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FRIDAY, APRIL 04, 2008

Where Do Babies Go When They Die?



This question was posed to me last night by one of my students. I thought I would put my thoughts here as a post and discuss. This is a very close to home subject for me, as my wife has had two, possibly three, miscarriages, so this really is a theology from both the mind and from the heart for me. I also have two children (pictured above) at the ages of 5 and 2 that are not old enough to fully "repent and believe." So, what am I to believe if one of them were taken from me? From what I understand, there are three thoughts on this:

1. *All babies go to heaven when they die*
2. *All babies go to hell when they die*
3. *God elects some babies to heaven and leaves some as the reprobate*

I am not going to go into a discussion with all three of these, but will say that I respect the third point and think those that believe that all babies go to hell need to rethink their theology and also the love of God. I really have a hard time with people who believe that all babies will go to hell when they die and don't have much patience with them. Those who believe the third point, I respect greatly because they say they are going to leave this decision to God and trust Him in his perfect wisdom. I respect it, but don't believe that they are correct.

I believe in the first. Namely, that all babies go to heaven when they die. Let me give you some reasons.

First, Jesus seems to infer this

"Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. See that you do not despise one of these

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little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven. Matthew 18:3-6,10

- Tim Lien and Co. Carl Medearis Jeff Vanderstelt

But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

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Jesus seems to really dismiss any who would say that all infants go to hell. Jesus says that heaven belongs to the children. That you must have faith as a child and humble yourself like a child. This isn't definitive to dismiss point three from above, or prove my point beyond doubt, but it's a start.

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Second, David believed his child was going to heaven

When David and Bathsheba had a child out of wedlock, God punished them by killing the baby. When we watch David he is very telling of his theology of infant salvation and the healing power and grace of God. David knew that the child should die, but he also knew the grace of God the healer. So, as the child was alive he fasted, prayed and wept for the child to be shown mercy. But, when the child died, it simply says:

So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the Lord and bowed down. Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate. 2 Samuel 12:20

Basically, life went back to normal. When asked about this, David gives his reasoning for assurance:

"But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." 2 Samuel 12:23

David says that he will go to him. Unless you believe that David was headed to hell, this pretty good evidence that David is confident that his child is in heaven.

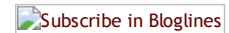
We also know that David was a man that God was not afraid to rebuke for not only his sins, but also for bad theology as well. When David didn't listen to God about how to carry the ark of the covenant, but placed it on a cart like the Philistines and Uzzah touched it and died, David wasn't happy. But, notice that after the fact, he no longer put the ark on a cart, but people carried it (2 Samuel 6:13) like they were supposed to. The point is that God corrected David and his bad theology on how to carry the ark and David responded by changing his method.

I believe for infant salvation the passage in 2 Samuel 12:23 looms very large. This is David who believed this, not some shmuck. David had close communication with God, was just rebuked by God through Nathan, and yet when David believes his child is in heaven, God doesn't rebuke him or speak against him in any way concerning these thoughts.

Lastly, we find the final clincher. It is found in Deuteronomy 1:34-39:

When the Lord heard what you said, he was angry and solemnly swore: "Not a man of this evil generation shall see the good land I swore to give your forefathers, except Caleb son of Jephunneh. He will see it, and I will give him and his descendants the land he set his feet on, because he followed the Lord wholeheartedly." Because of you the Lord became angry with me also and said, "You shall not enter it, either. But your assistant, Joshua son of Nun, will enter it. Encourage him, because he will lead Israel to inherit it. And the little ones that you said would be taken captive, your children who do not yet know good from bad—they will enter the land. I will give it to them and they will take possession of it.

