

“WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION”

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In one of the many listings of sins and/or sinners found in the Bible the apostle Paul listed those who are “without natural affection” (Rom. 1:31). The Greek language of the New Testament uses at least three words for our English word “love.” One is “agape” which is the divine love. A second is “phileo” which is brotherly love. A third is “storge” which is used of family love such as the love that a mother has for her child. The phrase “without natural affection” in Romans 1:31 is a negated form of the Greek word “storge” (*astorge*).

An Old Testament example of a mother who was “without natural affection” is found in First Kings chapter three. This section of scripture is dealing with the early reign of Solomon and verses 16-28 record a demonstration of the wisdom for which Solomon became famous.

Then came there two women, *that were* harlots, unto the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide *it*. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God *was* in him, to do judgment. (1 Kings 3:16-28 AV)

James Smith in his book “First and Second Kings” makes the following comments:

In this section the author has included an actual case from the judicial files of Judah which illustrates how Solomon's wisdom was quickly demonstrated to the nation. The case was a child custody suit involving two women who were harlots (v. 16). These women are not to be thought of as professional prostitutes, but as women who had borne children out of wedlock. Because of their shame they lived together and alone (v. 17). The plaintiff was first allowed to present her side of the story which was as

follows: Within three days of one another the two of us were delivered of a child. Emphasis is laid on the fact that no third party was present at the time of the births (v. 18), hence there was no possibility of independent testimony in the dispute. The defendant, while sleeping one night, rolled over on her child and smothered it (v. 19). During the night she discovered that her baby was dead, and so she swapped her lifeless baby for my living baby (v. 20). I awakened early to nurse my infant only to discover the babe at my bosom was dead. In broad daylight, however, I discovered that the dead child was not mine at all (v. 21).

The defendant in this case naturally disputed the contention of the plaintiff, tenaciously maintaining that the living child was really her own. Back and forth the women argued with one another making their claims and counter claims (v. 22). Finally king Solomon was ready to make a decision. First he summarized the problem as it has been presented to him (v. 23). Then he ordered that a sword be brought to him (v. 24) and that the child be divided and half given to each woman (v. 25). The real mother, the plaintiff as it turned out, was emotionally stirred by the decision which in effect would leave her son dead. The Hebrew reads literally, "*her bowels were in a ferment.*" The ancients regarded the lower digestive tract as the center and seat of emotions. In desperation she cried out to the king to spare the child and give it to her rival. She preferred to lose her suit and suffer the agony of handing over the child to her rival rather than allow it to be killed. The defendant, on the other hand, was perfectly willing to allow the execution of the child to take place. She really had no love for the infant, and her main object all along had been to deprive her companion of the fruit of her womb (v. 26). Jealousy dries up the milk of human kindness! It was now perfectly apparent who was the real mother, and so the king ordered that the plaintiff be given custody of the disputed child (v. 27). The people of Israel were impressed and even awed by this demonstration of the king's sagacity and they rightly concluded that the wisdom of God was in this young king (v. 28).

Notice that he describes the woman who was willing to allow the execution of the child as a person "who had no love for the infant." This is the same kind of person that Paul describes as "without natural affection." Any person who would advocate or allow the execution of their child or any person's child by abortion is a person who is "without natural affection." Any person who would advocate or allow the execution of an infant by the process of abortion demonstrates that they have no love for that infant, no milk of human kindness. Being pro-choice is the same as being pro-death! Being "without natural affection" is sin. Think of this when you vote.