

In the beginning, God created man, and breathed into him the breath of life.

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

But man's sin, his breaking of God's law, brought death into the world.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned--

One dreadful aspect of death that entered the world was murder, homicide, the killing of one human being by another, which started when Cain murdered his brother, Abel.

Genesis 4:8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

In the generations that followed, our race filled the world with violence.

Genesis 6:11-13 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

(12) So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. (13) And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

In all wisdom, God gave to our whole race a great law:

Genesis 9:5-6 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. (6) "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

At the same time, He renewed His blessing upon our race, that we may be fruitful, that we may beget new lives, the married man and woman producing babies, children, sons and daughters.

Genesis 9:7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it."

The righteous lived by these wise laws of life, shunning violence and bringing forth new life under God's blessing.

But the wicked, in rebellion against God, continued to murder. In a measure of just how terrible sin is, wicked men resorted to murdering even babies. They did this in perverse attempts to gain an advantage for themselves in this world.

Wicked tyrants such as Pharaoh saw in some babies a threat to their power, and so ordered them killed.

Exodus 1:15-16 Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; (16) and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live."

Exodus 1:22 So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."

Cruel conquerors killed the children of their defeated enemies, killing even the unborn children

2 Kings 8:12 And Hazael said, "Why is my lord weeping?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you will dash their children, and rip open their women with child."

They did this dreadful thing to enrich themselves, so that no one would be left to try to take back what they had stolen.

Amos 1:13 Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of the people of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead, That they might enlarge their territory.

The pagans looked to false gods to bless their livestock and the crops, and so burned up their own children in worship of the false god Molech, thinking he would then give them some temporal blessing. Even some of the Israelites burned up their children, even the King:

2 Chronicles 28:3 He [Ahaz] burned incense in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and burned his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

As the wicked thus murdered children, even unborn children, and even their own children, the righteous feared God and had faith in Him, and would not do such wickedness, even if commanded by their rulers.

Exodus 1:17 But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.

Hebrews 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

Sometimes God would raise up a ruler, who would order the killing of children to stop, as King Josiah did.

2 Kings 23:10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech.

By the Holy Spirit, King David wrote his poetic description of the way God carefully had made him in his mother's womb, as you heard read in Psalm 139 a few minutes ago.

When the Lord Jesus came, King Herod the Great demonstrated that wicked rulers among men still might order the killing of little children, even in their own land, over which they ruled, and might find cruel men willing to do the killing.

Matthew 2:16-18 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. (17) Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: (18) "A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, LAMENTATION, WEEPING, AND GREAT MOURNING, RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN, REFUSING TO BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY ARE NO MORE."

Such cruel tyranny from government officials is the grossest perversion of the wise and ancient rule God had given to our race through Noah, as we read a moment ago in Genesis chapter 9. The sword which King Herod and his servants wielded against little children had been placed into their hands by that order of God. It had been placed into their hands to use against murderers. But they used it to do the opposite, to commit murder, even the murder of children, and to protect themselves from being punished for doing so.

But when the wicked rule, and our rights are infringed, especially our inalienable right to life, our right not to be murdered, the people sigh and mourn and groan.

Proverbs 29:2b ...when a wicked man rules, the people groan.

Our Lord's apostles, Peter and Paul, wrote in their letters about the right working of human government, as instituted by God:

1 Peter 2:13-14 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, (14) or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

Romans 13:3-4 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. (4) For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

The word of God teaches us to put our trust in God, not in government officials:

Psalms 118:8-9 It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man. (9) It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in princes.

Yet we are to pray for the government officials, partly because we want to be able to lead a quiet and peaceable life, and what they do in office usually has a strong effect on how quiet and peaceable our lives are.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, (2) for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and ~~reverence~~ [honesty].

The example of our Lord's apostle, Paul, shows us that we may petition government officials for redress of our grievances when we see that their conduct in office infringes our rights rather than securing them.

Acts 22:25-29 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" (26) When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman." (27) Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." (28) The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen." (29) Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

So, when wicked men rule, and use their power not to punish murderers, but to murder, and to protect murderers, what do the righteous do?

They sigh and mourn and groan.

They fear the Lord and trust in Him.

They do not join in the murder, as the midwives would not.

They hide and protect the innocent from the murderers.

They teach the truth about the life of the unborn child, as from Psalm 139.

They teach God law, "Thou shalt not kill."

