'conversion of Constantine' - as it is called - introduced the most marvellous revolution in human empire, in practical thought, and in the laws and

<sup>153</sup> *Ib.*, VI:8.

<sup>154</sup> M.T. Cicero: *Republic*, III:22 & III:16.

<sup>155</sup> A.C. Coxe: *Introductory Notice to Lactantius*, in *Ante-Nic. Fath.* (Eerdmans), VII pp. 3f.

manner of mankind, ever known in the history of the World.... While Lactantius was tutor to his son, Constantine had read the *Apologies* addressed to the Pagan Roman Antonine Emperors by Justin Martyr....

921. "Lactantius, moved perhaps by [either] Hosius or Eusebius, undertakes the instruction of the Emperor.... I cannot doubt that he aimed...to win the Emperor and his court to a deeper and purer conviction of divine truth.... The gods of the empire were impotent to protect themselves against Christian progress and its masterly exposures of their shame and nothingness."
922. The changes in the Roman Empire after the accession of Constantine as Emperor in A.D. 313, and especially after his 321f legislation, were indeed dramatic. Constantine was born around 274, and raised by his godly mother Helen even when Christianity was still a forbidden religion alias a *religio illicita* throughout the then-still-pagan Roman Empire. Indeed, the last and worst Pagan Roman persecution of Christians throughout the Empire had raged under the vicious Emperor Diocletian - who ruled from A.D. 284 until 305.
923. Constantine was the son of Constantius Chlorus, the Governor of *Britannia*. Soon after the abdication of Diocletian in 305 and the 306 death of Chlorus, Constantine was proclaimed Emperor at York by his father's troops. In 312, he adopted the cross as his war emblem, and defeated the Pagan Maxentius at the Battle of Milvian Bridge. In 313, Constantine gave full legal toleration to Christianity. By 319, he was moving against Paganism. By 321 he gave preferential recognition to the Christian Religion - even before he finally emerged as Sole Emperor in 324, as alluded to in that same year by the *Church History* of Eusebius.
924. By 325, Constantine had convened the trinitarian Synod of Nicea. By 330, he had inaugurated the new Christian City of Constantinople. The thirtieth anniversary of his imperial rule was celebrated by Eusebius in the latter's *Encomium* of 335 - and re-celebrated by the latter's *Life of Constantine* in 338 (before Constantine died shortly thereafter).

### Constantine's first moves to establish a Christian Commonwealth

925. After Constantine had been proclaimed Emperor in Britain in 306, he had much work to do consolidating his power base in his struggle of life and death against Roman Paganism. In 312, he overthrew Paganism in Italy. The next year, he enacted the *Edict of Milan*. This granted religious toleration throughout the Roman Empire to Christianity (as well as to other religions previously prohibited) - and restored churches and property forfeited during the tyrannical reign of Diocletian.
926. It states:<sup>156</sup> "When we [Co-Emperors] Constantine and Licinius met at Milan in conference concerning the welfare and security of the realm, we decided that of the things that are of profit to all mankind - the worship of God ought rightly to be our first and chiefest care." Thus Constantine granted Christianity (and certain other religions) toleration as a *religio licita* (alias a 'permitted religion') - in 313 A.D.
927. By 319, even while yet trying to consolidate his power base, Constantine turned against Paganism in public life - suppressing soothsayers, alias false prophets. He then declared:<sup>157</sup> "No soothsayer may approach his neighbour's threshold, even for any other purpose. Friendship with men of this

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<sup>156</sup> Bettenson: *Documents of the Christian Church*, Oxford: Univ. Press, 1953 rep., p. 22  
<sup>157</sup> *Cod. Theod.*, IX:16:1.

profession must be put away, even if it be of long standing. A soothsayer who approaches his neighbour's house, is to be burnt."

928. Constantine ordered all state officials and urbanites and tradesmen to rest on Sundays from all professional work. He also gave the Church state aid. He even forbade Jews to stone such of their co-religionists as sought to embrace Christianity. Also, he prohibited all public religious exercises and practices deemed to be *contra bonos mores* and morally repulsive to an increasingly-Christianizing society.<sup>158</sup>

### Eusebius's 324 A.D. testimony about Constantine's earlier feats

929. Eusebius Presbyter of Caesarea completed his famous *Church History* around 324 A.D. In that work, Eusebius writes<sup>159</sup> that "Constantine was 'born' an Emperor - a pious son of a most pious and prudent father.... Maxentius was defeated at Rome by Constantine in a remarkable manner.... Let thanks for all things be given to God the Omnipotent Ruler and King of the Universe - and the greatest thanks to Jesus Christ the Saviour and Redeemer of our souls, through Whom we pray that peace firm and undisturbed may always be preserved for us, firm and undisturbed by external troubles."
930. At the Christian Constantine's triumph over Roman Paganism, states Eusebius<sup>160</sup> - "the whole race of God's enemies was destroyed.... Especially we who placed our hopes in the Christ of God, had unspeakable gladness and a certain inspired joy bloomed for all of us.... We saw every place which shortly before had been desolated by the impieties of the tyrants - reviving as if from a long and death-fraught pestilence, and temples again rising from their foundations to an immense height and receiving a splendor far greater than that of the old ones which had been destroyed" by Diocletian.
931. Eusebius says:<sup>161</sup> "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the City of our God - in His holy Mountain [Psalm 48:1].... Great is He Who changes times and seasons, Who exalts and debases kings [Daniel 2:21]; Who raises up the poor from the ground, and lifts up the needy from the dunghill [see First Samuel 2:7 cf. Psalm 113:7]. He has put down princes [alias the principal politicians] from their thrones, and has exalted them of low degree from the Earth. The hungry He has filled with good things; the arms of the proud He has broken [Luke 1:52f]....
932. "Constantine, the mightiest victor, adorned with every virtue of piety, together with his son...recovered the East.... They formed one united Roman Empire.... They glorified first of all God the universal King.... Edicts full of clemency and **laws containing tokens of benevolence and true piety were issued in every place by the victorious Emperor**. Thus, after all tyranny had been purged away, the Empire...was preserved firm...for Constantine and his sons.... Having obliterated the godlessness of their predecessors, recognizing the benefits conferred upon them by God, they exhibited their love of virtue...and gratitude to the Deity by the deeds which they performed in the sight of all men."

### Constantine upholds God's Moral Law throughout his Roman Empire

933. In his *Edict to the People of the Provinces Concerning the Error of Polytheism*, Constantine declares:<sup>162</sup> "I beseech the most mighty God to be merciful and gracious.... My own desire is for the

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<sup>158</sup> See F.N. Lee: *The Covenantal Sabbath*, London: Lord's Day Observance Society, 1972, p. 246.

<sup>159</sup> Euseb.: *Ch. Hist.*, IX:9:1 & X:1:1-3.

<sup>160</sup> *Ib.*, X:1:7 & 2:1 & 3:1.

<sup>161</sup> *Ib.*, X:4:8f & X:9:6-9.

<sup>162</sup> *Ib.*, II, chs. 55-58.

common good of the World and the advantage of all mankind that the people should enjoy a life of peace and undisturbed concord.... Those only can live a life of holiness and purity, whom God calls to a reliance on His Holy Laws.... The revolution of the seasons recurs according to unerring laws.... Were it not so, were not all regulated by the determination of God's will - so great a diversity, so manifold a division of power, would unquestionably have brought ruin on the whole race and its affairs."

934. In his *Law Respecting Piety Toward God and the Christian Religion*, Constantine draws attention<sup>163</sup> to "how vast a difference there has ever been between those who maintain a careful observance of the hallowed duties of the Christian religion - and those who treat this religion with hostility or contempt." He adds that "at this present time...they who **faithfully observe His Holy Laws**, and **shrink from the transgression of His Commandments** are rewarded with abundant blessings....
935. "Any one who will mentally retrace the course of events from the earliest period down to the present time, and will reflect on what has occurred in past ages, will find that **all who have made justice and probity the basis of their conduct, have not only carried their undertakings to a successful issue, but have gathered as it were a store of sweet fruit as the produce of this pleasant root...**
936. "Beginning at the remote Britain...through the aid of Divine Power I banished and utterly removed every form of evil which prevailed - in the hope that the human race might be recalled to a due observance of the Holy Laws of God, and at the same time our most Blessed Faith might prosper under the guidance of His Almighty Hand." For Constantine's Lord rules history!
937. Consequently, Emperor Constantine soon goes on to enjoin:<sup>164</sup> "Let all previously-exiled Christians, I say, now render thanks to God the Liberator! They are restored to their hereditary property and their wonted tranquillity - [viz.]...to their former homes, their families and [their] estates.... Receive with joy the bountiful kindness of God!
938. "If any...still persist in their avaricious temper..., such a course will bring punishment on themselves.... This correction of evil is the very characteristic of our service to the Supreme God.... It is in any case incumbent on us to discourage covetous desires, both by persuasion and by warning examples."
939. Rome's first Christian Emperor then concludes:<sup>165</sup> "The miseries which erewhile oppressed the entire human race, are now banished from every part of the [Roman] World through the power of Almighty God.... It remains for all, both individually and unitedly, to observe and seriously consider - how great this power and how efficacious this grace are, which have annihilated and utterly destroyed...most wicked and evil men; have restored joy to the good; and **now guarantee the fullest authority both to honour the Divine Law as it should be honoured with all reverence**, and pay due observance to those who have dedicated themselves to the service of that Law.... Let this ordinance be published!"

### Christian laws progressively enacted by Emperor Constantine

940. Constantine's laws can be studied readily through the somewhat later Codes of Theodosius and Justinian. Among Constantine's more important measures derived from Holy Scripture, are his slavery laws. Thus he enacted that slaves must not be branded in the face, 'which is fashioned in the likeness

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<sup>163</sup> *Ib.*, II, chs. 24-25 & 28.

<sup>164</sup> *Ib.*, II, chs. 30 & 38.

<sup>165</sup> *Ib.*, II, ch. 42.



of the divine beauty.<sup>166</sup> **Families of slaves were not allowed to be separated.**<sup>167</sup> Masters were not permitted to torture them.<sup>168</sup>

941. Later, **Constantine forbade pagan sacrifices in general** - and promoted the building of churches in particular. He prepared a *Prayer for Sacred Assemblies*,<sup>169</sup> and also a common daily prayer for the army.<sup>170</sup> He himself often gave Christian orations in public.
942. Further, Constantine abolished Paganism's cruel but not unusual punishments - such as crucifixion<sup>171</sup> and the breaking of legs.<sup>172</sup> In A.D. 325 - the very year during which the Emperor convened the great trinitarian Church Council of Nicea defining the Trinity and the implications of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ - all gladiatorial carnages were banned. **Rape was severely punished. Indeed, also concubinage was forbidden** to those already married.<sup>173</sup>
943. **Parents were forbidden to kill their infants.**<sup>174</sup> Exposing tiny children to the elements, was criminalized.<sup>175</sup> There was to be no imprisonment before trial.<sup>176</sup> Public works and court sessions were forbidden on Sundays,<sup>177</sup> but trials were to be held speedily thereafter. Pagan sacrifices, in general, were prohibited.<sup>178</sup> In one word - Emperor Constantine progressively erected a Christian political order.
944. Here is part of Constantine's *Letter to the King of Persia*. To the Pagan Monarch Sapor, Constantine unabashedly confesses:<sup>179</sup> "Keeping the Divine Faith, I have been made a partaker of the light of truth.... I profess the Most Holy Religion.... This worship I declare to be that which teaches me deeper acquaintance with the Most Holy God.... By His divine power, **beginning [in Britain] from the very borders of the Ocean, I have aroused each nation of the World** [of the Roman Empire] in succession **to a well-grounded hope of security.**
945. **"I recoil with horror from the blood of sacrifices,** from their foul and detestable odours, and from every earth-born magic fire. For the profane and impious superstitions which are defiled by these rites, have cast down and consigned to perdition many - nay whole nations - of the Gentile World."<sup>180</sup>
946. At the end of the famous *Oration of the Emperor Constantine*,<sup>181</sup> which he himself addressed to the Holy Assembly of the Christian Church, the Emperor himself remarked: "When men commend my services - which owe their origin to the inspiration of Heaven - they clearly establish the truth that God

<sup>166</sup> *Code of Theodosius* 9:40:2, March 315; *PL* 8:119.

<sup>167</sup> *Cod. Th.* 2:25, 334 A.D.; *PL* 8:376.

<sup>168</sup> *Cod. Th.* 9:12, chs. 1-2, 319 & 326 A.D.; *Codex of Justinian* 9:14; *PL* 8:161.

<sup>169</sup> Constantine: *Prayer for Sacred Assemblies* (esp. chs. 4, 11, 18 & 29).

<sup>170</sup> Euseb.: *Life of Constantine*, 4:20.

<sup>171</sup> Sozomen: *Church History*, 1:8.

<sup>172</sup> Aur. Vict.: *Caes.* 41.

<sup>173</sup> *Cod. Th.* 15:12:1; *PL* 8:293; *Cod. Just.* 11:44; Eusebius's *Life Const.* 4:25; Socrates's *Church History* 1:18; *Cod. Just.* 5:26, in 326; and his *Digest* 1:25:7.

<sup>174</sup> *Cod. Th.* 11:277:1-2 *cf.* Lact. *Inst.* 6:20.

<sup>175</sup> *Cod. Just.* 8:51:2 & 9:16:7.

<sup>176</sup> *Cod. Th.* 9:3:1-2.; *Cod. Just.* 9:4:1:2, in 320 & 326; *PL* 8:199 & 299.

<sup>177</sup> *Cod. Th.* 2:8:1; *Cod. Just.* 3:12:2, in July 321; *PL* 8:224.