Now, I don't believe in an actual age of accountability, but I do believe that God shows grace to those who are born into sin and yet don't have the capacity to call out on the Lord Jesus Christ to save them from their sin. I believe that Christ died for all men on the cross and covered their sin completely, but only through belief, is Christ's righteousness imputed to the man and his sins wiped away. But, because



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children cannot believe because of their youth, I believe God shows grace as he did to these children in Deuteronomy 1. He literally says that they do not know good from bad. Now, we know that children know if they are lying or being rebellious even at a young age, but the word "know" is a larger intention. The understanding is not to know what sin is, but a real understanding of the depths it has on the relationship with the Lord and the implications of it. It is an intimate knowledge, not merely a factual one. Children don't have the capacity to have an intimate knowledge of their sin and the impacts it has on their true Father God.

I am not sure when children come to this knowledge, as I believe that all children are different. Some may never come to this knowledge because they have downs syndrome. I think when we put all these together, we can confidently say that God shows grace to the children and that heaven will indeed be filled with infants, all praising God for his grace, as we will.

Now, let every mother and father here present know assuredly that it is well with the child, if God hath taken it away from you in its infant days. You never heard its declaration of faith, it was not capable of such a thing, it was not baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ, not buried with him in baptism; it was not capable of giving that "answer of a good conscience towards God;" nevertheless, you may rest assured that it is well with the child, well in a higher and a better sense than it is well with yourselves; well without limitation, well without exception, well infinitely, "well" eternally.

Charles Spurgeon

*"I hope you are both well reconciled to the death of your child. I cannot be sorry for the death of infants. How many storms do they escape! Nor can I doubt, in my private judgment, that they are included in the election of grace."
 John Newton (writing to friends who lost a child)*

POSTED BY SETH MCBEE AT 4/04/2008 08:30:00 AM

LABELS: ATONEMENT, INFANT SALVATION, SALVATION, THEOLOGY, VERSE STUDIES

19 COMMENTS:

leyley13 (jess) said...

Hey... Thank you for expanding on that explanation. Its hard to know whats right in this topic for me. I would agree with what you have said based on the scripture you listed.. Thanks again for clarity.

Jess

4/04/2008 01:48:00 PM

Robert said...

Hi,

I have to say that I think that the bible is inconclusive on this one. There just is not a real solid set of verses to go one way or the other.

The verses you sited were of Jesus using children as metaphors for humility an innocence. He used "as" and "such as"...he didn't say that they were going...but that the adults in the group had to humble themselves "like" these little ones.

I think that the direction that is most consistent is the Calvinist position. God does choose a people for himself, out of a world of fallen sinful human beings. No human being deserves Heaven...and it's no less fair to let a reprobate adult go to hell than it is a 4 year old or a 2 year old or an infant is it?

If we trust God for His decision in the salvation of humans, then we trust Him even if we don't understand.

Having said that...again, I'd say that the bible is inconclusive on this one...

Good post..

► 2007 (158)

► 2006 (93)

bob

QUICK BIOS

Athanasius
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 Charles Spurgeon
 George Whitefield
 Hudson Taylor
 John Bunyan
 John Calvin
 John Huss
 John Knox
 John Owen
 John Wesley
 John Wycliffe
 Jonathan Edwards
 Justin Martyr
 Martin Luther
 Matthew Henry
 Polycarp
 Richard Baxter
 Richard Sibbes
 Tertullian
 William Carey

4/04/2008 04:14:00 PM

Seth McBee said...

Bob.

Thanks for stopping by. I would agree with the fact that the Bible is inconclusive in toto. But, I would say that it gives us some great clues on where to draw a conclusion.

I might expand my thought with another post that will hit some other points as well for a greater understanding.

As far as the quotes from Christ, I am not going to go back and forth on what those verses mean, because I don't think they are conclusive on their own. I will say that Christ's intention of the passage was not on infant salvation, but it still seems to point to that very fact.

It is like when the Bible speaks about science (*earth is round in Isaiah 40:22, etc*) in different parts. Science isn't the focus of the passage but gives us insight. This is what I think we have here, but still not completely conclusive.

Thanks again for your thoughts.

4/04/2008 09:52:00 PM

Robert said...

Seth,

I look forward to another post...thanks.

