

The Tortoise and the Heir

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There is a law in the state of Florida, which prohibits the pilfering of the eggs of sea turtles; these denizens of the briny sea have long been declared an endangered species. In fact one may be prosecuted for even disturbing the little creatures during their rush to the water in the moments following their emergence from the egg. In the early seconds following their birth the infant turtles had better behave more like Aesop's hare than his tortoise or their extra-ovum lives will be brief indeed. It seems that some birds of prey are keenly aware of this precarious phenomenon of survival and seek to devour the tiny reptiles before they find safe harbor in the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Any extrinsic form of noise or bright light will throw the newly hatched turtles into a panic and thus impede their life-preserving trek to the sea. This then enables the birds to feast upon the tender flesh of the unfortunate little tykes. Curiosity seekers and nature's lovers in general have often gathered in darkness near the beach to observe this wonder of nature as millions of turtles break through their calcific protective wombs to enter the cruel world where survival of the fittest is the name of the game. If the people cheer them on in the contest or cameras flash to capture this wondrous moment, disaster awaits the unsuspecting baby turtles as their confusion turns them away from the safety of the salty expanse.

I have no problem what so ever with protecting endangered species that have been reduced in numbers by the foolish and heartless acts of humans that have been poor stewards of the biosphere, which God created for our pleasure and use. What I do object to however is the fact that these environmental rules apply to turtles but not to humans; to the *tortoise* but not the *heir*.

One morning [2-2-02, Groundhog Day; not an endangered species] I heard one liberal female media type take issue with President Bush's belief [and mine] that a fetus is a person. I suspect that this same woman would have no problem defining the contents of a turtle egg as a "turtle" at whatever state of development she happened to find it. Florida law does not say that the stealing of turtle eggs is permissible before a given time, after which time the contents of the eggshell have become a turtle, and after which date the act of absconding with the egg becomes a crime. Like a turtle, a human becomes a human upon conception. The church has held to this position since the beginning of any debate on the issue. Only in recent years have certain Protestant denominations acquiesced to the pro-choice position that life begins at some late date in the gestational process; although they are admittedly ignorant of its actual time of inception.

The problem with this ilk is that they either don't consult, choose to ignore, or simply don't believe in the only objective evidence we have for the beginning of a life; the Word of the Author of life Himself. David said, "Surely I was sinful at birth" and then almost immediately, as if in a corrective fashion, he moves his sin

back nine months in duration, “sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” (Psalm 51:5) It is the soul that gives life to the body of a human being. When the soul departs to its eternal destiny the body dies. It is also the soul that sins because it contains original sin. (Ezekiel 18:4) The soul conceives the sinful act and the body puts it into practice. Thus God’s Word clearly reveals, via His servant David, that the life giving soul is present at conception; the very instant that a sperm penetrates an egg. With the completion of this impregnation of the human egg an *heir* begins to develop within the mother’s womb. Whether an heir “of God and fellow heir with Christ” [Romans 8:17] through God’s plan of election, or merely the temporal heir of his or her parents, that heir deserves every opportunity for productive physical existence. To deprive that person of his or her earthly inheritance is a murderous act.

This essay on the present battle for life in which both the *Tortoise and the Heir* are engaged is more than merely a play on words. It is a play on worlds. The one world of animals and ecology that is God ordained, and Divinely orchestrated; an incessant process of natural selection and survival of the fittest and the other world of human life. Life that is synthesized in the mind of God. Life that is part of God’s eternal plan. Life that has been created in His image. The race is on and though I am not cheering for the “endangered” *tortoise* to lose, this is one contest, which I pray the *heir* will ultimately win.

