

APPENDIX - J

ANSWERING DR. AL MOHLER, DR. DAN AKIN, & MATT SLICK

(Revised & Updated to add this new section in Appendix J)

I discovered some additional theological claims not properly addressed in my book, so I am updating it with this additional section here:

In their theological position paper, “WHY WE BELIEVE CHILDREN WHO DIE GO TO HEAVEN,” **Dr. R. Albert Mohler and Dr. Daniel L. Akin** make some very strong arguments for their claim of **eternal** salvation for infants who die before the age of accountability. (Dr. Mohler, Jr. is the president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the flagship school of the Southern Baptist Convention & also one of the largest seminaries in the world, according to both <http://www.albertmohler.com/about> and <http://www.sbts.edu/about/president> –and Dr. Akin is the president of the similarly-named SEBTS as well, as his web page says: “About [line break] President, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary”: http://www.DanielAkin.com/?page_id=2

– Here is a link to their paper:

<http://BetweenTheTimes.com/index.php/2008/06/24/why-we-believe-children-who-die-go-to-heaven>

cross-posted to:

<http://www.TheologyForTheChurch.com/1/post/2011/9/why-we-believe-children-who-die-go-to-heaven.html>

and:

<http://www.DanielAkin.com/wp-content/uploads/2004/08/why-we-believe-children-who-die-go-to-heaven.pdf>

Before we get going, I must address one point of import:

The Bible does not specifically address the “age of accountability,” by name, and this truth was pointed out to me by **noted theologian, Matt Slick, who is the President and Founder of the Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry** (<http://carm.org/matt-slick>) when he was kind enough to personally take my phone call recently. However, Matt was wrong to question the existence of such an “age” of accountability –both by reason, as well as observation and experience –and also as shown by Scripture: It is undeniable that humans, at some “age,” reach the moral capacity/ability for moral reasoning and “accountability.” Just for comparison, let me point out that the BIBLE does NOT say anything about a “Gordon Wayne Watts,” now does it? However, anyone who denies my existence is just plain crazy: I most certainly do exist! So, Matt's logic here is bad logic. Furthermore, even though the exact phrase, “age of accountability,” is not found in the Bible, the actual subject matter is. Observe:

James 4:17 (KJV) – “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

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But, children are not “accountable” at that age – They are unable to discern between good and evil:

Deuteronomy 1:39 (KJV) – “...your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil...”

Isaiah 7:16 (KJV) – “For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good...”

However, at some “age,” an infant, who later becomes a child, does have some “accountability”:

Proverbs 20:11 (KJV) “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.”

Luke 2:52 (KJV) “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” [NOTE: Jesus INCREASED in wisdom: It was NOT all-at-once conferred upon Him.]

As special note about Deuteronomy 1:39: On pages 17 and 37, above, I mention that a literal translation is proper here, and that this passage does not prove that children get to heaven. But even IF it were a “pattern” for children, it would NOT mean that they go to heaven, only that they do not pay for the sins of their fathers: Look again at that passage: The fathers wandered in the wilderness for 40 years and died, but the children under a certain age got into the “promised land,” HOWEVER (and this is the key point), they were NOT given a “free pass” to sin as much as they want without retribution. Since the children were still capable of sinning, then application of this passage (if it were to be used as a 'pattern')

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would more closely fit with the children being held in abeyance, safe in Jesus' arms, until the Millennium, at which time they could still exercise free will. – I just thought I'd address the “Deut 1:39” argument that is so often used as a sure-fire pattern. If you're still not convinced, take a look at 2 Corinthians 5:10 (KJV), which says: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according

to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” The infants could NOT do EITHER, so no judgment is awaiting them, neither good nor bad –thus it would be contrary to God's known character to send them to either heaven OR hell without a proper assessment, as they did NO “works” in the body, yet another proof that my exegesis has better Scriptural underpinning.

OK, now that I've Biblically proven the existence of an 'age' of accountability (even though only God knows when a person becomes mature enough to be accountable), let's move on...