I think that my point in asking about what Jesus said was that he was using their "innocence" and "humility" as a teaching tool..not that they were going to heaven.

Anyway...good post and thanks again.

4/05/2008 03:56:00 AM

Keith said...

Seth:

Good post. I went through some of the same thoughts/Bible study some time ago with a couple that had lost a child. I went with "number 1."

4/06/2008 06:20:00 PM

Smoking said...

Seth: Isaiah 40:22 is not the same as the Matthew 18 and 19 passages. In the Isaiah passage, as you point out, a physical truth can be derived from the text, even though the purpose of the image is spiritual. This is not the case for the Matthew passages, however; the literary device used is analogy. If I said 'You'd have to be as small as a mouse to drive this model car', would you imply from my statement that mice are able to drive cars? Of course not. You would recognise that I was a) saying you had to be like a mouse in a specific, limited sense, and b) making no comment whatsoever on the actual ability of mice to drive cars. You could, however, glean from general information about car-driving that no mouse would have that ability. Just as you can glean from Scripture that babies do not have the ability to fulfil the conditions of salvation--repenting, believing, calling upon Jesus in order to be saved.

I have a three-week-old daughter, so naturally it would be 'nice' to believe that if she died, she would go to Heaven. Then again, I have a number of non-Christian friends, and it would be 'nice' to believe that when *they* die, they will go to Heaven. That's not really the point though, is it? Your post rather transparently indicates that you've chosen your theology on this matter based on what you *want* to be true, not on what the Bible teaches. In fact, you go so far as to dismiss Point 3 altogether on the grounds that you have 'little patience' with those who believe it! Well, why? Scripture is, after all, on their side. The Bible nowhere declares that infants are saved, and

the very nature of salvation, the way it is achieved--without exception--precludes that possibility. If you find this unpalatable, very well--but engage with it!

4/08/2008 08:55:00 PM

Dominic Bnonn Tennant said...

Seth, in addition to what Smokering has said above, let me offer the following criticisms:

In 2 Samuel 12:23 David appears to be referencing Job 7:8-10. Your argument that, if babies go to hell, then David must have expected to go to hell, is fallacious because it relies on a false dichotomy produced by interpreting this passage through the lens of a more complete understanding of the afterlife. The third option which you don't seem to have considered is that David is not referring to *either* heaven or hell, but simply to Sheol—which is the only interpretation which can actually be derived from the text itself. There is by no means any indication that David believes his child has gone to *heaven*; rather, that he has gone to *Sheol*, which is simply the residence of the dead. It is, at best, far from clear that any distinction is drawn between areas of Sheol at this stage in the Old Testament—so importing these categories into the passage from later revelation constitutes the exegetical fallacy of anachronism.

As regards Deuteronomy 1:39, I agree that *if* people are judged *only* for their sins, and *if* sins are *only* actions made against the law in full knowledge of the spiritual ramifications, then there is certainly a case to be made that babies always go to heaven. However, you have not exegetically justified either of these premises, and certainly they are quite unorthodox as far as I understand orthodoxy. Sans justification, I believe Smokering's point stands: everyone, including infants, requires salvation; and the only way of salvation we know is through faith, of which infants are not evidently capable.

Regards,
Bnonn

4/08/2008 11:21:00 PM

Robert said...

Dom and Seth,
Much more succinctly put than I could have...thank you for the insights.

Since humans have an imperfect fallen heart, and we have a hard time with this subject, we need to remind ourselves to trust Him.

If it's not fair that a segment of the population be punished, then it's not fair that anyone be punished!

We need to be consistent with scripture and let it take us where it will lead us.

4/09/2008 03:35:00 AM

Seth McBee said...

smokering: I hesitate to even engage with someone who is anonymous on issues like these. I really don't think that you read my posts. I think this is a little of the "*pot calling the kettle black*". I specifically said that I don't have much patience for those who believe that *all babies go to hell*, which is not point number 3. You also say that since I desire babies to go to heaven, *which is true*, then I derive my theology through that lense. Did you not read why I believed this? Or did you come on wanting to cause strife and not read the post? It would seem from your comments that you aren't in for a discussion but you are here to throw out disdain for those who don't believe as you do.