<sup>178</sup> Euseb.: *Life Const.* 2:44f & 4:23-25.

<sup>179</sup> Constantine's *Letter to the King of Persia* (cited in Eusebius's *Life Const.* IV ch. 8).

<sup>180</sup> *Ib.*, IV chs. 9-10.

<sup>181</sup> Constantine: *Oration of the Emperor to the Holy Assembly of the Christian Church*, ch. 26.

is the cause of the exploits I have performed.... While it is natural for man occasionally to err - God is not the cause of human error.

947. "Hence, it behooves all pious persons to render thanks to the Saviour of all - first, for our own individual security; and then, for the happy posture of public affairs.... For He is the invincible Ally and Protector of the righteous."

### **Eusebius's 335 A.D. *Oration* in praise of the laws of Constantine**

948. The great Church Historian Eusebius - in the new imperial 'City of Constantine' or Constantinopolis (alias Constantinople or 'Istanbul') - delivered a very important *Oration in Praise of the Emperor Constantine*. He did so, on the thirtieth anniversary of his reign - in A.D. 335.
949. There, Eusebius said:<sup>182</sup> "Thus did the Emperor himself, strange and incredible as the fact may seem, become the instructor of his army in their religious exercises. He taught them to offer pious prayers in accordance with the divine ordinances....
950. Eusebius went on:<sup>183</sup> "Hence the universal change for the better which leads men to spurn their lifeless idols; to trample under foot **the lawless rites** of their demon deities; and laugh to scorn the time-honoured foolishnesses of their fathers. Hence too the establishment in every place of those **schools of sacred learning wherein men are taught the precepts of saving truth**....
951. "At the same moment, the nations of the East and the West are being instructed in His precepts. The people of the northern and southern regions unite with one accord under the influence of the same **principles and law** - in the pursuit of a godly life; in praising the one Supreme God; in acknowledging His only-begotten Son their Saviour as the Source of every blessing."
952. Asks Eusebius regarding Jesus:<sup>184</sup> "Who but He, with invisible and secret power, has suppressed and utterly abolished those bloody sacrifices which were offered with fire and smoke - as well as the cruel and senseless immolation of human victims? - a fact which is attested by the Heathen Historians themselves! For it was not till after the publication of the Saviour's divine doctrine - about the time of Hadrian's reign - that the practice of human sacrifice was universally abandoned. Such, and so manifest, are the proofs of our Saviour's power and energy after death.... He is, even now, carrying on...the works of a Living Agent."
953. Eusebius then says to and of Constantine:<sup>185</sup> "You will yourself relate in worthy terms: the visible protection which your divine Shield and Guardian has extended in the hour of battle; the ruin of your open and secret foes; and His ready aid in time of peril. To Him you will ascribe...your administration of civil affairs; your military arrangements and correction of abuses in all departments; your ordinances respecting public right; and, lastly, your legislation for the common benefit of all.... With such memorials, you have adorned that edifice..., ascribing victory and triumph to the heavenly Word of God - thus proclaiming to all nations with clear and unmistakable voice, in deed and word, your own devout and pious confession of His Name."

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<sup>182</sup> Euseb.: *Oration for Constantine*, Prologue, 1 & 3.

<sup>183</sup> *Ib.*, X:2,6,7.

<sup>184</sup> *Ib.*, XVI:7-12.

<sup>185</sup> *Ib.*, ch. XVIII.

### **Eusebius's A.D. 338 *Life of Constantine* on his godly legislation**

954. In his *circa* A.D. 338 *Life of Constantine*, that Emperor's Biographer the famous Church Historian Eusebius declares<sup>186</sup> that Constantius "the father of Constantine...had for a long time given many proofs of royal virtue, in acknowledging the Supreme God alone and condemning the polytheism of the ungodly - and had fortified his household by the prayers of holy men.... During the whole course of his quiet and peaceful reign, he dedicated his entire household, his children [including Constantine], his wife [Helen], and domestic attendants - to the One Supreme God."
955. Later, in Constantine's own treatment of prisoners-of-war (even if Pagans) explains Eusebius,<sup>187</sup> "his God was ever present to his thoughts.... He desired to do everything according to His will, and conscientiously to avoid any wanton sacrifice of human life.... He directed his victorious troops to spare the lives of their prisoners, admonishing them as human beings not to forget the claims of their common nature."
956. Of Constantine, Eusebius further observes:<sup>188</sup> "The **Emperor's edicts, permeated with his humane spirit**, were published among us.... **His laws, which breathed a spirit of piety toward God**, gave promise of manifold blessings, since they secured many advantages to his provincial subjects....
957. "They recalled those who, in consequence of their refusal to join in idol worship, had been driven to exile.... In the next place, they relieved from their burdens those who for the same reason had been adjudged to serve [sentences] in the civil courts; and ordained restitution to be made to any who had been deprived of property."
958. Eusebius then yet further declares:<sup>189</sup> "While thus variously engaged in promoting the extension and glory of the Church of God and striving by every measure to commend the Saviour's doctrine, the Emperor was far from neglecting 'secular' affairs.... He manifested a paternal anxiety for the general welfare of his subjects....
959. "He remitted a fourth part of the yearly tribute paid for land, and bestowed it on the owners of the soil.... This privilege being established by law...[was] secured for the time to come...to be held not merely by the then present generation but by their children and descendants in perpetual remembrance."

### **God's Moral Law in Eusebius's A.D. 338 *Life of Constantine***

960. Explains Eusebius:<sup>190</sup> "The Emperor...modelled, as it were, his very palace into a church of God - and himself afforded a pattern of zeal to those assembled therein.... **He took the Sacred Scriptures into his hands, and devoted himself to the study of those divinely-inspired Oracles.** After which he would offer up regular prayers, with all the members of his imperial court....
961. "He ordained too, that one day should be regarded as a special occasion for prayer. I mean that which is truly the first and chief of all, the day of our Lord and Saviour.... His true bodyguard, strong in affection and fidelity to his person, found in their Emperor an Instructor in the practice of piety, and like him held the Lord's salutary day in honour, and performed on that day the devotions which he loved.

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<sup>186</sup> Euseb.: *Life of Constantine*, I chs. 17.

<sup>187</sup> *Ib.*, II ch. 13.

<sup>188</sup> *Ib.*, II ch. 20.

<sup>189</sup> *Ib.*, IV chs. 1-3.

<sup>190</sup> *Ib.*, IV chs. 14-18.

962. "His desire was to teach his whole army zealously - to honour the Saviour's day.... He freely granted to those among them who were partakers of the divine faith, leisure for attendance on the services of the Church of God."
963. As a typical Briton, also Constantine strongly opposed idolatry. Explains Eusebius:<sup>191</sup> "His subjects both civil and military throughout the Empire found a barrier everywhere opposed against idol worship, and every kind of sacrifice [to idols] forbidden. A statute was also passed, enjoining the due observance of the Lord's day - and transmitted to the Governors of every Province...."
964. "He issued successive laws and ordinances: forbidding any to offer sacrifice to idols; to consult diviners; to erect images; or to pollute the cities with the sanguinary combats of gladiators.... **The Egyptians, especially those of Alexandria, had been accustomed to honour their river [the Nile] through a priesthood composed of effeminate men**" - either homosexual or willingly emasculated. "A further law was passed, commanding the extermination of the whole class as vicious, so that no one might thenceforward be found tainted with the like impurity."
965. "The childless had been punished under the old law with the forfeiture of their hereditary property.... The Emperor annulled this, and decreed that those so circumstanced should inherit.... **He regulated the question on the principles of equity and justice, arguing willful transgressors should be chastised with the penalties their crimes deserve....**
966. Consequently, concludes Eusebius:<sup>192</sup> "God has made manifest to us - in the person of Constantine, who alone of all sovereigns [over the Roman Empire] had openly professed the Christian Faith - how great a difference He perceives between those whose privilege it is to worship Him and His Christ, and those who have chosen the contrary part (who have provoked His enmity).... Standing as he did - alone and pre-eminent among the Roman Emperors as a worshipper of God; alone as the bold proclaimer to all men of the doctrine of Christ; having alone rendered honour, as none before him had ever done, to His Church; having alone abolished utterly the error of polytheism, and discountenancing idolatry in every form - so, alone among them both during life and after death, was he accounted worthy of such honours."
967. "Hence, it behooves all pious persons to render **thanks to the Saviour of all** - first, for our own individual security; and then, **for the happy posture of public affairs.... For He is the invincible Ally and Protector of the righteous!**"

### Chief Presbyter Athanasius of Alexandria on God's Moral Law

968. Chief Presbyter Athanasius of Alexandria triumphed christologically and trinitarianly at the A.D. 325 Council of Nicea (convened by Emperor Constantine himself). In addition, Athanasius also upheld God's Moral Law. Indeed, it is as if the Ten Commandments would be taken almost for granted by all of the Post-Nicene Church Fathers - once the political government alias the state as such had done so, at its christianization in A.D. 313f.
969. In his apology *Against the Heathen*, Athanasius states<sup>193</sup> that "the one who was named Adam in Hebrew, is described in the Holy Scriptures as having **at the beginning had his mind toward God....**

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<sup>191.</sup> *Ib.*, IV chs. 23-27.

<sup>192.</sup> *Ib.*, IV chs. 74-75.

<sup>193.</sup> Athanasius: *Against the Heathen*, chs. 2f & 47.

Purity of soul is sufficient of itself to reflect God.... The Creator fashioned the race of men.... They fell into lust of themselves, preferring what was their own to the contemplation of what belonged to God.... From lusting, and not meeting with gratification, they learned to commit murder and wrong....

970. "The body has eyes so as to see creation...and ears to listen to the divine Oracles and the Laws of God.... The audacity of men...began to do the contrary.... Their hands...made them commit murder...and their other members...adultery instead of...lawful procreation.... The tongue, instead of right speaking, [was misused] to slander and...perjury; the hands again, to stealing and striking fellowmen.... **My Christ-loving friend!** Be of good cheer and of good hope, because immortality and the Kingdom of Heaven is the fruit of faith and devotion toward Him - **if only the soul be adorned according to His Laws!**"
971. In his work on *The Incarnation of the Word*, Athanasius goes on to say<sup>194</sup> that the Pagans "serve the creature rather than the Creator" [Romans 1:25]; and that with them "everything was full of irreligion and lawlessness." Yet "God made provision...even for this weakness of theirs, by sending a Law and Prophets.... It was open to them, by knowing the Law, even to cease from all lawlessness and live a virtuous life....
972. "Gentiles, leaving their godlessness, are now taking refuge with the God of Abraham.... Christ has come.... He has illumined absolutely all with His light, and given them the true and divine teaching concerning His Father.... When they hear the teaching of Christ - they straightway, instead of fighting, turn to industry.... In youth, they are selfrestrained; in temptations, they endure; in labours, they persevere.... All idolatry and everything opposed to the Christian Faith, is daily dwindling and losing power and falling!"

### **Basil the Great: breaches of the Decalogue need severe punishment**

973. The Chief Presbyter of Caesarea, Basil the Great, had much to say on the abiding importance of God's Moral Law. In his *Letter 46* - alias *To a Fallen Virgin* - he insists<sup>195</sup> (perhaps around 365 A.D.): "Now is the time to quote the words of the Prophet and to say, 'Oh that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears - so that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!' [Jeremiah 9:1].... Truly, God's Laws would groan aloud on seeing so great a pollution on the Earth. They have pronounced their prohibition of old 'you shall not covet your neighbour's wife' [Deuteronomy 5:21]; and through the holy Gospels they say that 'whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery already with her in his heart' [Matthew 5:28]."
974. In his *Letter 188 (to Amphilochius)*, Basil declares:<sup>196</sup> "**The woman who purposely destroys her unborn child, is guilty of murder. With us, there is no nice enquiry as to its being 'formed' or 'unformed.'** In this case, it is not only the [human] being about to be born who is vindicated - but [also] the woman, in her attack upon herself.... In most cases, women who make such attempts die" - even at their own hand. "**The destruction of the embryo is an additional crime, a second murder....** Herein, as I suppose, the ancient authorities followed the old rule 'you shall not avenge twice for the same thing' [Nahum 1:9 LXX]....
975. "Abusers of themselves with mankind [alias practising homosexuals] and with beasts [alias bestializers] - as also murderers, wizards, adulterers and idolaters - are deserving of the same

<sup>194</sup> Athanasius: *The Incarnation of the Word*, chs. 11f & 40 & 52 & 55.

<sup>195</sup> Basil: *Letter 46 (To a Fallen Virgin)*, 1.

<sup>196</sup> Basil: *Letter 188 (to Amphilochius)*, 2f & 7 & 11.

punishment.... We shall, without doubt, observe what is laid down by Moses in the case of wounded men (Exodus 21:19) - and shall **not** hold a murder to have been committed in the case of a man who lies down after he has been struck, and [later] walks again leaning on his staff" but then dies some time thereafter. **Yet if he [the person stricken] does not rise again after he has been struck...the striker is a homicide** - but an unintentional homicide."