They preach the gospel of Jesus Christ: forgiveness of sins for the wicked who repent and believe in Him; forgiveness even for murderers, even for those who have murdered their own children.

They petition the government officials, appealing to them to do their duty.

They pray for the government officials.

So it was that, long ago, our state legislature and governor enacted just laws recognizing that the murder of unborn babies by abortion is a crime, requiring punishment by imprisonment, and specifying that the crime lay in destroying “the life of the fetus or embryo...in the woman’s womb.”

In 1971, one of our courts convicted a doctor of the crime of performing an abortion. On appeal, our state criminal appeals court upheld the conviction, specifically denying that our laws prohibiting abortion were unconstitutional.

-The State attempts to protect that human life not in existence by actual birth through its abortion statutes and defines this as the "life of the fetus or embryo."

-The State of Texas is committed to preserving the lives of its citizens...Article 1191...is designed to protect fetal life...and this justifies prohibiting termination of the life of the fetus or embryo...

At the same time, a case filed in federal court very near here, in Dallas, Texas, was making its way through the federal court system. Roe v. Wade alleged that the Texas laws against abortion violated the U.S. constitution. January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that our Texas laws against abortion were, indeed, unconstitutional.

It was the duty of our newly-installed governor, Dolph Briscoe, jr., to uphold our state’s just laws, since his authority to govern rested squarely on the Lord’s great rule that murderers must be punished. In his inaugural address, Governor Briscoe had said

...I ask God’s blessings on the task we undertake to magnify the greatness of our state, and the well-being of its people.

...We must carry out the first function of government---protection of the life and the property of each individual citizen.

But days later, when informed of the Roe v. Wade decision, our governor made no substantial opposition to the Supreme Court’s ruling, and did not defend the human lives in his jurisdiction.

In our state, much of the power of the state government is wielded by the Lt. Governor, who, from 1973-1991 was Bill Hobby. His public statement on the Roe v. Wade decision was this:

“It is my opinion that the best solution is one in which the state is neutral on the subject of abortion. I believe the medical profession of Texas will respond to the decision and will treat abortion as a medical matter in a responsible way.”

And so it has been from January 1973 until this week. In this state, and in the other states of this republic, the civil magistrates have failed to secure the rights of unborn babies, who, consequently, have been murdered by the wicked in their tens of millions, a scale never achieved by the cruelest of the ancient pagans. What have the disciples of Jesus Christ been doing about it? Among other things, we have been:

-sighing and mourning and groaning

-fearing the Lord and trusting in Him

-teaching the teach the truth about the life of the unborn child, as from Ps 139.

-teaching God law, “Thou shalt not kill.”

-preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ: forgiveness of sins for the wicked who repent and believe in Him; forgiveness even for murderers, even for those who have murdered their own children

-petitioning the government officials, appealing to them to do their duty

-praying for the government officials, that God would give us wise rulers who would stop the killing

Now, after nearly 50 years of such mourning and praying, we find that God has answered His people's prayers. This week, the present Supreme Court of the United States overruled the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. The people, by their state legislatures, truly had the right all along to make their own laws outlawing murder by abortion; and the Supreme Court never truly had the right to overrule them. Now that has been recognized legally, officially. The Court as it is today has corrected the error of the court as it was decades ago.

But we do not worship or trust in the Supreme Court, or any man. Every blessing we see in the working of governments is a gift from God in heaven. It was by His institution long ago that governments exist, and have the charge to punish evildoers. And it is by His providence that any government official ever governs justly, according to that institution.

When the righteous are in authority, and use their authority to secure our rights, by punishing evil-doers, the people rejoice. So, today the proverb rings true

Proverbs 29:2a When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice...

The Roe v. Wade decision came when I was 3 years old. So I do not remember anything different. As soon as I learned about abortion, I began sighing, mourning, groaning over it. Probably it has been the same with you. Often I have been conscious of that constant grieving, but most of the time it simply has seemed normal to me. But ever since I heard that the wicked ruling was overturned, truly my spirit has been rejoicing inside me.

That rejoicing comes from the Lord, and is in the Lord. The injustice that has been overturned, and the resulting justice that has been restored, are His doing.

Philippians 4:4-7 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Hear how our Lord's apostle exhorts us to rejoice in the Lord, and to be anxious for nothing, but to pray to God about everything. Surely the rightness of that has been proven to us yet again, and we can learn a lesson of patience. We have been praying for the overturning of this wickedness for almost 50 years. It seemed over long to us. But to God 50 years is like a day. Our Lord Jesus taught us that we ought always to pray and never to faint.