Drs. Al Mohelr and Dan Akin make some Scriptural arguments in favour of their position, but are they proper hermeneutical exegeses of the Scripture?

To begin with, they are to be commended for admitting that: “It is readily admitted that Scripture does not speak to this issue directly...” but let's now take a closer look at their arguments – where I will quote a short “Fair Use” excerpt of their arguments, and then address them, one-by-one:

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((1)) GRACE:

They say: “First, the grace, goodness and mercy of God would support the position that God saves all infants who die.”

My response: Grace can not ignore justice, so this claim, whether true or not, is not proved at this juncture.

They say: “This is the strongest argument and perhaps the decisive one. God is love (1 John 4:8) and desires that all be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).”

My response: This logic, if taken to its logical conclusion, would support Universalism, since God would want to save all people. Since not all are saved, this logic is bad logic.

They say: “People go to hell because they choose in willful rebellion and unbelief to reject God and His grace. Children are incapable of this kind of conscious rejection of God.”

My response: Correct . . . so far.

They say: “Where such rebellion and willful disobedience is absent, God is gracious to receive.”

My response: This is assuming a new form of salvation, not described in Scripture. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin: Romans 14:23. Without faith it is impossible to please God: Hebrews 11:6. And, indeed Psalm 58:3 (KJV) states that: “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born,

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speaking lies.” Also, I Cor 15:50 (KJV) states that: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” [This gives no exception for a child entering heaven merely on merit of being under a certain age. Babies CAN'T enter heaven at this juncture, but God does provide a way: Read the rest of this book. Since children, born into sin, can NOT express faith (something of which babies are incapable), their logic is not sound.]

((2)) KING DAVID'S SON

They say: “David could have done those two things [confessed confidence he'd see his son again & also comfort his wife, Bathsheba] only if he was confident that his little son was with

God. Any other explanation does not do justice to the text [(2 Samuel 12:15-18).”

My response: I respectfully dissent: He could have EASILY confessed hope of seeing his son again, in the Millennium, and this would have been no less comforting. For a more detailed assessment of this passage, please see Chapter 4, “ADDRESSING KING DAVID'S CLAIMS,” on page 17.

((3)) ORIGINAL SIN vs. PERSONAL SIN

They say: While they admit that we have original sin, from Adam, they say that we are only held accountable for what we do, and that: “It is to the one who knows to do right and does not do it that sin is reckoned. Infants are incapable of such decisions.”

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My response: Again, I agree with their logic . . . so far: Infants are NOT capable of knowing right from wrong, but their conclusion (that infants get “eternal” salvation) would normally “add to” or “take away” Scripture (Revelation 22:18-19), a leap-of-logic, which is really a Scripturally forbidden no-no. Thankfully, they are humble (and wise) enough to admit in the offset that: “It is readily admitted that Scripture does not speak to this issue directly...”

((4)) JESUS & the LITTLE CHILDREN

They say: “Fourth, Jesus affirmed that the kingdom of God belonged to little children (Luke 18:15-17).”

My response: That is an incorrect exegesis of this passage. See e.g., Chapter 8, “ADDRESSING ONE PASTOR'S CONCERNS,” where I properly address this (and similar) passages.

((5)) MANY PEOPLE SAVED IN REV. 7:9

They say: “Fifth, Scripture affirms that the number of saved souls is very great (Revelation 7:9). Since most of the world has been and is still non-Christian, might it be the untold multitude who have died prematurely or in infancy comprise a majority of those in heaven?”

My response: This is actually pretty intriguing, since Revelation 7:9 (KJV) says: “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and

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people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;” and that is to be contrasted with Matthew 7:13b-14 (KJV), which says: “...for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Here, in Matthew, we clearly see that “many” are lost and “few” are saved, implying that there are less saved people. However, the passage in Revelation is ambiguous and indeterminate in quantity. It may be that a “minority” of the many billions of souls is still quite a huge number! (Also, Rev. 7:9 may be describing heaven, at a time period AFTER the Millennium, and AFTER many more souls could get saved, and we must consider that Matt. 7:13-14 may be describing earth, not the Millennium.) There are simply too many unknown variables to formulate any “solid theology” on these passage. This is especially critical when one is speaking of a new type of salvation that does NOT require

faith –and which violates NUMEROUS Scriptural standards!