976. In his *Letter 199 (to Amphilochius)*, Basil insists:<sup>197</sup> "We call the man who lives with another man's wife an adulterer, and do not receive him into communion until he has ceased from his sin.... Men who keep women carried off by violence...must not be received.... Swearing is absolutely forbidden [Matthew 5:34].... Let an indictment for murder be preferred against the woman who gives birth to a child on the road, and pays no attention to it.... Suffering violation [alias rape], should not be a cause of condemnation. So the slave girl, if she has been forced by her own master, is free from blame." Not so the rapist himself (who should indeed be put to death).
977. In his *Letter 217 (to Amphilochius)*, Basil states<sup>198</sup> that "the woman who had given birth to a child and abandoned it on the road, if she was able to save it but neglected it...is to be judged as in a case of murder. If, on the other hand, she was unable to provide for it, and the child perished from exposure and want of the necessities of life, the mother is to be pardoned.... Robbers...are prohibited from the communion.... The adulterer will be excluded.... The fornicator will not be admitted to participation in the sacrament."
978. Finally, in his *Letter 270*, Basil berates<sup>199</sup> his addressee who had been "incapable of understanding how...*raptus* [alias carrying off a woman against her will]...is an act of unlawfulness and tyranny against society and human nature and an outrage.... Wherever you find the girl, insist on taking her away [from her ravisher] - and restore her to her parents. Shut out the man from prayers, and make him excommunicate.... **We regard the ravisher as a common foe, like a snake or any other wild beast; and so, hunt him out!"**
979. The above provisions were later excerpted and elaborated as the so-called *Canons of Basil* - and annotated by Zonaras and Balsamon and Aristenus during the Middle Ages for ecclesiastical use in adjudicating delicts. Those *Canons* state:<sup>200</sup> "Let her that procures abortion undergo ten years' penance, whether the embryo were perfectly formed or not.... They who have committed sodomy with men or brutes; murderers; wizards; adulterers; and idolaters - have been thought worthy of the same punishment.... But the man or woman is a murderer that gives a *philtrum* [alias a drug], if the man that takes it die upon it. So are they who take medicines to procure abortion; and so are they who kill on the highway....
980. "Fornication is neither marriage, nor the beginning of marriage." Further: "They who steal women, and their accomplices, be not admitted to prayers.... A woman being delivered of a child during a journey, and who takes no care of it, shall be reputed guilty of murder.... He who gives a mortal wound to another, is a murderer.... A woman delivered on the road, and who neglects her child, is guilty of murder - unless she was under necessity by reason of the solitude of the place and the want of necessaries....

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<sup>197</sup> Basil: *Letter 199 (to Amphilochius)*, 18 & 22 & 29 & 33 & 49.

<sup>198</sup> Basil: *Letter 217 (to Amphilochius)*, 52 & 55 & 58f.

<sup>199</sup> Basil: *Letter 270*.

<sup>200</sup> *Canons of Basil* (2 & 7 & 8 & 26 & 30 & 33 & 43 & 52 & 62-68 & 72), in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Eerdmans ed., Second Series, XIV p. 604 & n. 1 and pp. 605f

981. "He that [sodomizes alias] abuses himself with mankind, shall receive the punishment of an adulterer.... So shall he who abuses himself with beasts.... He who confesses to conjuration, or to poisoning, shall receive the punishment of a murderer.... Incest with a sister is punished as murder.... All incestuous conjunction, is adultery.... He who gives himself over to divination [alias sorcery], shall be treated as a murderer."

### **The Law in Cyril of Jerusalem's 375 A.D. *Catechetical Lectures***

982. The *Catechetical Lectures* of the 375 A.D. Cyril, Chief Presbyter of Jerusalem, were very influential - especially in preparing catechumens to be found worthy of admission to the Lord's Supper. Cyril maintains<sup>201</sup> that "God, according to the Preacher [Ecclesiastes 7:29], **made man upright**; but that they have themselves sought out many inventions. Yet we are His workmanship, says the Apostle [Ephesians 2:10], **created unto good works** which God afore prepared so that **we should walk in them**.... Neither fornication, nor adultery, nor murder, nor any transgression of the Law shall prevail with **you!**"
983. Cyril continues:<sup>202</sup> "If ever you hear any of the heretics speaking evil of the Law..., answer in the sound of the Saviour's voice, saying: Jesus 'came not to destroy the Law' [Matthew 5:17].... Honouring our Father in Heaven, let us honour also 'the fathers of our flesh' [Hebrews 12:9].... The Lord has evidently so appointed in the Law...[Deuteronomy 5:16], saying: 'honour your father and your mother, so that it may be well with you'....
984. "Let the following Commandment especially be observed by those here present who have fathers and mothers. 'Children, obey your parents in all things! For this is well-pleasing to the Lord' [Colossians 3:20].... When our fathers on Earth are of a contrary mind to our Father in Heaven - then we must obey Christ's Word. But when they put no obstacle to godliness in our way - if we are ever carried away by ingratitude and, forgetting their benefits to us, hold them in contempt - then the Oracle will have place which says 'let him who curses father or mother die the death' [Exodus 21:17 & Leviticus 20:9 & Matthew 15:4]. The first virtue of godliness in Christians is to honour their parents: to requite the troubles of those who begat them."

### **Constantinople's Chrysostom on God's Law in his *Homilies on Matthew***

985. In his *Homilies on Matthew*, Chief Presbyter John Chrysostom of Constantinople stated<sup>203</sup> around A.D. 400 that "Adam, by the incontinence of the belly, was cast out of paradise.... The first man did...both offend God and transgress the Law. As much, and more, He teaches you."
986. "The devil...in the case of Cain...did not at once urge him to slay his brother, since he would not have persuaded him; but first wrought upon him to offer things more or less vile. He said: 'this is no sin!' In the second place, he kindled envy and jealousy - saying, 'neither is there anything in this!' Thirdly, he persuaded him to slay and to deny his murder - and did not leave him, before he had put on him the crowning act of evil."
987. "In the case of Cain, what was done was not a murder only, but worse than even many murders. For it was not a stranger but a brother whom he slew; and a brother who had not done wrong, but suffered

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<sup>201</sup> Cyril: *Catechetical Lectures*, II:1.

<sup>202</sup> *Ib.*, IV:33 & VII:15f.

<sup>203</sup> John Chrysostom: *Homilies on Matthew*, XIII:2f; LXXXVI:3; XXVI:8; LXXIV:1f.

wrong.... 'Upon you [O Jerusalem], shall come all the righteous blood shed upon the Earth - from the blood of righteous Abel' [Matthew 23:34f]...., 'requiting the sins of fathers upon children for the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me' [Exodus 20:5].... See how seasonably He also mentioned Abel - indicating that this murder likewise is of envy!"

988. Coming to New Testament times, Chrysostom explains<sup>204</sup> that John the baptizer was "murdered, and that by an immodest damsel and a corrupt harlot - and all in vindicating the Laws of God.... Such is the nature of whoredom. It makes men not only wanton, but also murderous. Those women, at all events, who desire to commit adultery - are prepared even for the slaying of their injured husbands; and not only one or two but ten thousand murders are they ready to venture upon."
989. Jesus said: 'Do not think I have come to destroy the Law!' Matthew 5:17. Chrysostom comments: "To command men to be meek and gentle and merciful and pure in heart and to strive for righteousness, indicated no such design - but rather altogether the contrary.... **He was proceeding to ordain Commandments greater than those of old.** He said, 'it was said to them of old time 'you shall not kill!' But I say to you, 'do not even be angry!'" Matthew 5:17-22. "Yet it was Himself Who gave those laws also.... He does not disturb the order of the Commandments, but begins first with that which comes earlier, with which the Law also began...."
990. "The Lawgiver has pronounced it, and you must not ask any more questions.... Do you not see how full the Law is of gentleness and tender care - and that which seems to men in general to be severity, how much love towards man it discloses? ...'I say to you, do not swear at all!' [Matthew 5:33f]. Why did He, passing over that Commandment, go straightway not to theft but to false witness? Because he who steals, on occasion swears too; but he who knows not either to swear nor to speak falsehood, will much less choose to steal. So that by this, He has overthrown the other sin likewise. Since falsehood comes from stealing...."
991. "It were the utmost folly for us, while we give up five and even six days to the business of this life, not to bestow on things spiritual so much as one day." Jesus Himself "first rehearses the Law, by which He signifies His earnest desire that parents should be honoured. For 'honour,' says He, 'your father and your mother - so that you may live long upon the Earth!' [Matthew 15:4f & 19:19 cf. Exodus 20:12 & Ephesians 6:1f]. And again, 'He who curses father or mother - let him die the death!' [Exodus 21:17]. 'In vain do they worship Me,' He says, but of their own they make much account 'teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'" Matthew 15:8f.
992. "Christ has taught us what is just...saying that 'on two Commandments hang the Law and the Prophets' [Matthew 22:40]; that is to say, on the love of God and on the love of our neighbour.... 'Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do likewise to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets' [Matthew 7:12].... He says, 'you shall love the Lord your God.' This is the first and great Commandment. And the second is like unto this, 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself'.... 'He who loves Me, will keep My Commandments' [John 14:15].... To love one's neighbour, works a keeping of the Commandments.... On these hang all the Law and the Prophets."

### Chrysostom on God's Law in his Homilies on John & Acts & Romans

993. Moreover, Chrysostom rightly remarks<sup>205</sup> on John 1:17 that "even the things of the Law were of grace. The fact is, man was created from nothing. For we did not receive this [our existence] as a

<sup>204</sup> *Ib.*, XLVIII:6; XVI:1 & 7; XVII:2-5; V:1; LI:3; I:12; LXXI:1.  
<sup>205</sup> Chrys.: *Homily of St. John* (1:17).



recompense for past good deeds. How could we, when we did not even exist? But we received this from God, Who is ever first to bestow His benefits....

994. "It is not only that we were created from nothing. But, **when we were created, we straightway learned what we must and what we must not do. We received this law in our very nature.** And our Creator entrusted to us the impartial rule of conscience. These, I say, are proofs of the greatest grace and unspeakable lovingkindness. And the **recovery** of this Law **after** it had [later] become corrupt - [the recovery] by means of the **written** [Law] - this too was the work of grace." Thus, according to Chrysostom, man needed grace before the fall - in order to be able then to keep the Law. And now, after the fall, man needs even more grace - so as to be justified from the penalty of his breaches of the Law, and also unto sanctification by trying to keep it.
995. In his *Homilies on Acts*, Chrysostom insists<sup>206</sup> that "the laws are full of punishment and restraint, and there is no such thing as law without penalty and coercion... We speak of the Laws of God. When we discourse about hell, then we bring forward those laws [*cf.* Revelation 21:8 & 22:14f]. Just as in the affairs of the World, people urge the laws of murder, highway robbery, and the like - so do we the penal laws (laws which not man enacted but the Only-begotten Son of God Himself). Let him who has no mercy, He says, be punished! Matthew 18:23.... We know that the murderer and adulterer ought to be punished....
996. "Not in fine public monuments nor yet somewhere out of sight did He deposit His Laws. Not pillars of brass did He raise up, and engrave letters thereon, but twelve souls raised He up for us - the souls of the Apostles, and in their minds has He by the Spirit inscribed this writing [*cf.* Romans 1:16f & 2:14].... **I say this, not to set up a law against Christ's Law. God forbid!** For it is said: 'Let your yes, be yes; and your no, no!' [Matthew 5:27].
997. In his *Homilies on Romans*, Chrysostom points out<sup>207</sup> that "the law is holy - and the Commandment holy and just and good [Romans 7:12]....Neither Adam, nor anybody else, can be shown ever to have lived without the Law of Nature. For as soon as God formed him, He put into him that Law of Nature." Indeed, during the course of a sermon on Romans 13:14, Chrysostom declared: "Drunkenness leads to whoredom; whoredom to adultery; adultery to murder - or rather to something even worse than murder!"

### Presbyter Jerome of Bethlehem on the Decalogical Law of God

998. From around 374 onward and right until his death in 420 A.D., the great Presbyter Jerome of Bethlehem strongly condemned<sup>208</sup> "the various forms of transgression." He agreed with Paul "that no whoremonger nor unclean person nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ" (Ephesians 5:5) - and that especially Christians need to keep on "laying aside fornication, uncleanness, evil concupiscence and covetousness: which are idolatry." Colossians 3:5f. For "lust involves profanation"; and "fraud is idolatry."
999. Together with the famous heresyhunter, Chief Presbyter Epiphanius of Salamis, Jerome assailed the Antinomians who were asking Christians "**to give up the teaching of the Law** of Apostles and Prophets; and of the Saviour Himself...loud as thunder in the Gospel." Condemning Antinomianism,

<sup>206</sup> Chrys.: *Homilies on Acts*, V & X.

<sup>207</sup> Chrys.: *Homilies on Romans*, 12 & 24.

<sup>208</sup> Jerome: *Letter XIV (to Heliodorus)*, 5.

Jerome adds (with Epiphanius):<sup>209</sup> "O, the madness and folly of those who have forsaken the teaching of the book of Proverbs [6:20] - 'my son, keep your Father's Commandments!'"

1000. Jerome himself elsewhere says:<sup>210</sup> "He Who said 'do not commit adultery' also said 'do not murder.' If we commit no adultery, yet if we murder - we have become **transgressors of the Law** [James 2:11]. 'Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point - he is guilty of all' [James 2:10].... So also in the Gospel, when the Lord discusses that Commandment of the Law which says: 'honour your father and your mother' [Exodus 20:12 *cf.* Mark 7:8-11f]."
1001. Too, adds Jerome:<sup>211</sup> "The creation of the first man should teach us to reject more marriages than one. There was but one Adam, and but one Eve; in fact, the woman was fashioned from a rib of Adam [Genesis 2:21f]. Thus divided, they were subsequently joined together in marriage. In the words of Scripture, 'the two shall be one flesh' - not two or three." *Cf.* Malachi 2:14f. "Adam received a Command in paradise to abstain from one tree, though he might eat the other fruit."
1002. Finally, in his work *Against the Pelagians*, Jerome reminds<sup>212</sup> those heretics that the New Testament "proceeds thus: 'He Who said "you shall not commit adultery" also said "you shall not murder." But, although you do not murder, yet - if you commit adultery - you have become a transgressor of the Law' [James 2:11]. Light offences are compared with light ones, and heavy offences with heavy ones. A [light or a non-capital] fault that deserves the rod, must not be avenged with the sword. Nor must a [heavy alias a capital] crime worthy of the sword, be checked with the rod.... In Holy Scripture, we are stimulated to aim at perfect righteousness. Thus: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God' [Matthew 5:8]; and 'blessed are the undefiled in the way, who **walk** in the **Law of the Lord**' [Psalm 119:1]."