There is more praying to be done. All evil and injustice, all murder, even of children, even of unborn babies, has not been stopped. But rejoice in the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. For He has done great things for us. Praise His name!

Texas state law - penal code

Article 1191

If any person shall designedly administer to a pregnant woman or knowingly procure to be administered with her consent any drug or medicine, or shall use towards her any violence or means whatever externally or internally applied, and thereby procure an abortion, he shall be confined in the penitentiary not less than two nor more than five years; if it be done without her consent, the punishment shall be doubled. By 'abortion' is meant that the life of the fetus or embryo shall be destroyed in the woman's womb or that a premature birth thereof be caused.

Article 1196

Nothing in this chapter applies to an abortion procured or attempted by medical advice for the purpose of saving the life of the mother

1971 Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Thompson v. State appeal of conviction for performing an abortion

-<https://law.justia.com/cases/texas/court-of-criminal-appeals/1973/44071-3.html>

-Roe v. Wade already had been decided in federal court, overruling Texas statutes, although it had not yet been ruled in SCOTUS

-The State attempts to protect that human life not in existence by actual birth through its abortion statutes and defines this as the "life of the fetus or embryo."

-The State of Texas is committed to preserving the lives of its citizens...Article 1191...is designed to protect fetal life...and this justifies prohibiting termination of the life of the fetus or embryo...

Roe v. Wade

filled in Dallas federal court March 3, 1970

Dolph Briscoe became governor of Texas on January 16, 1973, just eight days before the Supreme Court ruling of January 22.

Inaugural address:

...I ask God's blessings on the task we undertake to magnify the greatness of our state, and the well-being of its people.

...We must carry out the first function of government---protection of the life and the property of each individual citizen.

State of the state address January 17, 1973

...The first function of government is the protection of life and property of its citizens.

...I support the capital punishment provision in certain cases...

On the day Governor Briscoe took office, it was against the law in Texas to perform an abortion, except for the purpose of saving the mother's life.

Governor Briscoe:

“I am today asking the attorney general for his evaluation of this ruling and for the alternatives open to Texas as a result of the Supreme Court’s decision.”

Lieutenant Governor (1973-1991) Bill Hobby:

“It is my opinion that the best solution is one in which the state is neutral on the subject of abortion. I believe the medical profession of Texas will respond to the decision and will treat abortion as a medical matter in a responsible way.”

1973 Penal Code

summary: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/55160NCJRS.pdf>

Attorney General John Hill

August 13, 1974

<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/opinion-files/opinion/1974/jho369.pdf>

In his Aug. 13, 1974, opinion to a criminal district attorney, Hill says that Roe v. Wade declared Texas’s abortion statutes unconstitutional.

“Articles 1191, 1192, 1193, 1194 and 1196, Texas ’ Penal Code, have been held unconstitutional and are no longer of any effect. Article 1195 is still a valid statute but applies only to those situations in which the victim is in the process of being born. Therefore, there are now no laws in this state regulating abortion, per se,” Hill said.

In closing his opinion, Hill states that proposed legislation “must conform to the guidelines” set forth by the Supreme Court’s decision in Roe v.. Wade.

https://www.dailytoreador.com/news/lubbock-to-be-a-sanctuary-city-for-the-unborn/article_e8ce88d4-ba57-11eb-8de5-9ff04e00603c.html

In response to a 1974 request for opinion, Texas Attorney General John Hill issued guidelines pertaining to abortion in the post-Roe world, including: (1) a requirement that only licensed physicians perform abortion; (2) physicians and private hospitals (but not public hospitals) may decline to provide abortion services; (3) abortion facilities should not be subject to any reporting or regulatory requirements different than other facilities; and (4) legislation allowing the putative father to consent to the abortion would likely be unconstitutional.

<https://notevenpast.org/george-lege-part-9-abortion-law-texas/>

1973 Penal Code (Texs)

“individual” defined as “human being who has been born and is alive”

2003 Penal Code amended to read

"Individual" means a human being who is alive, including an unborn child at every stage of gestation from fertilization until birth.

Karen Blumenthal's archive of Roe v. Wade documents

Jeremiah - Call to Worship - Psalm 68:1-5

Roel - Scripture Reading - Psalm 139

Thad - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Romans 16:27

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 718 "Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 773 "O Lord, Make Haste"

Haven - Trinity 403 "Not What My Hands Have Done" - Andrew lead