((6)) CHOSEN / SANCTIFIED from the WOMB

They say: “Sixth, some in Scripture are said to be chosen or sanctified from the womb (1 Samuel 1:8-2:21; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15).”

My response: They are correct . . . so far. Samuel, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist were all sanctified, or set apart by God for special

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service.

They say: “This certainly affirms the salvation of some infants...”

My response: They are incorrect here. So, *what* if God called these prophets from the womb? Does that guarantee their salvation? I think not! Many called but FEW chosen: Matthew 20:16, 22:14.

They say: “...and repudiates the view that only baptized babies are assured of heaven. Neither Samuel, Jeremiah or John the Baptist was baptized.”

My response: They are correct here. Neither was the thief on the cross baptised, but he was certainly saved! “And Jesus said unto him [the thief on the cross], Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43, and discussed in more detail on page 81, above.

Furthermore, they also discussed election, with this comment: “Calvin affirmed the certain election of some infants to salvation and was open to the possibility that all infants who die

are saved.” Calvin apparently would adhere to “Position 7: ONLY 'foreknown' or 'predestined' or 'elect' babies who die before the age of accountability make it to heaven,” which is, of course, discussed in Appendix – G, “ADDRESSING MINOR POSITIONS 6-9.”

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Lastly – they made a very interesting comment earlier in their paper.

They said: “...a popular evangelical theologian [apparently, Dr. R.C. Sproul, Jr., as indicated by other websites which discuss this incident] chided Billy Graham when at the Oklahoma City memorial service he said, “Someday there will be a glorious reunion with those who have died and gone to heaven before us, and that includes all those innocent children that are lost. They’re not lost from God because any child that young is automatically in heaven and in God’s arms.” The theologian scolded Dr. Graham for offering what he called “. . . a new gospel: justification by youth alone.”

My response: I believe that R.C. Sproul is correct in his criticism of a “new gospel” – and for the reasons elucidated above: Not only is this “justification by youth alone” NOT found in the Bible ANYWHERE, but a Biblically sound alternative is proposed. While I, too, will admit that it is “readily admitted that Scripture does not speak to this issue directly,” as Dr. Mohler and Dr. Akin, I believe that my claims of the Millennium are sound and solid.

Nonetheless, I got an interesting email from Richard Deem,

who responded to my questions about his position paper – and raised good points about whether my “babies in Millennium” assessment was, indeed correct. Rich's blog is located at: http://www.GodAndScience.org/doctrine/babies_who_die.html

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In his email, among other things, Rich asked me how could babies who were born and died be born again physically into the millennium, to which I responded that I didn't know for sure, but I cited Scriptures that showed children in the Millennium (Is. 11:6b,8), in physical bodies that live and die (Is. 65:20b), as well as a Rebellion that proves Free Will still exists (Rev.20:9).

Isaiah 11:6b,8, KJV – “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb..and a little child shall lead them. 8And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.”

Isaiah 65:20b, NASB – “And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed.”

Revelation 20:9, NASB – “And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.”

However, Rich raised a much deeper (and more fundamental) issue: He pointed out that those who are resurrected in the first resurrection (those killed for their faith) cannot go to hell (Revelation 20:6), since they had already passed the test of loyalty to Jesus. However, let's look at that passage to see what's going on there.

Revelation 20:4-6 (KJV) says:

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Admittedly, this is a tough passage, but Rich is correct to suggest that these people here are probably tribulation saints who refused the mark. [His exact words were: “Those who are resurrected in the first resurrection (those killed for their faith) cannot go to hell (Revelation 20:6), since they had already passed the test of loyalty to Jesus,” and with that, I would agree.]