### **Augustine's Confessions and Epistles on the Decalogical Law of God**

1003. The A.D. 354-430 Augustine of Thagaste in North Africa, became a Presbyter in Hippo-Regius during 391. In his famous *Confessions*, he condemns<sup>213</sup> the antinomianism of his former associates the Manichaeans. Their antinomian Manichaeism did not uphold man's "knowledge of that true inner righteousness which does not judge according to custom but out of the **most perfect Law of God Almighty**." The latter is "the same always and everywhere." Indeed, it is that Law "according to which [Adam and Abel and Noah and] Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Moses and David and all those commended by the mouth of God, were **righteous** [Hebrews 11:1-40]...."
1004. "Those offences which be **contrary to nature**, are everywhere and at all times to be held in detestation and punished. Such were those of the Sodomites which, should all nations commit, they should all be held guilty of the same crime by **the Divine Law**.... That fellowship which should be between God and us is violated when that same nature of which He is Author is polluted by the perversity of lust...."
1005. "When God commands anything contrary to the customs or compacts of any nation to be done - though it were never done by them before, it is to be done [thenceforth].... If intermitted, it is to be

<sup>209</sup> Jerome: *Letter LI (Jerome's approval and translation into Latin of Epiphanius's letter to Bishop John of Jerusalem)*, 4 & 6. See too Jerome's *Letter to Pammachius against John of Jerusalem*, 11-14.

<sup>210</sup> Jerome: *Letter LXIX (to Oceanus)* 10, and *Letter CXXIII (to Ageruchia)* 6.

<sup>211</sup> Jerome: *Letter CXXIII (to Ageruchia)* 6 & 12 and *Against Jovinianus* II:15.

<sup>212</sup> Jerome: *Against the Pelagians*, I:19.

<sup>213</sup> Augustine: *Confessions*, III:13-16.

restored; and if never established, it **is** to be established.... The greater authority is obeyed before the lesser - so must God [be obeyed], above all....

1006. "So also in deeds of violence where there is a desire to harm..., as the highwayman to the traveller; or for the avoiding of some evil, as with him who is in fear of another; or through envy.... These be the chief iniquities which spring forth from the lust of the flesh, of the eye, and of power.... So do men live in opposition to the three and seven, that psaltery 'of ten strings' [Psalm 144:9 *cf.* Exodus 20:1-17] - **Your Ten Commandments, O God** most high and most sweet!"
1007. On Psalm 144, Augustine comments:<sup>214</sup> "To the First Commandment [loving God with all one's heart] there belong three strings, because God is triune. To the other, *i.e.*, the love of our neighbour, seven strings. These let us join to those three which belong to the love of God - if we would, on the psaltery of ten strings, sing a new song!"
1008. In his *Epistle to Januarius*, Augustine again refers<sup>215</sup> to "**all of the Ten Commandments...we have received as a means of our instruction.**" He adds: "We have been taught literally not to worship idols.... The precepts enjoining us not to take God's Name in vain, to honour our father and mother, not to commit adultery, or murder, or steal, or bear false witness, or covet our neighbour's wife [or goods] - are **all devoid of typical or mystical meaning, and are to be literally observed.**"

### **Augustine's *City of God* and *Enchiridion* on the Decalogical Law of God**

1009. In his famous work *The City of God*, Augustine declares<sup>216</sup> that "God, as it is written, made man upright [Ecclesiastes 7:29] and consequently with a good will. For if he had not had a good will, he could not have been upright.... Sacrilege is forbidden.... God has forbidden it.... 'Honour your father and your mother' [Exodus 20:12] - God has commanded it.... 'You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal' [Exodus 20:13-15 *cf.* Mark 10:19] and other similar Commandments - not human lips, but the Divine Oracles, have enounced them....
1010. "We must now contemplate the rich and countless blessings with which the goodness of God Who cares for all He has created, has filled this very misery of the human race which reflects His retributive justice. The first blessing [was that] which He pronounced before the fall, when He said: 'increase and multiply and replenish the Earth!' [Genesis 1:28]. He did not inhibit [that blessing] after man had sinned. But the fecundity originally bestowed, remained."
1011. In his *Enchiridion*, Augustine argues that Adam's first sin transgressed the whole Decalogue - both in respect of himself, and also in respect of all his descendants. "In that one sin, which 'by one man entered into the World and so passed upon all men' [Romans 5:12], and on account of which infants are baptized" - he explains<sup>217</sup> - "a number of distinct sins may be observed if it be analyzed, as it were, into its separate elements. For there is in it pride, because man chose to be under his own dominion, rather than under the dominion of God; and blasphemy, because he did not believe God; and murder, for he brought death upon himself; and spiritual fornication....
1012. "Infants are involved in the guilt of the sins not only of the first pair, but of their own immediate parents.

<sup>214</sup> See Augustine's *Sermons Eight and Nine on the Ten Chords* and on *Psalm 144* (sec. 33), in *Nic. & Post-Nic. Fath.* (Eerdmans ed.), First Series, I p. 65 n. 3.

<sup>215</sup> Augustine: *Letter LV (to Januarius)*, XII:22.

<sup>216</sup> Augustine: *The City of God*, XIV:11:11 & XVIII:41 & XXII:24.

<sup>217</sup> Augustine: *Enchiridion*, chs. 45f.'l

For that divine judgment, shall visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children' [Exodus 20:5 & Deuteronomy 5:9], certainly applies to them before they come under the new covenant by regeneration.... But about the sins of the other progenitors who intervene between Adam and a man's own parents - a question may very well be raised whether everyone who is born, is involved in all their accumulated evil acts.... Whether any other solution of this great question may or may not be found in Scripture by a more diligent search and a more careful interpretation, I dare not rashly affirm."

### **Augustine's *Sermons on New-Testament Lessons on the Decalogical Law of God***

1013. In his *Sermons on New-Testament Lessons*, Augustine insists<sup>218</sup> that "we were created good by The Good. For 'God made man upright' [Ecclesiastes 7:29].... How shall we be able to flee to Him Who made the World - unless we give ear to His Law which is preached everywhere? ... For God's Scripture...says 'great peace have they who love Your Law' [Psalm 119:165].... 'The meek shall inherit the Earth' [Psalm 37:11].... For these 'meek' ones are they who 'love the Law of God.' For 'blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord, and teach him from Your Law, so that You may give him rest from the day of adversity' [Psalm 94:12f cf. Matthew 5:5-17f]....
1014. "Hear too Paul himself showing you, both that the Law is good, and yet that nothing but the grace of Christ delivers from sin.... The Apostle says 'for I delight in the Law of God after the inner man' [Romans 7:22]. That is, I see now that what the Law blames is evil - and what the Law commands is good....
1015. "Now who is he that fulfils the Law, but he who has charity? Ask the Apostle. 'Charity is the fulfilling of the Law' [Romans 13:10]. For all the Law is fulfilled in one word - in that which is written [*viz.*] 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' [Galatians 5:14].... As long as the Law is not fulfilled, there is infirmity.... From that infirmity, who then shall make whole - but He Who came to give charity? 'A new Commandment I give to you, that you love one another' [John 13:24]. And because He came to give charity, and charity fulfils the Law - with good reason He said 'I came not to destroy but to fulfil the Law' [Matthew 5:17]."

### **The Decalogical Law of God in Augustine's Anti-Pelagian Works**

1016. In his anti-Pelagian work *On Forgiveness of Sins and Baptism*, Augustine states:<sup>219</sup> "When the first human beings, the one man Adam and his wife Eve who came out of him, willed not to obey the Commandment which they had received from God - a just and deserved punishment overtook them.... Before they had thus violated their obedience, they were pleasing to God....As soon indeed as that transgression was effected, and the disobedient soul turned away from **the Law of its Lord**, then its servant the body began to cherish a law of disobedience against it....
1017. Also in another of his Anti-Pelagian works, *On the Spirit and the Letter*, Augustine exhorts:<sup>220</sup> "**Let us look at the Decalogue itself**.... It is summed up in these Ten Commandments.... I should like to be told **what** there is in these Ten Commandments...which ought **not** to be kept by a Christian - whether it prohibit the making and worshipping of idols and of any other gods than the one true God; or the taking of God's Name in vain; or prescribe honour to parents; or give warning against fornication, murder, theft, false witness, adultery, or coveting other men's property? Which of these Commandments would anyone say that the Christian ought not to keep? ... The Commandments

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<sup>218</sup>. Augustine: *Sermons on New-Testament Lessons*, XI:2 & XXXI:1 & LXXV:2.

<sup>219</sup> Augustine: *On Forgiveness of Sins and Baptism*, II:35f[XXIf].

<sup>220</sup> Augustine: *On the Spirit and the Letter*, chs. 24f[XIVf] & 36[XXI].

themselves are so useful and salutary to the doer of them, that **nobody could have life unless he kept them....**

1018. "The Holy Spirit, through Whom love is shed abroad in our hearts - Who is the fulfilment of the Law - is designated in the Gospel as 'the finger of God' [Luke 11:20]. Is it not because those very tablets of the Law were written by the finger of God, that the Spirit of God by Whom we are sanctified is also *the finger of God* - in order that, living by faith, we may do good works through love?
1019. "Who is not touched by this congruity - and, at the same time, diversity? For as fifty days are reckoned from the celebration of the Pass-over (which was ordered by Moses to be offered by slaying the typical lamb to signify indeed the future death of the Lord) to the day when Moses received the Law written on the tablets of stone by the finger of God [Exodus 31:18] - so in like manner from the death and resurrection of Him Who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, there were fifty complete days up to the time when the finger of God (that is, the Holy Spirit,) gathered together in one perfect company those who believed [Acts 2:1f]....
1020. "For this, 'you shall not commit adultery' [and] 'you shall not covet' and if there be any other Commandment - such, of course, as was written on those tablets - it is briefly comprehended...'you shall love your neighbour as yourself.' Love works no ill.... Therefore **love is the fulfilling of the Law** [Romans 13:9f].... **God's Law, therefore, is love.** 'To it, the carnal mind is not subject; neither indeed can it be' [Romans 8:7]....
1021. "What then is God's Law written by God Himself in the hearts of men, but the very presence of the Holy Spirit Who is 'the finger of God' - and by Whose presence is shed abroad in our hearts the love which is the fulfilling of the Law [Romans 13:10] and the goal [or *telos* alias the purpose] of the Commandment [First Timothy 1:5]? ... 'You shall not commit adultery'; 'you shall do no murder'; 'you shall not covet' [Exodus 20:13-17]; and what-soever other Commandment - is briefly comprehended in the saying 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' [Romans 13:9]!"
1022. In Augustine's anti-Pelagian writing *On Nature and Grace*, he insists<sup>221</sup> that 'the precepts of the Law are very good' if we use them lawfully [First Timothy 1:8].... 'And His Commandments are not grievous' [First John 5:3].... No man, therefore, who 'returns to the Lord his God' [*cf.* Hosea 6:1-7f] - as he is commanded, 'with all his heart and with all his soul' [Deuteronomy 30:3] - will find God's Commandment 'grievous'.... **'Love- is the fulfilling of the Law!'**" Romans 13:8.
1023. Finally, in Augustine's anti-Pelagian work *On Rebuke and Grace*, he asks:<sup>222</sup> "What then? Did not [the unfallen] Adam have the grace of God? Yes, truly, he had it largely - but of a different kind. He was placed in the midst of benefits which he had received from the goodness of his Creator. For he had not procured those benefits by his own deservings....
1024. "The first man had not that grace by which he should never will to be evil. But assuredly he had that in which if he willed to abide he would never be evil, and without which moreover he could not by free will be good - but which, nevertheless, by free will he could forsake.... If that man had not forsaken that assistance of his free will, he would always have been good.... This first is the grace which was given to the first Adam. But more powerful than this, is that in the Second Adam!"

<sup>221</sup> Augustine: *On Nature and Grace*, ch. 83.

<sup>222</sup> Augustine: *On Rebuke and Grace*, chs. 29f[XI].

### The Decalogical Law of God in Augustine's Anti-Manichaean Works

1025. In his *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean*, Augustine stresses<sup>223</sup> that "the Law when joined with grace is no longer the letter and the Law in the same sense as when by itself it kills by abounding sin.... Even thus, however, the Law is not evil.... The Law is holy, and the Commandment holy and just and good [Romans 7:12f]....
1026. "The same Law which was given by Moses, becomes - through Jesus Christ - grace and truth.... The Law is always good - whether it hurts those who are destitute of grace, or benefits those who are filled with grace.... Grace fits the mind for keeping the Law, as health fits the eyes for seeing the sun.... The mind, healed by the love of the spirit, dies not to the justice of the Law - but to the guilt and transgression which followed on the Law in the absence of grace....
1027. "Christ said that He came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets - but to fulfil them [Matthew 5:17].... Christ...speaks...of Commandments which date from the earliest times: 'you shall not murder' [Matthew 5:21f *cf.* Exodus 20:13]; 'you shall not commit adultery' [Matthew 5:27f *cf.* Exodus 20:14]; 'you shall not bear false witness' [Matthew 5:33 with 19:18 *cf.* Exodus 20:16]. These, it can be proved, were of old promulgated in the Word by Enoch and Seth and the other righteous men to whom the precepts were delivered [Ecclesiastes 7:29 *cf.* Hebrews 11:1-5f]....
1028. "If there was no pleasure in what is unlawful, no one would sin. To sin, is to indulge this pleasure; instead of restraining it. And by **'unlawful' is meant what is forbidden by the Law in which the order of nature is preserved...**[*viz.*] **the eternal Law which enjoins the preservation of natural order and forbids the breach of it...** The eternal Law - that is, the will of God the Creator of all - for the preservation of the natural order, permits the indulgence of the bodily appetite under the guidance of reason in sexual intercourse not for the gratification of passion but for the continuance of the race through the procreation of children."