Dom: Thank you for showing others how to engage in a discussion about biblical topics. I would still believe that there was some hope from David of the eternity of his son. The reason is because his remorse is completely gone from him. If his baby was just going to be meeting him in Sheol (which you and I would not see this as the same thing as I see Sheol as hell or a place of destruction) and not for an eternity in heaven then why the peace? Also,

those going to hell and those in Abraham's bosom would be in different places with a chasm too large to cross as we find in Luke 16.

William: Thanks for stopping by and I hope that the piece is of comfort to you and the boy's family who passed away.

4/09/2008 08:48:00 AM

Robert said...

Seth,
If you don't mind me saying so....

Comfort comes from knowing that no matter what the eternal fate of loved ones, Heaven or Hell, that God is just, merciful, and true, and will always do the correct thing.

I say that having a father than died unsaved, a twin brother that died at birth, and my family currently is either unsaved or in cults.

The only peace and comfort I CAN have is knowing whatever God does with them, He's perfectly correct in doing so.

4/09/2008 09:44:00 AM

Seth McBee said..

Robert.
I completely agree with you.

This is why those who trust God for the answers on this, based on Scripture, will always find my respect.

4/09/2008 09:47:00 AM

Smoking said...

Seth: Yes, point 2, not point 3. Sorry.

My real name is Sarah Tennant, although I'm actually a lot less anonymous posting as Smoking online (Googling-wise, that is). How is my anonymity relevant to the validity of my argument?

If I misunderstood your intentions I apologise; however, if your aim is truly to take an unbiased look at Scripture's position on babies and salvation, why even bring up your personal feelings about those who believe Point 2 at all? It damages your credibility to point out your lack of respect for these people. Similarly, your desire to believe that all babies go to heaven is (or should be) irrelevant, so why bring it up?

You're right that I didn't address all the points you raised. The reason for this is simply that I think my argument is more fundamental. If Scripture clearly indicates how salvation is obtained (and it does), and if babies are clearly unable to obtain salvation in that manner (and they are), and if no exception to the rule is given (and none is), then babies cannot be saved, and any other passages of Scripture need to be examined in light of this doctrine. If babies cannot be saved, then whether or not they know good from evil is irrelevant. Spurgeon's and Newton's views on the matter are irrelevant.

As for your reasons 4 and 5 (previous comments have already sufficiently dealt with points 1 and 2), I can't see how they are relevant given the doctrine of election?

In short, I cannot see that you have proven your case at all. The only reason I can see for even thinking there might be an (unwritten, extrapolated) exception to the rule of 'salvation is by grace through faith' is emotion--which, while understandable, is not qualitatively different to the emotion which accompanies the death of *adult* unbelievers.

Finally, I agree with Robert. It may seem cold comfort, but knowing that God will act in a just and holy way is ultimately the *only* real comfort--more real than knowing things will turn out the way we want them to.

4/09/2008 06:08:00 PM

Dominic Bnonn Tennant said...

Seth, it's always a pleasure. Smokering is my wife, so let her be considered anonymous no longer (: And, though she may have misread which of your points was numbered which, I believe that her comments are sound regarding the passages in Matthew 18 and 19. It just isn't exegetically warranted to infer from them that babies or children are automatically saved. The most that can be inferred with any level of certainty is that God loves children—but that is already clear from other passages such as John 3:16, which assert that God loves *everyone*. Yet not everyone is saved. The emphasis in Matthew 18 and 19 is clearly on humility: on how salvation is only possible if we make ourselves lower than anyone else (which we do in Christ)—since that is the status afforded children in ancient near-east society. You would have to show me some real exegetical reasoning which engages with established Reformed soteriology before I could accept this passage as *even superficially* suggesting that all children will be saved. Remember, Scripture must be read in light of Scripture. Given what we know about salvation, it is no more reasonable to think that Jesus is here implying that children will be saved as to think that, in Matthew 5:20, he is implying that only those more outwardly righteous than the pharisees will be saved.

