

Luke 1:41 – Baby or Fetus?

By [Wayne Jackson](#)

When the virgin Mary learned that she was pregnant, and that she would bear the Christ child, she journeyed to the hill country of Judea and sought out her kinswoman, Elizabeth. Elizabeth, of course, was also pregnant with the child who would come to be known as John the Baptizer.

Luke, the medical doctor (Colossians 4:14) and historian, declares that when Mary greeted Elizabeth, “the babe” (John) leaped in her womb (Luke 1:41; cf. 44). The Greek word here employed by Luke is *brephos*. It is a term that is used in the Greek New Testament to denote either a pre-born or post-born child.

Unlike some modern religionists, who support the notion that the entity within the womb is a mere blob of tissue to be disposed of at will, the inspired writers of the Bible consider the unborn human to be a child in every sense of the word — as much a “baby” as a newborn infant. He or she is not just a fetus; there is a child in the mother’s body.

The fact is, when Dr. Luke presents the record concerning the birth of Christ, he says the shepherds were told that they would find a “babe” lying in a manger (Luke 2:12). Luke again employs *brephos*. From the divine viewpoint, the product of human conception is a baby — both before and after birth.

It is no more justifiable to take the child’s life before its birth than it would be to dispose of it after birth. In either case, the crime is murder. Thus, beside Luke 1:41 write: *The pre-birth human is a “baby” — as much as the post-birth child is. See Luke 2:12 for the same word.*

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Scripture References

Colossians 4:14; Luke 1:41; Luke 2:12

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Fortify Your Faith
P.O. Box 11746
Jackson, Tennessee 38308
Phone: (731) 256-7280 – Fax: (731) 256-5152

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