### Decalogical Law of God in Augustine's *On the Gospel of St. John*

1029. In his work *On the Gospel of St. John*, Augustine states<sup>224</sup> that "when a man is born...he inherits sin from Adam.... Thereafter he grows, and begins to approach the years of reason; so that he may get to know the **Law of Nature** which everyone has had implanted in his heart [*cf.* Romans 1:16f & 2:14f]. 'What you would not have done to yourself - do not to another!' [*cf.* Matthew 7:12]....
1030. "Have you any desire to be robbed? Certainly not! See here, then, the Law in your heart. What you are unwilling to suffer - be unwilling to do! This Law also is transgressed by men. And here, then, we have the 'second day' of death [*cf.* Genesis 2:17f & 3:17-20f].
1031. "The Law was also divinely given through Moses.... Therein, it is said: 'you shall not murder'; 'you shall not commit adultery'; 'you shall not bear false witness'; 'honour your father and mother'; 'you shall not covet your neighbour's property' [Exodus 20:12-17 *cf.* Matthew 19:17f]. Here you have the written Law.... This is the 'third day' of death.
1032. "What remains? The Gospel also comes; the Kingdom of Heaven is preached; Christ is everywhere published. He threatens hell; He promises eternal life - and that also is despised. Men transgress the

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<sup>223</sup> Augustine: *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean*, XV:8 & XIX:1f & XXII:28f.

<sup>224</sup> Augustine: *On the Gospel of St. John*, Tractate XLIX:12f.

Gospel; and *this* is the fourth day of death.

1033. "Jesus says...even now: 'I am the resurrection and the life' [John 11:25].... Give ear, brethren! Give ear to what He says.... How many are there in this audience who are crushed down under the weighty mass of some sinful habit! Perhaps some are hearing me, to whom it may be said: 'do not be drunk with wine wherein is excess!'.... Some others it may be are hearing me - who are unclean and stained with lusts and crimes.... O Lord, raise them again! 'I am,' He says, 'the resurrection and the life.' The resurrection, *because* the life!"

### The Decalogical Law of God according to John Cassian

1034. John Cassian, Presbyter-Abbot of Marseilles (around 435 A.D.), rightly states<sup>225</sup> that "every man is tempted by his own lust. Then lust, when it has conceived, bears sin; and sin, when it is consummated, begets death [James 1:14f]. For the first Adam could not have fallen a victim to gluttony, unless he had had material food at hand and had used it wrongly....Adam also was tempted while he still retained the image of God unbroken - that is through gluttony, vainglory, pride; and not through those in which he was by his own fault entangled and involved after the transgression of the Commandment....
1035. "Gluttony, fornication, covetousness, anger, dejection, accidie, have a sort of connexion with each other and are so to speak linked together in a chain so that any excess of the one forms a starting point for the next.... Seven spirits are said to be worse than the first that went forth [Matthew 12:43f], for this reason.... Gluttony...opened the door to other passions; *viz.* to fornication, covetousness, anger, dejection, and pride....
1036. John Cassian then continues:<sup>226</sup> "Adam...was *not* deceived but, acquiescing in the wishes of her who was deceived, seems to have come to yield a consent that was deadly.... After the death of righteous Abel [Matthew 23:35], in order that the whole human race might not spring from a wicked fratricide, Seth was born in the place of his brother who was slain.... His offspring, following the example of their father's goodness, always remained separate from intercourse with and the society of their kindred descended from the wicked Cain [Genesis 5:4-30]....
1037. "The line which sprang from the seed of righteous Seth always mixed with its own kith and kin, and continued for a long while in the holiness of its fathers and ancestors, untouched by the blasphemies and the wickedness of an evil offspring.... Yet, after this, the sons of Seth who were the sons of God saw the daughters of those who were born of the line of Cain, and inflamed with the desire for their beauty took to themselves from them wives who taught their husbands the wickedness of their fathers and at once led them astray from their innate holiness and the single-mindedness of their forefathers.... They fell away from that true study of natural philosophy handed down to them by their ancestors, which the first man who forthwith traced out the study of all nature, could clearly attain to....
1038. "God at man's creation by nature implanted in him complete knowledge of the Law...according to the word of the Prophet who says 'He gave the Law to help them' [Isaiah 8:20 LXX *cf.* Ecclesiastes 7:29 & Romans 2:14f].... That the complete knowledge of the Law was implanted in man at his first creation, is clearly proved from this; *viz.* that we know that...**even before the flood all holy men observed the Commandments of the Law**....

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<sup>225</sup> Cassian: *Conference of Abbot Serapion*, in Cassian's *Conferences* 5:4 & 5:6 & 5:10 & 5:26.

<sup>226</sup> Cassian: *Second Conference of Abbot Serenus*, in *Conf.* 8:11 & 8:21-23.

1039. "For how could Abel, without the command of the Law, have known that he ought to offer to God a sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof [Genesis 4:4], unless he had been taught by the Law which was naturally implanted in him? ... How did Enoch learn how to 'walk with God' [Genesis 5:22]? ... Where had Shem and Japheth read: 'you shall not uncover the nakedness of your father!' - so that they went backwards and covered his shame [Genesis 9:23 *cf.* Leviticus 18:7]?"
1040. Cassian goes on:<sup>227</sup> "Which of the saints [whether antediluvian or postdiluvian Patriarchs] do we read of as **not having observed some Commandment of the Law** before the giving of the law [by Moses to the Israelites]? Which of them...did not fulfil this: 'you shall not make to yourself any graven image'? ... Which of them did not observe this: 'honour your father and your mother' - or what follows **in the Decalogue**: 'you shall do no murder'; 'you shall not commit adultery'; 'you shall not steal'; 'you shall not bear false witness'; 'you shall not covet'? ... They anticipated the Commandment; not only the Law, but even of the Gospel....
1041. "They had the sound and complete system of **natural laws implanted in them**. Yet the wicked, not content to avenge wrongs done to them with the even justice of the *lex talionis* [Exodus 21:22f.]...repaid a very slight touch with deadly kicks [Genesis 4:23 *cf.* 4:14].... We do not doubt that the compacting of flesh is formed from man's seed.... In the actual compacting of this body, a ministerial office alone must be attributed to men. But the chief part of its formation [is to be attributed] to God the Creator of all.
1042. "As David says: 'Your hands have made me and fashioned me' [Psalm 119:73]. And [as] the blessed Job [declares] - 'have You not milked me like milk, and curdled me like cheese? You have put me together with bones and sinews' [Job 10:10f]. And [as] the Lord [said] to Jeremiah [1:5] - 'before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.' But Ecclesiastes [12:7] very clearly and accurately gathers the nature of either substance [body and soul] and its beginning...as follows: 'before the dust returns to the Earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God Who gave it'.... This also is clearly implied in *that* breathing by God, through which Adam in the first instance received his life [Genesis 2:7f]....
1043. "The devil also...was created a spirit or an angel and good, and had no one as his Father but God his Maker. But when he had become puffed up by pride...he became a liar.... He abode not in the truth, but from the beginning, became a murderer both by bringing Adam into a state of mortality and by slaying Abel by the hand of his brother at his suggestion." Isaiah 14:14; John 8:44; First John 3:8-12.
1044. Finally, Cassian the Christian concludes:<sup>228</sup> "I delight in the Law of God after the inner man; but I see another law in my members opposing the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my body-parts.... With the mind I myself serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin [Romans 7:22-25].... The Creator...Himself declares that the fount and spring of sin flows...'from the heart - evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, *etc.* [Matthew 15:19]....
1045. "This Law, the Apostle also calls spiritual, saying: 'but we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin' [Romans 7:14].... This Law is spiritual which bids us eat in the sweat of our brow that 'true Bread Which comes down from Heaven' [Genesis 3:15-19f *cf.* John 6:33].... We were sold by Adam's fall and...ruinous transaction.... Adam...by eating of the forbidden tree...gave up his natural freedom!"

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<sup>227</sup> *Ib.*, 8:23-25.

<sup>228</sup> Cassian: *Third Conference of Abbot Theonas*, in *Confes.* 23:1 & 23:12.



### The Decalogical Law of God in Presbyter Leo the Great of Rome

1046. Leo the Great, Presbyter of Rome, *circa* 400-61 A.D., writes<sup>229</sup> that "even God's peculiar people Israel had well-nigh entirely fallen away from the enactments of the Law" right before the time of the incarnation of the Second Adam. "When the wise men had returned to their own land..., Herod's madness blazes out into fruitless schemes. He orders all the little ones in Bethlehem to be slain.... But that which the wicked king removes from the World, Christ admits to Heaven...."
1047. "The teaching of the Law, dearly beloved, imparts great authority to the precepts of the Gospel - seeing that certain things are transferred from the old ordinances to the new.... By the very devotions of the Church, it is shown that the Lord Jesus Christ 'came not to destroy but to fulfil the Law' [Matthew 5:17]...."
1048. "This peerless Faith, dearly-beloved - this Truth proclaimed throughout all ages - is opposed by the devilish blasphemies of the Manichaeans, who to murder the souls of the deceived have woven a deadly tissue of wicked doctrine out of impious and forged lies.... Those opponents of the Truth of which we speak, have **rejected the Law that was given through Moses**, and the divinely-inspired utterance of the Prophets."

### God's Law veiled from Pope Gregory the Great to Thomas Aquinas

1049. With Leo, one approaches the *terminus ad quem* of the Patristic Period and the start of the mediaeval Dark Ages. The latter were reached in earnest - in the days of Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome (540-604 A.D.). Gregory was the first Presbyter of Rome ever to be called 'Sole Pope' alias 'Universal Father.' He himself firmly repudiated those titles, regarding them as marks of the Antichrist. Consult his *Epistles* IV:72-83 & VII:25-30. Yet all of his successors eagerly appropriated those names.
1050. Increasingly, the laws of the Pope were gradually elevated toward supremacy. Pope Gregory VII alias Hildebrand in 1073 elevated himself even above the Law of God Himself. Indeed, Pope Innocent III in 1215 not only proclaimed transubstantiation, and demanded the worship of a piece of bread alleged to be Christ - as a new yet essential Roman Doctrine. He even tried to inflict his will over England's *Magna Carta* (with its appeal to the Common Law based upon Holy Scripture). Daniel 7:25 and Second Thessalonians 2:4f.
1051. One ray of light, relatively speaking, was Thomas Aquinas (1224-74). It is true that also Thomas misconstrued the right relationship between Nature and Scripture; and of the character of God's image in man. Neither did he rightly recognize the existence of private property in human society before the fall; nor appreciate the immediate ensoulment of both male and female humans already at conception. Nevertheless, in many other respects, Thomas did indeed maintain a high regard for God's laws and revelations.
1052. Dr. Walter Farrell of the Thomistic Institute states<sup>230</sup> that "Thomas lays down some fundamental principles that give his whole treatment a unity.... The first principle he insists on, is that nothing that was natural to man was lost by man's sin.... Thomas points out that the cause of the original perfection of man, was his original justice. That is, man was created in sanctifying grace with his soul completely

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<sup>229</sup> Leo the Great: *Sermon XXXIII* (1f) and *Sermon XXXI* (3) and *Sermon XVII* (1) and *Sermon XXXIV* (IV).

<sup>230</sup> W. Farrell: *A Companion to the Summa [of Thomas Aquinas]*, New York: Sheed & Ward, 1941, I pp. 348f & 357f.

subject to God.... Original justice and original perfection went hand in hand in Adam....

1053. "Eve was given to Adam as a helper, particularly in the work of generation. There would, of course, have been generation in the Garden of Eden. Thomas thinks this is true beyond all doubt.... Thomas says that it is as much a part of man's nature to live the domestic life and have children, as it is to eat. So much so, that in the Garden of Eden there would have been no sterility; no perpetual virginity. Everyone would have married.... There would have been children born in those days, and born in exactly the same way as they are today. For, from the very beginning, marriage has been a holy thing.... There would have been children.... There would have been work.... This work, whether of Adam or of Eve, would have been something like the born mother's joy in her children."
1054. Of course, this changed quite dramatically - immediately after the fall. Thomas says:<sup>231</sup> "The sinner is much worse than a wild animal, and does much more damage." Farrell explains<sup>232</sup> that "Thomas will allow the execution of criminals.... The criminal is a corrupt member of the social body, to be cut off for the health of the whole - as a gangrenous foot of a diabetic is amputated, to save his whole body...."
1055. "The central and fundamental truth has been the sacredness of human life.... This fundamental truth is so seriously challenged today.... There is the mercy-killing calculated to relieve a man of his suffering.... The argument even includes an unborn child, so that the mother's life be saved. All this is murder.... Murder is its hideous, loathsome self - no matter what name we give it. Society can kill in self-defence...."
1056. "The minimum demands of social fitness, are stated in the Ten Commandments. It is most fitting that those commands should have been underscored by the finger of God.... Without them we cannot hope for life either in the kingdom of man, or in the Kingdom of God.... All of the Ten Commandments are really commands of justice.... The Ten Commandments are the least statement of the...principles of the Natural Law...."
1057. "There is one particularly noteworthy characteristic of this Law, which makes a fitting conclusion to St. Thomas' tract on justice.... **There is no higher rule of human action, than the Law of God**.... Still more simply, God is God and man is man even in the business of legislation."