OK, if these people refused the mark, how then can this include babies who die as infants? They did not refuse because they COULD not refuse: Isaiah 7:16 (KJV) “For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good...” [He was under the age of accountability, as discussed above.]

There are also other groups discussed in Revelation: The

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“144,000” sealed and redeemed servants (or, as some might call them, 'saints') are mentioned in Rev. 7:1-8, 14:1-5. These, however, can not mean the infants here, as many more than 144,000 children have died before the age of accountability.

Rich made a reasonable request of me, asking for BIBLE proof, when he said:

“I also see no support that a person can go to heaven temporarily and end up in hell permanently. These are truly bizarre doctrines that are foreign to Christianity.

None of your material is at all convincing. In order to convince me, you are going to have to show from the scriptures that babies can be reincarnated and that the children of the millennium are produced in that manner. Anything less than that is speculation, at best.”

I would agree with Rich that it would be bizarre for a person to go to heaven temporarily and then still end up in hell, but I would respond, reminding him that one-third of ALL the holy angels in heaven already WERE in heaven, and yet this did not preclude them from exercising Free Will -and one third of the angel (in heaven, which included Lucifer) fell –and are bound for hell. Also, this passage comes to mind: Isaiah 55:9 (KJV) “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

So, it may be true, even if it seems bizarre.

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In this case, what I am alleging is that the infants who die in

When Babies Die: Where do they go? (Full-color Edition)

their infancy end up in heaven for the time being (as were all the angels before they fell) and then go into the millennium to be given a genuine chance to accept or reject God, and then the judgment thereafter.

So, in conclusion, while even I admit I have not proved my case is true, nonetheless, I have proved that is it possible: Furthermore, I have shown that Rev. 20:6 can't refer to infants, since Isaiah 7:16 and Deuteronomy 1:39 prove that they could not chose good or evil (whether or not to take the mark).

As Sherlock Holmes was fond of saying, “Eliminate all other [untrue] factors, and the one which remains must be the truth”: The Millennium is the last man standing.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gordon Wayne Watts, A.S., B.S. resides in Lakeland and Plant City, Florida, and his main claim to fame is a lawsuit[1] that got further in court than either former Florida Governor, Bush's similar attempt[2], or Terri's own blood family[3], in their respective attempts to save Terri Schiavo:



[1] *In Re: GORDON WAYNE WATTS (as next friend of THERESA MARIE 'TERRI' SCHIAVO)*, No. SC03-2420 (Fla. Feb.23, 2003), denied 4-3 on rehearing.
<http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/clerk/dispositions/2005/2/03-2420reh.pdf>

[2] *In Re: JEB BUSH, GOVERNOR OF FLORIDA, ET AL. v. MICHAEL SCHIAVO, GUARDIAN: THERESA SCHIAVO*, No. SC04-925 (Fla. Oct.21, 2004), denied 7-0 on rehearing.
<http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/clerk/dispositions/2004/10/04-925reh.pdf>

[3] *Schiavo ex rel. Schindler v. Schiavo ex rel. Schiavo*, 403 F.3d 1223, 2005 WL 648897 (11th Cir. Mar.23, 2005), denied 2-1 on appeal.
<http://www.ca11.uscourts.gov/opinions/ops/200511628.pdf>

Watts is also a graduate of The Florida State University, with his double major with honours in Biological and Chemical Science, some post baccalaureate education, a vocational associate's degree from United Electronics Institute, and some recent theological classes at Evangelical University -and a few classes in the "school of hard knocks." Mr. Watts is a Protestant Christian, attending the First Baptist Church at the Mall in Lakeland, Florida, the same church attended by famous Preterist author, Rev. John L. Bray.

Gordon has read the Bible from cover-to-cover in the KJV, and now is part-way through in the AMP version – and continues his studies in the Bible – and in other areas, such as science, politics, and activism to help oppose unjust laws and seek change, consistent with the teachings of Jesus.