Regarding David's actions concerning his son, you ask, "why the peace"? Well, firstly let me remind you that you are begging the question against my previous post by continuing to assume that David had a defined concept of heaven and hell. Sheol just doesn't mean what you think it means. It is not hell; it is simply the place of the dead. Consider Job 14:13 and 17:13, where clearly Job does not understand Sheol to be a place of eternal torment. Or consider Habakkuk 2:5, where Sheol just means death. Or Ecclesiastes 9:10, where it evidently means simply the grave (unless you believe that no one is conscious in hell). Or Psalm 89:48, where it may mean death, the afterlife, or even a place of judgment. As you can see, the precise meaning depends heavily on context. Sheol can mean death or the grave. It usually means the afterlife in general. Sometimes it appears to be referring to a place of judgment in the afterlife. However, it never *always* means hell, and it is not clear that it *ever* means hell in the way we think of that term. The fact that Sheol has a largely negative connotation when used in Scripture is simply because it is the place of the dead, and death is not something with generally positive connotations. For example, it would be a mistake to confuse the use of death as a temporal judgment on sin—described as going down to Sheol—with the *eternal* judgment of the reprobates in hell. I can certainly understand how it is easy to make this conflation; but it is wrong.

Because of this, the *only* interpretation which is exegetically warranted of David's comment "I shall go to him" is that it is referencing Sheol. This is simply a grammatico-historical fact; and it is even more clear from what appears to be a conscious citation on David's part of Job 7:9: "he will not return to me".

Now, I agree that it *may* be the case that David believes his son has gone to heaven. That is a *possible* interpretation of the text; one *possible* answer to your question, "why the peace?" However, it is not a *warranted* interpretation; it is not a *warranted* answer. Therefore, to build any kind of theology on it (especially one which causes so many difficulties for established and very strongly warranted soteriology) is thoroughly dubious. The far more obvious interpretation, and one which you yourself have already mentioned *and affirmed* several times, is simply that David trusts God. And this is where we get to the crux of the matter, because you are discounting *a priori* the possibility that someone who believes all babies go to hell can be trusting God!

What is the point of saying that you have little patience for those people who believe that all babies go to hell, as I tentatively do, when those people themselves are trusting God to do what is right? I am sensitive to the fact that this is a particularly emotional topic, but shall not the judge of all the earth do what is just? The problem I have with your position on this topic is that it is simply a case of special pleading. You acknowledge that you want babies to go to heaven, and you have found reasons to believe this from Scripture. However, these reasons are flawed, as I think I've shown. You then say that you respect those who trust God to elect some babies while damning the rest, because they are trusting God to do what is right. Remember, this is another way of saying that they are content to accept that their baby *might* be

going to hell, because their emotional reaction is superseded by their faith. This is not a faith that their baby is going to heaven—it is a faith that God will do what is right. You would presumably be willing to accept the interpretation that David was trusting God in this way in 2 Samuel. But then you have no patience for those who take the third position that all babies go to hell. You would not accept that David could have trusted God *and* believed positively that his child was going to hell (rather than simply believing that it *might* go to hell). Well, notice the assumption you've snuck in here: the implicit judgment of God that says he *could not be right* to send all babies to hell. Is this not just the same as the judgment universalists make on God? Is it not the same as the judgment Arminians make on God?

Seth, where is your scriptural warrant? Where is the exegesis which shows that those who believe all babies go to hell must be wrong? That they are simply mistaken to trust in God's justice, because it is not just for God to send all babies to hell? Isn't this an obvious inconsistency, coming from someone I know to be a firm Calvinist who loves the doctrines of grace?