### **Martin Luther's *Thesaurus on the Decalogical Law of God***

1058. The Protestant Reformer Dr. Martin Luther rightly reestablished the righteousness of God in Christ as the sole ground of a sinner's justification. Yet, from fear of lapsing into so-called 'works-righteousness' he is somewhat weak on the subject of sanctification - and especially on the place of the Law of God therein. Witness, for instance, his erroneous assessment of the Epistle of James (including also its chapters 1:25 & 2:6-13 & 4:1-12).
1059. Yet in several places Luther deviates from the Decalogue - *viz.* in his toleration of images; in his dispensationalistic views anent the nature of the weekly sabbath; in his advocacy of infanticide where babies are severely deformed; and in his corresponding misnumbering of most Commandments ('rapturing' the Second, misidentifying the Third through the Ninth, and even subdividing the Tenth into two allegedly-different Commandments).

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<sup>231</sup> *Ib.*, III, p. 196.

<sup>232</sup> *Ib.*, III, pp. 197-200 & 348-50.

1060. These matters needed decisive correction by Calvin and Calvinism - as too does Modern Evangelicalism, which is basically Lutheran rather than Calvinistic. Nevertheless, also Martin Luther himself - though much less so than the so-called 'Lutheranism' after him - clearly stressed the importance of the Decalogue in the life of humanity. Thus he (quite rightly) opposed abortion - and also insisted on the death penalty for rape.
1061. In his *Thesaurus*, Luther explains<sup>233</sup> that "if Adam had remained in the image of God - he would have raised children in whom there would have been no evil desires.... Even before the fall, there was rule and government among men. That is now the very first Commandment.... You may not say that the first Commandment has been abrogated! After all, does one not need a God? So too, regarding: you shall not commit adultery, murder, theft, *etc.*
1062. "This is not just the Mosaic Law, but also the Law of Nature. Romans 1.... 'You shall not murder/commit adultery/steal *etc.*' is not just Mosaic Law but also Natural Law written in the heart of every man. This is taught by St. Paul, Romans 2[:14f]; Christ, Matthew 7[:12]; and so too Paul, Romans 13[:8f].... Natural Law too teaches: you must love your neighbour as yourself.... The Natural Law is never comprehended so fine and orderly, as precisely in the Ten Commandments of Moses....
1063. "The Ten Commandments obligate the Heathen...to the extent to which they are written in their hearts by nature.... However, God gave the Jews also a written Law - that is, the abundant Ten Commandments, which are nothing other than the Law of Nature written in the heart by nature." The *Thesaurus* also contains Luther's ten-page *Refutation of the Antinomians*, and his three-page tract *On the Sophists' Doctrine of God's Commandments*.<sup>234</sup>

### The Decalogical Law of God in Luther's early treatises

1064. In his 1520 *Treatise on Good Works*, Luther gives an exposition of the Ten Commandments - running to almost a hundred pages. It begins:<sup>235</sup> "We ought first to know that there are no good works except those which God has commanded.... Therefore, whoever wishes to know and to do good works - needs nothing else than to know God's Commandments.
1065. "Thus Christ says, Matthew 19, 'if you wish to enter into life - keep the Commandments!' And when the young man asks Him, Matthew 19, what he should do that he may inherit eternal life - Christ set before him naught else but the Ten Commandments.... This is the work of the First Commandment, which commands: 'you shall have no other gods'.... The second work...is the work of the Second Commandment, that we shall honour God's Name and not take it in vain.... Now follows the Third Commandment: 'hallow the rest day'....
1066. "The Second Table follows. 'You shall honour your father and your mother'.... The passions of anger and revenge of which the Fifth Commandment says 'you shall not murder'...includes many and dispels many vices.... 'You shall not commit adultery'.... 'You shall not steal'.... 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour'.... The last two Commandments (which forbid evil desires of the body for pleasure, and for temporal god)...are drawn together by St. Paul into one, Romans 7."
1067. Says Luther's 1520 *Brief Explanation of the Ten Commandments, The Creeds, and the Lord's*

<sup>233</sup> M. Luther: *Thesaurus* [1570], Luedenscheid: Johann Berg, 1983 rep., pp. 73 & 100f & 103.

<sup>234</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 108A-112B.

<sup>235</sup> M. Luther: *Works*, Philadelphia: Holman, I pp. 184,187,194,204,221f,250,275,278,281,285.

*Prayer*.<sup>236</sup> "The **ordinary** Christian...is **required** to learn and **know** the Ten Commandments; the [Apostles'] Creed; the Lord's Prayer. This has not come to pass without **God's special ordering**.... The Ten Commandments contain...all the teaching that is needful for man's life.... If a man desires to keep them, he has good works for every hour of his life.... Knowing this, we must learn next **whence** we shall get the power to lead good lives and to keep the Commandments." From the Gospel; in the *Creed*!

1068. In Luther's 1523 treatise *Secular Authority: To What Extent it Should Be Obeyed*, he explains: "We must firmly establish secular law and the sword.... The passages which establish this, are the following: Romans 13, 'let every soul be subject to power and authority'.... Also First Peter 2, 'be subject to every kind of human ordinance, whether to the King as supreme or to the Governors as to those sent by him for the punishing of the evil and for the reward of the good.'
1069. "**This penal law existed from the beginning of the World**. For when Cain slew his brother, he was in...great terror of being in turn killed Genesis 4:14f].... He would not have had this fear, if he had not seen and heard from Adam that **murderers should be slain**. Moreover, God re-established and confirmed it after the Flood in unmistakable terms when He said: 'whoso-ever sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed by man' [Genesis 9:6]....
1070. "Afterward it was also confirmed by the Law of Moses. Exodus 21:14, 'if a man presumptuously kill, you shall take him from My altar that he may die.' And again, in the same place [Exodus 21:23f]: 'a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a foot for a foot, a hand for a hand, a wound for a wound, a bruise for a bruise.' Christ also confirms it, when He [Matthew 26:52] says to Peter in the garden, 'he who takes up the sword shall perish by the sword' - which is to be interpreted like Genesis 9, 'whosoever sheds man's blood' *etc.* Doubtless Christ refers in these words to that passage, and incorporates and confirms it in them."<sup>237</sup>

### The Decalogical Law of God in Luther's later works

1071. In his 1539 work *On the Councils and the Churches*, Luther gives a most important analysis of the Council of Jerusalem alias the First General Assembly of the Christian Church at Acts 15:28 - anent its decisions that no extra burden be laid upon the Gentile Christians other than the prohibitions against idolatry and bloodshed and stranglings and fornication. Here, Luther says in his *On the Councils and the Churches*:<sup>238</sup> "**The Ten Commandments must remain**.... If a burden is no more a burden, it is good to bear.... **It is good to keep, like the Ten Commandments...grown out of God's Law.**"
1072. Luther then turns against his old friend and earlier follower, John Agricola of Eisleben - who, having demeaned the Law, now taught that repentance was possible only through the knowledge of the goodness of God revealed in the Gospel. Explains Luther: "That is what the Antinomians too are doing today! They are preaching finely and...with real seriousness about Christ's grace, the forgiveness of sins, and the other things that can be said concerning redemption.... They will not speak to the people about...sanctification, *i.e.*, the new life in Christ. For they think that they ought not to terrify people or disturb them, but always to preach in a comforting way about grace and the forgiveness of sins in Christ.
1073. "They utterly avoid such words as these: 'Listen! You want to be a Christian - and yet remain an

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<sup>236</sup> *Ib.*, II pp. 354 & 367

<sup>237</sup> *Ib.*, III, pp. 231f.

<sup>238</sup> *Ib.*, V pp. 195 & 233f & 266f & 285f.

adulterer, fornicator, drunken swine, proud, covetous, a usurer, envious, revengeful, malicious!' On the contrary, they say: 'Listen! Though you are an adulterer, a fornicator, a miser, or any other kind of sinner - only believe, and you will be saved and need not fear the Law. Christ has fulfilled it all!'

1074. "Tell me, is that not...taking away Christ and bringing Him to nought at the same time that He is most highly preached? It is saying Yes and No.... They are fine Easter preachers, but shamefully poor Pentecost preachers. For they preach nothing concerning sanctification...but preach only about redemption by Christ.... Whosoever, then, does not cease from sinning, but continues in his former wicked life - must have another Christ from the Antinomians. For the real Christ is not there.... We do not remain in sin, but can and **should lead a new life in good works of all kinds - such as the Ten Commandments, or Two Tables of Moses, require....**
1075. "The Holy Spirit gives people faith in Christ, according to Acts fifteen.... He makes heart, soul, body, works and manner of life new - **and writes God's Commandments not on tablets of stone but on hearts of flesh according to Second Corinthians three....** They willingly obey parents and overlords; conduct themselves peacefully and humbly; are not wrathful or revengeful or malicious; nor lewd adulterers.... They do not lie, deceive, backbite - but are kind, truthful, faithful and reliable and whatever else God's Commandments require.... Those who are not of this sort, ought not to count themselves Christians - and they ought not to be comforted as one comforts Christians with much talk about the forgiveness of sins and the grace of Christ as the Antinomians do!
1076. "For they, rejecting and not understanding the Ten Commandments, preach much about the grace of Christ instead. They strengthen and comfort those who remain in sins - telling them that they should not fear sins, or be terrified at them, since through Christ these are all done away.... They really do not understand the Faith and Christ aright, and abolish Him even as they preach Him. For how can a man preach rightly about the works of the Holy Ghost in the First Table and speak about comfort, grace, forgiveness of sins - if he neither heeds nor practises the works of the Holy Ghost in the Second Table which he can understand and experience while he has never attempted or experienced those of the First Table?
1077. "Therefore it is certain that they neither have nor understand either Christ or the Holy Ghost, and their talk is mere foam on their tongues, and they...teach Christ - and destroy Him by teaching Him.... When the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Catechism are openly used - there, be sure, that a holy Christian people is.... The Creed and Ten Commandments and God's Word...are all holy possessions whereby the Holy Ghost makes holy the holy people of Christ."
1078. We conclude with Luther's 1545 *Introduction to the Old Testament*. There, he insists<sup>239</sup> that "Moses conducts and performs his office.... In order to put Nature to the very utmost shame, he gives laws that speak of natural and true sins.... **The Ten Commandments cannot be done away.** For sins against the Ten Commandments would be sin, even though...they were not known - just as the unbelief of the Heathen is sin, even though they do not know or think that it is sin.... When Christ comes, the law ceases - especially the Levitical law.... The Ten Commandments do not cease in the sense that they are no longer to be kept or fulfilled."

### Calvin on the Decalogical Law of God before the Noachic Flood

1079. In John Calvin, that greatest of all Church Reformers, we find the place of the Ten Commandments -

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<sup>239</sup> *Ib.*, VI pp. 375f.

as the rule of gratitude in the life of the Christian - rightly assessed. Believing in its 'threefold use' - the pedagogical, the political, and the normative<sup>240</sup> - he insisted, in his 1540 Strassburg *Liturgy of the Word*,<sup>241</sup> that the **Decalogue be read to or sung by Christian congregations each week in public worship every Lord's Day.**

1080. For to Calvin, the Decalogue was God's Law for all people of all religions and for all time. As he points out<sup>242</sup> in his *Commentary on Genesis* (1:26), "Paul says that we are transformed into the image of God by the Gospel. And, according to him, spiritual regeneration is nothing else than the restoration of the same image. Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:23.... He made this image to consist in **'righteousness and true holiness**....
1081. "God intends the human race to be multiplied by generation indeed - but not, as in brute animals, by promiscuous intercourse.... Beginning at holy and chaste marriage, he proceeds to speak of the production of offspring [Genesis 1:28].... That pure and lawful method of increase, which God ordained from the beginning, remains firm. This is that **Law of Nature** which common sense declares to be inviolable....
1082. "Men were created to **employ themselves in some work** [the 'Puritan Work Ethic'], and not to lie down in inactivity and idleness.... Let him who possesses a field, so partake of its yearly fruits that he may not suffer the ground to be injured by his negligence. But let him endeavour - to hand it down to posterity as he received it, or even better cultivated....
1083. "Man was the governor of the World.... **A Law is imposed upon him, in token of his subjection.... God, from the beginning, imposed a Law upon man** for the purpose of **maintaining the right due to Himself**.... A precept was given to man, whence he might know that God ruled over him.... What I have before said...**is to be recalled to memory frequently** - namely that our life will then be rightly ordered, if we obey God and if His will be the regulator of all our affections." Genesis 2:15f.

### Calvin on the Decalogical Law of God between the Flood and Sinai

1084. The fall and the flood brought no change to man's obligations to observe the Law of God. As Calvin points out<sup>243</sup> in his comment on Genesis 9:1-12, "God blessed Noah and his sons.
1085. "He does not simply mean that the favour of fruitfulness was restored to them, but that at the same time the design of God concerning the new restitution of the World was revealed unto them.... He not only renews the World by the same Word by which He before created it, but He directs His Word to men in order that they may recover the lawful use of marriage - may know that the care of producing offspring is pleasing to Himself....
1086. "Now, **we must firmly retain the liberty given us by the Lord which He designed to be recorded as on public tables [or tablets]. For by this Word, He addresses all the posterity of Noah** - and renders His gift **common to all ages**....

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<sup>240</sup> J. Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II:6-12.

