



Teachings on Life: Judaism

Judaism is one of the oldest monotheistic religions and was founded over 3500 years ago in the Middle East. Jews believe that God appointed the Jews to be his chosen people in order to set an example of holiness and ethical behaviour to the world.

I am Jewish. I believe there is only one God Who is present in our everyday life. I show my love and faith to God by obeying Him. At its very core Judaism is concerned with the sanctity of human life. A few of my foundational beliefs that shape my views on abortion:

Humankind was created in the Divine Image of God. For this reason every person is equally important. People have free will to make choices in their lives and each of us is responsible for the consequences we bring about as a result of those choices.

Although some have interpreted the Jewish faith to permit, Cecily Routman, founder of the Jewish Pro-life Foundation, has written that “The Torah introduces the principle of the sanctity of unborn human life as early as the Noachide Code - Who so sheddeth man’s blood, within man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man. And you, be fruitful, and multiply; swarm in the earth, and multiply therein. (Genesis 9: 6-7)... References pertaining to the sacred creation of unborn life follow in the Tanakh” including Isaiah 49:1 and Psalm 139.

From the 10th-12 centuries, abortion was completely prohibited “except during a breech birth, when the unborn child would cause the mother’s death if not surgically removed from the womb.” There were no antibiotics like we have today. Routman explains that “this view has been used to justify elective abortion for any reason far beyond its original intent” – an intervention in “a direct, life threatening case in the matter of a breech birth. Some of these rabbinical opinions justified the exception on the basis that life inside the womb had less value (these) opinions had no scientific or factual basis, and have been proven wrong by modern science and medicine.”

If I had the opportunity to share my heart with a Jewish woman or couple who might be considering an abortion, this is the wisdom I would lovingly offer: If your life is not in jeopardy, please consider that this tiny human being has infinite potential to do good in the world. He or she is an irreplaceable part of our Jewish community, uniquely connected to each of us. The person chosen by God to be your baby will have the opportunity to grow spiritually and make the earth a better place.