In closing, let me remind you that I don't believe dogmatically that no infants are saved. What I believe is that no *scriptural warrant* exists upon which to formulate a doctrine of infant salvation. Therefore, I trust God's justice. *If* all infants go to hell because salvation is through faith alone, and babies cannot have faith, I trust God's justice. *If* some babies are elected to salvation through a means which God has not revealed, while others are damned just as are damned adult sinners who have not believed (whether or not they had a chance to do so), I trust God's justice. And *if* all babies are saved and none perish in hell, I trust God's justice.

Regards,
Bnonn

4/09/2008 06:14:00 PM

Puritan Lad said...

Those who take position #1 use similar arguments, but as you suggested, they are inconclusive. I have to take position #3, though I would love to be proven wrong. This is for several reasons.

1.) Original Sin. Psalm 51:5 and Psalm 58:3 clearly tell us that we are born wicked, and even shaped in the womb that way. Romans 3 tells us that the whole world is guilty before God, therefore infants, just like anyone else, need to be born again (John 3:3).

2.) 1 Corinthians 7:14 suggests that God views the children of believers (or even one believer) different than those of non-believers. The former are "holy", whereas the latter are "unclean". Will the unclean children go to heaven?

3.) Romans 9:10-13 tell us that God loved Jacob and hated Esau when "the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." (Romans 9:11) This suggest God's sovereignty in election even before a child is born. (If Esau had died in infancy, would he have gone to heaven?)

I try to approach this as true to the scriptures as possible, without sentimentalism. In this case, however, I admit that it is difficult.

4/18/2008 05:27:00 AM

Bob Hayton said...

I'm coming to this late, but I wanted to point out that Matt. 19:14 simply says that the kingdom of heaven belongs to "little children", or literally infants. In Mark and Luke, teaching on humility and being saved "as" little children is in view, but in the immediate context of Matt. 19:14 there is no similar wording, you have to go back a chapter and a half to get it.

So on the face of it, Matt. 19 teaches that God's kingdom extends to little infants. This coupled with 1 Cor. 7, mentioned by the last commenter, leads the Reformed and Presbyterian to conclude that the children of saints are saved, barring a rejection and breaking of the covenant.

I'm still Baptist, but they make a good point. And with the David example (if we allow it to be referring to Heaven or something like that), it only deals with the children of saved people, not necessarily all kids.

I agree there is not much clarity on the topic in Scripture, and we certainly can trust in the goodness and righteousness of our God.

Blessings,

Bob Hayton

4/24/2008 04:58:00 PM

Anonymous said...

Thanks. I recently had a miscarriage, and have heard other people with a strong Calvinist background refer to answer #3 as their belief on what happens to babies when they die. I have been listening to John MacArthur Jr.'s teaching on the subject and find his approach to be the same as yours, and it is so encouraging to hear that Spurgeon also agrees! A healthy security resting in the sovereignty of God need not lead us to fatalism, but rather, I have the security of knowing that the Judge of the Earth who does what is right is also the God who is love, and I trust He not only has purpose in what He does, but as God of grace, has taken our child to be with Him early. I know where my child is, even if I don't know why He chose to take them now. His love is so precious at this time, and it is so encouraging to hear others affirm what my heart is sure of knowing the love and grace of my God. Thanks.

5/29/2009 03:08:00 PM

Anonymous said...

Since John 3:18 states that one that does not believe is condemned already, and John 3:36 states that one that does not believe does not have life, but that the wrath of God abides on him, how can one emphatically say an infant is in either heaven or hell when it dies?

If belief is the only guarantee of eternal life in Christ as Scripture proclaims, then the only way an infant can be saved is if that infant believes in Christ.

Is it possible for an infant to believe such? Maybe. Research has proven that babies in the womb respond to outside sounds and voices. A fetus that is subjected to hearing a certain book will calm down after birth when that book is read and be more agitated when listening to a book it had not previously heard. This is interesting to say the least.