<sup>241</sup> This is conceded even by the antinomianizing W.D. Maxwell in his Scoto-Catholic *Outline of Christian Worship*, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1958 ed., pp. 114f & 144-49.

<sup>242</sup> J. Calvin: *Commentaries upon the First Book of Moses called Genesis*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948 ed., I pp. 94 & 98 & 125f.

<sup>243</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 289-98.

1087. "To swallow down living flesh, men betray their brutality by eating blood.... We must remember that this restriction was part of the old Law.... God so highly estimates our life, that He will not suffer murder to go unavenged [Genesis 9:5f cf. Acts 15:20-29 & 16:4f & 21:24f]....
1088. "**They are deceived...who think a political law simply for the punishment of homicides is here intended....** I do not deny that the punishment which the laws ordain and which the judges execute are founded on this divine sentence, but I say the words [Genesis 9:5f] are more comprehensive....
1089. "God sends executioners from other quarters.... He even arms the magistrate with the sword for the avenging of slaughter, in order that the blood of men may not be shed with impunity....
1090. "He again turns his discourse to **Noah and his sons, exhorting them to the propagation of offspring. As if He would say: 'you see that I am intent upon cherishing and preserving mankind. Do you therefore also attend to it!' At the same time, in commending to them the preservation of seed, **He deters them from murder and from [other] unjust acts**....**
1091. "God, as in a matter of present concern, makes a covenant with Noah and his family.... **He transmits His covenant to posterity - not only so that, as by continual succession, the effect may reach to other ages**, but so that they who should afterwards be born might also apprehend this testimony by faith, and might conclude that the same thing which had been promised to the sons of Noah was promised unto them.... The ignorance of the Anabaptists may be refuted, who deny that the covenant of God is common to infants.... **God promises salvation to a thousand generations" (alias for 20 000+ years)!**

### Calvin on the Decalogical Law of God among Christians after Calvary

1092. In Calvin's 1555f *Sermons on Deuteronomy* he spends<sup>244</sup> some 740 pages - and in his 1563 *Harmony of the Pentateuch* some 856 pages<sup>245</sup> - explaining and applying every one of the Ten Commandments. There, he does so also for the pre-Mosaic and the post-Mosaic periods of the history of the World - but especially as the rule of gratitude to be observed today by members of the Christian Church.
1093. Thus, anent the Sabbath, he comments<sup>246</sup> on Exodus 20:11 that "the hallowing of the Sabbath was **prior** to the Law [of Moses].... That they were forbidden to gather the manna on the seventh day [Exodus 16:28f], seems to have had its origin from a wellknown and received custom.... It is not credible that the observance of the Sabbath was omitted when God revealed the rite of sacrifice to the holy Patriarchs [Genesis 4:3f cf. 2:1-3]. But what in the depravity of human nature was altogether extinct among heathen nations, and almost obsolete with the race of Abraham, God renewed in His Law."
1094. Also as regards the Sixth Commandment ('you shall not murder!'), Calvin remarks:<sup>247</sup> "The sum of this Commandment is that we should not unjustly do violence to anyone.... He elsewhere deters men from murder...by asserting that thus His image is violated (Genesis 9:6).... He would still have us consider

<sup>244</sup> J. Calvin: *The Sermons of Mr. John Calvin upon the Fifth Book of Moses called Deuteronomy*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987 rep., pp. 182-922.

<sup>245</sup> J. Calvin: *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses Arranged in the Form of a Harmony*, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1948 ed., I pp. 417-512; II pp. 1-472; III 1-289

<sup>246</sup> *Ib.*, II pp. 439f.

<sup>247</sup> *Ib.*, III pp. 20f & 32.

what might **naturally** occur to everybody's mind.... **For He does not...frame a new law....** The Patriarchs...had abstained from blood.... Its prohibition had no reference to the First Table [of the Decalogue, but to the Second].... When the Apostles abrogated the ceremonial law, they did not dare to allow the free eating of blood.... Acts 15:20. Therefore, lest such a matter...should cause deadly schisms in the churches - they commanded the Gentiles not to eat of blood."

1095. The above-mentioned Genesis 9:6 can also be translated: 'by mankind shall the blood be shed of him who sheds the blood of a human being **within** a human being' - thus prescribing the **death penalty** also against **abortionists**. Calvin thus rightly observes<sup>248</sup> that it is "**a capital crime to put an end to the foetus** [Exodus 21:22f].... For the *foetus*, though enclosed in the womb of its mother, is already a human being (*homo*).... It is...a monstrous crime to rob it of the life which it has not yet begun to enjoy....
1096. "It seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house, than in a field - because a man's house is his place of most secure refuge [*cf.* Exodus 22:2-7 & 22:26-31 and Deuteronomy 21:1f & 23:15-24 & 24:6f]. It ought surely to be deemed **more atrocious to destroy a foetus in the womb before it has come to light**.... It would be a **crime punishable with death not only when the mother died from the effects of the abortion, but also if the infant should be killed**: whether it should die from the wound abortively or...after its birth."

### The Decalogue in Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion

1097. It needs to be noted that in the final and definitive edition of his chief work - *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* - Calvin exhorts the Decalogue to be observed by all mankind and especially by Christ's Church. There he states<sup>249</sup> that "the many noble faculties with which the human mind is endued, proclaim that something divine is engraven on it.... We have ideas of **rectitude, justice, and honesty**.... The end of regeneration is to form us anew in the image of God.... The new man is renewed after the image of Him Who created him (Colossians 3:10).... 'Put on the new man which is created' (Ephesians 4:24).... Paul comprehends under this renovation...knowledge and...**true righteousness and holiness**.... At the beginning, the image of God was manifested by...rectitude of heart....
1098. "We now see how Christ is the most perfect image of God - into which we are so renewed as to bear the image of God in knowledge, purity, righteousness and true holiness.... That the whole matter may be made clearer, let us take a succinct view of the office and use of the Moral Law. Now this office and use seems to me to consist of three parts.
1099. "First, by exhibiting the righteousness of God - in other words, the righteousness which alone is acceptable to God - it admonishes everyone of his own unrighteousness." This is the 'paedagogical use' of the Law - in that, like a paedagogue alias a schoolteacher, the Law leads us to Christ the Second Adam Who alone perfectly fulfilled it.
1100. "The second office of the Law is, by means of its fearful denunciations and the consequent dread of punishment, to curb those who unless forced have no regard for rectitude and justice." This is the 'political use' of the Law - its judicial function even today. "Such persons are curbed.... It is true, they are not on this account either better or more righteous in the sight of God.... The more they restrain

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<sup>248</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 41f

<sup>249</sup> J. Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I:15:2-4 & II:7:6f,10,12-14.



themselves, the more they are inflamed.... They thoroughly detest the Law itself, and execrate the Lawgiver.... Nevertheless, this forced and extorted righteousness is necessary for the good of society....

1101. "The third use of the Law (being **also the principal use** and more closely connected with its proper end) has respect to believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already flourishes and reigns.... **It is the best instrument for enabling them daily to learn with greater truth and certainty what that will of the Lord is which they aspire to follow....**
1102. "Some unskilful persons [*viz.* the **Antinomians**]...boldly discard the whole Law of Moses, and do away with both its Tables - imagining it unchristian to adhere to a doctrine which contains the ministration of death.... It cannot be denied that it contains a perfect pattern of righteousness.... It must be **impious** to discard it.... When the Lord declares that He came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil (Matthew 5:17); that until Heaven and Earth pass away, not one jot or tittle shall remain unfulfilled - He shows that His advent was not to derogate in any degree from the observance of the Law.... The very end of His coming, was to remedy the transgression of the Law. Therefore the doctrine of the Law has not been infringed by Christ, but remains - so that...it may fit and prepare us for every good work.

### **The Exposition of the Moral Law in Calvin's *Institutes***

1103. Finally, Calvin purports<sup>250</sup> "to introduce the **Ten Commandments** of the Law.... In this way, it will be made more clear that **the worship which God originally prescribed is still in force....** The very things contained in the two tables are in a manner dictated to us by that internal law [Romans 2:14f] which...is in a manner written and stamped on every heart."
1104. Thereafter, Calvin enumerates: "First Commandment - I am the Lord your God Who brought you out...of the house of bondage: you shall have no other gods.... Second Commandment - you shall not make for yourself any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven...: you shall not bow yourself down to them.... Third Commandment - you shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.... Fourth Commandment - remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.... Fifth Commandment - honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.... Sixth Commandment - you shall not murder.... Seventh Commandment - you shall not commit adultery.... Eighth Commandment - you shall not steal.... Ninth Commandment - you shall not bear false witness [alias tell untruths].... Tenth Commandment - you shall not covet...anything that is your neighbour's."
1105. On the above-mentioned Sixth Commandment Calvin states<sup>251</sup> that "Scripture notes a twofold equity on which this Commandment is founded. Man is both the image of God, and our flesh. Therefore, if we would not violate the image of God - we must hold the person of man sacred. If we would not divest ourselves of humanity, we must cherish our own flesh.... To be clear of the crime of murder, it is not enough to refrain from shedding man's blood. If in act you perpetrate; if in endeavour you plot; if in wish and design you conceive what is adverse to another's safety - you have the guilt of murder. On the other hand, if you do not according to your means and opportunity study to defend his safety - by that inhumanity, you violate the Law!"
1106. Calvin's reference to the good Samaritan shows the need to love both mankind in general - and our

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<sup>250</sup> *Ib.*, II:8:1,13,17,22,28,39,35,39,41,45,47,49.

<sup>251</sup> *Ib.* II:8:40.

own relatives, including our unborn babies, in particular. Explains the Reformer:<sup>252</sup> "Our Saviour having shown in the parable of the Samaritan (Luke 10:36) that the term *neighbour* comprehends the most remote stranger - there is no reason for limiting the precept of love to our own connections. I deny not that the closer the relation, the more frequent our offices of kindness should be. For the condition of humanity requires that there be more duties in common between those who are more nearly connected by the ties of relationship....

1107. "But I say that the whole human race, without exception, are to be embraced with one feeling of charity.... Therefore, if we would hold the true course in love, our first step must be to turn our eyes not to man (the sight of whom might oftener produce hatred than love) but to God - Who requires that the love which we bear to Him be diffused among all mankind.... Our fundamental principle must ever be - let a man be what he may, he is still to be loved; because God is loved!"

### **The Law of God according to the Calvinistic *Westminster Confession***

1108. The A.D. 1643f Calvinistic *Westminster Standards* of the Presbyterian Church rightly points out that the Bible not only condemns murder, but also everything which can lead to murder - things such as hatred and unrighteous anger. In addition, add the *Standards*, the Bible also enjoins the preservation of all human life (including that of the very young) - and whatever leads to such preservation. Indeed, both explicitly and implicitly, this also covers the need to preserve all **prenatal** human life - and to punish appropriately the unrighteous prenatal killing of all unborn and defenceless little people. Exodus 21:22-25; Jeremiah 1:5; Acts 2:38f; Romans 6:1-4f.
1109. The *Westminster Standards*, and specifically its *Confession*, are not original in their statements about God's Law. For Westminster goes right back to the Early Church Fathers, and indeed especially even to Holy Scripture itself (as the very basis of what those Early Church Fathers believed).
1110. Correctly, the *Westminster Confession* states<sup>253</sup> that "God gave to Adam a Law, as a covenant of works - by which He bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it. Genesis 1:26f; Romans 2:14f; 5:12,19.... This Law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai in Ten Commandments. [Exodus 20:1-17;] James 1:25; 2:8-12; Romans 13:8f; Exodus 34:1....
1111. "The Moral Law doth for every bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof [Romans 13:8-10; Ephesians 6:2; First John 2:3-8].... Neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve - but much strengthen - this obligation [Matthew 5:17-19; James 2:8; Romans 3:21].... Neither are the forementioned uses of the Law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it - the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the Law requireth to be done. Galatians 3:21; Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33."

### **The Law of God according to the *Westminster Larger Catechism***

1112. It is very significant that fully 45 of the 107 'Questions' and 'Answers' in the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* - traditionally used to prepare for "catechising such as are of weaker capacity"<sup>254</sup> for

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<sup>252</sup> *Ib.*, II:8:55.

<sup>253</sup> *West. Conf.*, 19:1-7.

