

AlbertMohler.com

What Makes Abortion Plausible? What Makes Abortion Unthinkable?, Part One

Friday, January 23, 2009

The following is an edited transcript of a message preached by R. Albert Mohler, Jr. for "Sanctity of Human Life Sunday" on January 18, 2009. Today's installment is the first of a six-part series.

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – Giver of Life.

I invite you to turn to the first chapter of the book of Jeremiah, and to look with me at these introductory words to Jeremiah's prophecy.

We need to turn to Scripture even before we turn to the issue of abortion. We must not attempt to think about urgent moral issues of our day without first turning to Scripture. We want to think clearly so that we are prepared to convince, to speak, to intervene, and to articulate - for we are responsible to have an answer. But there is a grave danger if we begin without first going into the world of the Bible to get our bearings. When we turn to the Scripture we come to understand that every single issue we confront is connected to every other issue and every truth is connected to every other truth. Therefore, we actually do injury and harm to our argument if we just take one thread of the garment and try to talk about it without understanding the whole.

When we reenter the world of the Bible and gain our bearings, we find both the explicit statements of Scripture and also the grand narrative of the Bible. This narrative begins with creation and ends with consummation. All of human experience, all of human history, and everything we know now makes sense. We understand that after creation came the fall, and so we come to understand that we live in a sinful world. We understand that creation represents God's perfect purpose, but that human beings brought sin into the world. Thus, everything we experience about the world now is what we know about a fallen world. And in a fallen world, it is not just that people do bad things. In a fallen world, every single atom and molecule of the entire cosmos is crying out for redemption. Things are not *now* as they *are* to be, as God would *have* them to be, and as He will *make* them to be.

In entering the world of the Bible, we come to know God's plan in a way that makes all of human history understandable, putting everything in a larger frame of reference. The story is not just about the creation of a universe that was declared good by its creator, nor is it just about the fall and the catastrophe that took place so that nothing is right or exactly as it should be. We ourselves understand falleness to be our own experience. We look in the mirror and see the evidence of the fall.

We come to understand that the purpose of God was to bring glory to His name through the redemption of a people who would be known by His own name, saved by the blood of His own Son. We come to understand that redemption is the great theme of the Bible. From beginning to end, all things point toward a Cross and resurrection, and the Gospel becomes the magnificent display of God's glory. In the Gospel, God shows Himself to be even more glorious than had he merely been Creator, because He is now Creator and Redeemer.



We also understand that history has purpose – history is headed toward something. God was its beginning as the Creator, and God will bring all things to His perfect end. And because Jesus Christ Himself is the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the beginning and the end, history is headed towards *someone*.

Therefore, as we reenter the world of the Bible, we find not only that the Bible reveals to us very clear precepts and teachings, but it also reveals a set of theological assumptions that are a part of God's merciful revelation to us.

Now, let us look together at Jeremiah 1:1-10:

The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the exile of Jerusalem in the fifth month. Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Alas, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, Because I am a youth." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak. "Do not be afraid of them, For I am with you to deliver you," declares the LORD. Then the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. "See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, To pluck up and to break down, To destroy and to overthrow, To build and to plant."

That is quite a job description! Jeremiah the prophet receives a job description from the Lord who says, "This is what you are going to do. You are going to pluck up and break down. You are going to destroy and overthrow. You are going to build and are going to plant." Indeed, we know that the Lord used Jeremiah to do those very things in his prophetic ministry to God's people.

However, take special note of Jeremiah's reflection on how the Lord addressed him with His call. Jeremiah did not invent this job for himself. Jeremiah did not appoint himself to this task. Jeremiah did not call himself as a prophet. No, the Lord called Jeremiah.

When the Lord spoke to Jeremiah, he said, "Before I made you, I knew you." Fascinating, isn't it? "Before I *made* you," God said, "I *knew* you." And then, as the Lord continued to speak to Jeremiah, he said, "And before you were born, I consecrated you." That is, God set Jeremiah apart – "I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Listen to those verbs: made, knew, consecrated, appointed. These are strong verbs, revealing divine action. God says, "I did these things, and I did these things *before* you were born, *before* I made you."

We read there the very origin of the biblical worldview concerning Jeremiah. The first thing God says is, "I made you." He speaks of the time before He made him, but the first thing he says is, "I made you." Jeremiah is not an accident. In his mother's womb, Jeremiah is not some mere biomass. From the moment of conception, a holy and omnipotent God made Jeremiah – for His own glory. And before the Lord even made Jeremiah, He knew him.

Now, how does the Lord know Jeremiah? Jeremiah knows Him as his Creator. He knows Him because long before the conception that took place that would produce Jeremiah in the womb, an omnipotent and omniscient God *knew* Jeremiah because an omnipotent and omniscient God *made* him. How did Jeremiah come to be? Father, mother, conception, pregnancy, birth- yes, but before all those things, God.

The world of the Bible tells us so much that so many would simply ignore. Jeremiah receives this call, grounded in the fact that God says to him, "I haven't just been watching you and only now decided to appoint you. You haven't been on some kind of trial run as I've been seeing if indeed I'm going to use you. No, before you were, I knew you. Before I made you, I consecrated you and set you apart, and before you ever drew your first breath I appointed you to pluck up and to bring down." Here Jeremiah is told, "This is your task, and it was your task before you were."

And so, from Scripture's account of Jeremiah's calling, we gain a clear understanding that every single human being is made by God, and formed by God within the womb.

Content Copyright © 2002-2010, R. Albert Mohler, Jr.