Perhaps the wise king Solomon's advice should be practiced by all Christian mothers... subject the fetus to the reading of the Scriptures as much as possible... train up the child in the way he should go... starting as early as the first trimester. Research shows that there is brain activity as early as 9 weeks into the pregnancy.

Let's not consign a child to heaven that may be wicked. On the obverse, let's not consign a child to hell that may not be wicked. Someone said earlier that the judge of all the Earth would do right. Let's believe Him to do just that.

In the meantime, talk to your child that is still in the womb. Tell him or her about Jesus often. The same with the infant in the crib, read him stories from the Bible. It may be that God will work in mysterious ways in the life of that child through the faithful witness of his or her parents.

12/10/2010 01:13:00 AM

Gordon Wayne Watts said...

Bro. Seth, you are only correct in regard to the *immediate* destination of children who die before the age of accountability.

Regarding the scriptures you cite, you misunderstand them:

Matthew 18:3-6, 10 & 19:14 refers to treatment standards of children by adults, not

eternal salvation issues.

The 2nd Samuel passage about David was not literal, since it DOES contradict a whole body of scripture on this same point.

Lastly, Deuteronomy 1:39, which says: "Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey [e.g., kidnapped for plunder], and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither [i.e., to the promised land], and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it." -- HOWEVER, this does NOT refer to children going to Heaven; rather, a literal translation is proper here: This refers to children going in to the promised land after 10 of the 12 spies brought back a bad report and caused Israel to wander in the wilderness for 40 years. Do NOT read more into the Word than what is plainly written!! That is adding to or taking away from the Word, LOL -and this is strictly forbidden by Rev. 22:19, not just for the book of Revelation but for ALL the word of God.

I am a Southern Baptist (probably similar in faith to yourself), and my church bylaws clearly state "There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord," but this necessarily involves freewill.

Therefore, for you to imply or suggest that they will be *eternally* saved without a chance to accept or reject Christ violates both John 3:16 and John 14:6, and contradicts a wide body of Scripture.

For a VERY detailed explanation of this position, see e.g.,

<http://GordonWayneWatts.com/theology/WhenBabiesDie.html>

or:

<http://GordonWatts.com/theology/WhenBabiesDie.html>

This is my position paper on the subject, and it is aptly titled: "Where do babies go when they die? Heaven?? Hell! ?(*)
NO! -Wrong on both counts -so says the Bible:"

I would suggest you print this for offline study (easier on your back/eyes than reading while sitting at your computer desk) -- it requires 14 pages of paper, and prints in colour.

Gordon Wayne Watts
LAKELAND, Fla. (Between Orlando & Tampa)

PS: I'm the pro-life litigant whose 4-3 loss in court almost saved Terri Schiavo's life, so I'm on your side here.

** After you read my 14-page position paper, plz let me know what you think. Thx! **

3/05/2011 09:04:00 PM

Gordon Wayne Watts said...

I had posted a prior comment, but it was a bit lengthy, addressing the points at hand. But I think I can say the same thing in fewer words, so I'll try again:

After reading the husband and wife team who commented, I agree it is not *explicitly* spelled out in scripture, but I believe EVERYONE is missing the main point:

SINCE we know salvation can only happen thru free will, and babies DON'T have free will, and since we know God is just and fair, the ONLY logical conclusion is that God WILL give the babies a chance to accept or reject -just like everyone else had a chance -angels and people included.

The only question then becomes "when?"

The 1000-Year Millennium Reign of Christ Jesus is the most likely candidate, as I elucidate here:

<http://GordonWatts.com/theology/WhenBabiesDie.html> -or:

<http://GordonWayneWatts.com/theology/WhenBabiesDie.html>

Gordon Wayne Watts
LAKELAND, Fla. (between Tampa & Orlando I am)

PS: See my release notice on my position paper above: Yes, anyone and everyone can not only link to it but also reproduce it in its entirety -so long as attribution is given.

3/06/2011 10:08:00 PM

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