<sup>254</sup> *The Shorter Catechism*, in *The Subordinate Standards and Other Authoritative Documents of the Free Church*

admission to the Lord's Supper - concern God's Moral Law.<sup>255</sup> Indeed, those Ten Commandments are even listed *seriatim* right after the last Question and Answer (107) in the *Shorter Catechism*.<sup>256</sup> In the *Westminster Larger Catechism* - "for catechising such as have made some proficiency in the knowledge of the grounds of religion"<sup>257</sup> - fully 62 of its 196 'Questions' and 'Answers' relate to the Decalogue.<sup>258</sup>

1113. Now the Sixth Commandment ("you shall not murder!"), states the *Westminster Larger Catechism*,<sup>259</sup> "forbids the unjust taking of all human life (and discourages all thoughts and actions which lead to this)." Negatively, declares the *Catechism*, the Commandment forbids "all taking away the life of ourselves (Acts 16:28) or of others (Genesis 9:6) - except in case of publick justice (Numbers 35:31-33), lawful war (Jeremiah 48:10 & Deuteronomy 20:1-20), or necessary defence (Exodus 22:2-3)."
1114. It forbids all "neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life. Matthew 25:42f; James 2:15f; Ecclesiastes 6:1f." It also forbids "striking [and] wounding (Numbers 35:16-21) and what-soever else tends to the destruction of the life of any. Exodus 21:18-36."
1115. Observe that the *Westminster Standards*, precisely while dealing with the Sixth Commandment ('you shall not murder!'), cite "Exodus 21:18-36." This is striking. For part of that passage, *viz.* Exodus 21:22-25, includes a discussion of (even accidentally) hurting or killing unborn tiny human beings.
1116. However, the Sixth Commandment ("you shall not murder!") not only negatively forbids certain attitudes and actions. It also positively **enjoins** the lawful preservation of all human life (and encourages all thoughts and actions which lead to this).
1117. Positively, declares the *Westminster Larger Catechism*,<sup>260</sup> this Commandment enjoins "all careful studies and lawful endeavours to preserve the life of ourselves (Ephesians 5:28f) and others (First Kings 18:4)." This is to be achieved "by resisting all thoughts and purposes (Jeremiah 36:15f & Acts 23:12-27), subduing all passions (Ephesians 4:25), and avoiding all occasions (Second Samuel 2:22 & Deuteronomy 22:8), temptations (Matthew 4:6f & Proverbs 1:10-16), and practices which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any (First Samuel 24:12 & 26:9-11 & Genesis 37:21f)."
1118. Men are thus required lawfully to preserve human life, and to make a "just defence thereof against violence. Psalm 82:4; Proverbs 24:11f; First Samuel 14:45." It also requires "protecting and defending the innocent. First Thessalonians 5:14; Job 31:19f; Matthew 25:35f; Proverbs 31:8f." Thus the *Westminster Larger Catechism* would condemn King Herod's "slaughter of the innocents" - such as those like the baby Jesus, by Whom wicked Herod felt threatened (Matthew 1:18-21 & 2:16-20). Nor does Westminster leave room for illicit abortion - alias the unjust prenatal destruction of unwanted babies.

### ***Westminster Confession: God's Law to be embraced by all nations***

1119. However, the *Westminster Standards* not only oppose all ongoing transgressions of God's Moral Law.

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*of Scotland*, Edinburgh: Free Church Offices, 1933, p. 224.

<sup>255</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 233-84 (QQ. 40-85).

<sup>256</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 248f.

<sup>257</sup> *Ib.*, p. 102.

<sup>258</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 140-94 (QQ. 91-153).

<sup>259</sup> *West. Larg. Cat.*, Q. & A. 136

<sup>260</sup> *West. Larg. Cat.*, Q. & A. 135..

They also require and predict that, by the Almighty power of the poured-out Spirit of Christ the only-begotten Son of God the Father, the Law-abiding Christian Church will yet become increasingly more sanctified - and continue to expand internationally until the whole Earth is filled with the glory of the knowledge of Jehovah like the waters cover the sea. Isaiah 2:2-21 & 11:1-9f and Habakkuk 2:14-20 and Zechariah 9:9f & 14:4-16f *cf.* Matthew 6:9f & 28:19f and Revelation 5:9f & 15:4 & 21:24f.

1120. For the *Westminster Confession* insists<sup>261</sup> that Christ keeps on working within His children - "effectively persuading them by His Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit." Thus He enables them increasingly to keep on "**overcoming all their enemies** by His almighty power and wisdom in such manner and ways as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation. Romans 9:14f; First Corinthians 15:25f; Malachi 4:2f; Colossians 2:15."
1121. There is also a "general equity" (*viz.* the Decalogue itself) even within the "judicial laws" of Ancient Israel. Thus, God still continues to "require" all peoples and even "the state" or the political government of each and every nation - and even increasingly so - to live by that "general equity.... Exodus chapter 21. Exodus 22:1 to the 20th verse. Genesis 49:10. First Peter 2:13f. Matthew 5:17.... First Corinthians 9:8f."<sup>262</sup>
1122. For: "Neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but **much strengthen** this **obligation**.... Matthew 5:17-19; James 2:8; Romans 3:31." For: "Neither are the forementioned uses of the Law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the Law **requireth** to be done. Galatians 3:21; Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33."<sup>263</sup>
1123. Now the *Westminster Confession* next proceeds on to show<sup>264</sup> that "under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is **further enlarged**...in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace and in **fuller communications** of the free Spirit of God.... Galatians 5:1; Acts 15:10f; Second Corinthians 3:13-18.... The end of Christian liberty...is that, **being delivered out of the hands of our enemies**, we might serve the Lord without fear in holiness and **righteousness** before Him all the days of our life. Galatians 5:13; First Peter 2:16; Second Peter 2:19; John 8:34; Luke 1:74f....
1124. "They who upon pretence of Christian liberty shall oppose any lawful power or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God. And for their publishing of such opinions or maintaining of such practices as are **contrary to the light of nature** or **the known principles of Christianity**...or such erroneous opinions or practices as either in their own nature or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church - they may lawfully be called to account and proceeded against by the censures of the Church and by the power of the civil magistrate.... Romans 13:1-8; 1:32; First Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 1:10-13; Deuteronomy 13:6-12; Ezra 7:23-28; Revelation 17:12-17; Nehemiah 13:15-30; Second Kings 23:5-21; Second Chronicles 34:33; 15:12-16; Daniel 3:29; First Timothy 2:2; Isaiah 49:23; Zechariah 13:2f."
1125. For: "The **light of nature** sheweth that there is a **God Who hath lordship and sovereignty over all**; is good and doeth good unto all; and is **therefore to be feared**, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in and served with all the heart.... Romans 1:20; Acts 17:24; Psalm 119:68; **Jeremiah 10:7**.... It is of **the**

<sup>261</sup> *W.C.F.* 8:8tu (*cf.* too *W.L.C.* 53g & 54q).

<sup>262</sup> *Ib.*, 19:4g.

<sup>263</sup> *Ib.*, 19:5k & 19:7wx.

<sup>264</sup> *Ib.*, 20:1i & 20:3o & 20:4pqr.

**Law of Nature** that in general a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God... By a positive, moral and perpetual Commandment binding all men in all ages He hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a sabbath to be kept holy unto Him...to be continued to the end of the World as the Christian Sabbath. This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord...in the publick and private exercises of His worship and in the duties of necessity and mercy.... Revelation 1:10; Exodus 20:8-10; Matthew 5:17f; Nehemiah 13:15-22; Isaiah 58:13; Matthew 12:1-13."

1126. Further, "in matters of weight and moment, an oath is warranted by the Word of God under the New Testament as well as under the Old; so a lawful oath, being imposed by lawful authority, in such matters ought to be taken.... It is a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority.... First Kings 8:31; Nehemiah 13:25; Ezra 10:5.... Numbers 5:19f; Nehemiah 5:12; Exodus 22:7-11."<sup>265</sup>
1127. For "**God the supreme Lord and King of all the World hath ordained civil magistrates to be under Him over the people for His own glory** and the publick good; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword for the defence and encouragement of them that are good and for the punishment of evildoers. Romans 13:1-4 & First Peter 2:13-14.... They may lawfully, now under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasions. Luke 3:14; Matthew 8:9-10; Acts 10:1-2; Revelation 17:14-16."<sup>266</sup>

### **Westminster Catechisms: Christ's foes must all yield to His Law**

1128. In the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* - which every Christian child should know and love by heart - it is stated<sup>267</sup> that "Christ executeth the office of a King in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and **conquering all His and our enemies**." It further states: "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled **more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness**.... Romans 6:4-6 & 8:1.
1129. It then lists the Ten Commandments as man's duty and "the rule of his obedience" owed to God. Finally, it declares that in the Lord's Prayer we are daily to "pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed" and "that **the Kingdom of grace may be advanced...and others brought into it and kept in it**."
1130. In the *Westminster Larger Catechism* we are told<sup>268</sup> "Christ executeth the office of a King in calling...a people to Himself and giving them officers, **laws**, and censures by which He visibly governs them...[and by] **overcoming all their enemies**.... Acts 15:14f; Genesis 49:10; Psalm 110:3... Isaiah 33:22; Matthew 18:17f; First Corinthians 5:4f.... First Corinthians 15:25; Psalm 110:1ff...; Psalm 2:8f.
1131. In the Lord's Prayer, daily "**we pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed**, the Gospel propagated **throughout the World**, the Jews called, the **fulness of the Gentiles brought in**, the **Church...purged from corruption...and maintained by the civil magistrate**" - and "**Satan trodden [down] under our feet**." Here, the prooftexts include: "Psalm 68:1 & 18; Revelation 12:10f; Second Thessalonians 3:1; Romans 10:1; John 17:9; Romans 11:25f; Malachi 1:11; Zephaniah 3:9; First Timothy

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<sup>265</sup> *Ib.*, 21:1a; 21:7mn; 21:8op; 22:2f & 22:3i.

<sup>266</sup> *Ib.*, 23:1ad.

<sup>267</sup> *W.S.C.* 26 & 35 & 40-82f & 102.

<sup>268</sup> *W.L.C.*, 45fho

2:1-2" & "Romans 16:20"<sup>269</sup> (*q.v.*).

1132. The above views were not just those of Calvin and his fellow-Calvinian Reformers, nor those also of Zwingli and his Zwinglians. Nor were they the views merely of **all of the Westminster divines individually**, almost a century later. They are the views also of many more modern theology books. Such include: Dabney's four volumes of *Discussions*<sup>270</sup> (especially his *Discussions Secular* and his *Discussions Philosophical*); Thornwell's important essay *Antinomianism*;<sup>271</sup> Geesink's definitive *Reformed Ethics* (I & II)<sup>272</sup> and his masterly *Concerning the Lord's Ordinances* (I-IV)<sup>273</sup> - as well as Smeenk's *Christian-Social Principles* (I & II);<sup>274</sup> and Professor John Murray's handy book *Principles of Conduct*.<sup>275</sup>
1133. Yet enough! Already quite sufficient has been said in the above pages, to demonstrate that God's Moral Law in His Ten Commandments is truly of abiding authority - and is indeed the teaching also of: the Older Testament; the Newer Testament; the Patristic Church; the Protestant Reformation; and the *Westminster Standards* of Calvinistic Puritanism.

### Conclusion: God's Law also anent human life is for all ages

1134. Conclusion. We find ourselves, especially as regards the sanctity of all human life, to be in agreement with Rabbi Dr. Israel Porusch, the British contributor to the English translation of the *Babylonian Talmud*.<sup>276</sup> In his article *Criminal Law* - in *Vallentine's Jewish Encyclopaedia* - Dr. Porush correctly observes:<sup>277</sup> "The sanctity of human life is one of the basic laws of the *Torah* [alias the Pentateuch]. 'Whosoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in His own image' [Genesis 9:6].
1135. "This is a Commandment.... There is no difference between the life of an infant and that of an adult.... Parents have no rights [as to life and death] whatsoever, over the lives of their children (whether these be healthy or deformed). Deliberate homicide was punished with death." For the Noachian Laws of Genesis 9:1-7 *cf.* Acts 15:19-29, including those against murder (which in the *Talmud* also includes abortion),<sup>278</sup> are according to the Holy Bible and "according to the *Talmud*...binding on all human beings."<sup>279</sup> Certainly Christians, and hopefully also Moslems, can feel quite comfortable with the above Jewish assessment of the modern Rabbi Porusch.
1136. Abortion, then, is the intentional and criminal killing of an unborn human child. It is implicitly condemned in the *Westminster Shorter Catechism's* exposition of the Sixth Commandment stamped on the heart of man at his very creation - and re-imprinted on everybody, everywhere, and ever since.

<sup>269</sup> *Ib.*, 191c-i & 195z

<sup>270</sup> R.L. Dabney: *Discussions - Evangelical and Theological* (I-II), London: Banner of Truth, 1967 rep. See too his *Discussions - Secular* (IV) and his *Discussions - Philosophical* (III), both published by Sprinkle in Harrisonburg Va. (1979 & 1980 rep.).

<sup>271</sup> J.H. Thornwell: *Antinomianism* (in *The Collected Writings of James Henley Thornwell*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974 rep., II pp. 383f.

<sup>272</sup> W. Geesink: *Reformed Ethics I & II*, Kampen: Kok, 1931.

<sup>273</sup> W. Geesink: *Concerning the Lord's Ordinances I-IV*, Kampen: Kok, 1925.

<sup>274</sup> C. Smeenk: *Christian-Social Principles I-II*, Kampen: Kok, 1934

<sup>275</sup> J. Murray: *Principles of Conduct*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.

<sup>276</sup> See in Hyamson & Silbermann's *op. cit.*, p. viii

<sup>277</sup> I. Porush: *Criminal Law*, in Hyamson & Silbermann's *op. cit.*, p. 371

<sup>278</sup> See *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Jerusalem: Keter, 1971f, arts. *Abortion* and *Castration and Murder*.

<sup>279</sup> Hyamson & Silbermann: *op. cit.*, p. 275.

Many if not most oriental societies formerly frowned on abortion. Indeed, the Old Testament in particular most severely condemns any involvement (on the part of God's people) with those surrounding pagan cultures which sometimes tolerated feticide and infanticide.

1137. Those ancient pagan cultures, like their modern successors, were a foul stench of death - unto death. Yet civilization and indeed even the very future of mankind itself was saved by the advent of Christianity - a sweet aroma of life, unto life. Second Corinthians 2:15f. Christianity, and that alone, subsequently made the West great - for many centuries.
1138. It is only the internationalizing and restorative religion of Jesus Christ which saved the abortion-ridden Ancient Roman Empire from utter disintegration. It was Christianity that civilized the Pagan West, and built a new civilization. Today, civilization temporarily yet increasingly decays under the abortive impact and ongoing spread of the Christ-hating French Revolution of 1789. Nevertheless, the promised resurgence and final World Conquest of a reformed and a life-loving Christianity - will yet save mankind from selfdestruction.