

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know from where the quote, “when a baby is born you cry and at a death you rejoice” was taken.

We researched your question and as far as we can determine, the quote is closely related to a Buddhist saying, “Weep when a child is born, and rejoice when someone dies.” Possibly it is derived from the biblical Book of Job, which predates Buddhism by about 2,000 years. (Job being considered the oldest of all the canon of scripture.)

Job was a good man who loved God very much. God had blessed Job with wealth and a beautiful family. Satan said that Job only loved God because of the blessings he received. God knew better and allowed Satan to test Job with both tragedy and physical ailments. When Job was afflicted with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head, he said, "Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said, 'A man is conceived....' Why did I not die at birth, come out from the womb and expire...? Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul, who long for death, but it comes not, and dig for it more than for hidden treasures, who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they find the grave?" (Job 3:1, 11, 20-22) Quite possibly this quote may be the basis for the Buddhist quote mentioned above.

Another thought is that the quote you cited bears resemblance to some early Gnostic Christian beliefs. To the Gnostics, the world was evil, and anything that prevented even one person from being born was good.

All of the above having been said, the second part of the quote, “and at death you rejoice” can have a positive application, especially if a person has suffered greatly leading up to his death. Once the person dies, suffering ends. He is either with our Lord in heaven, or he is “asleep” in death awaiting the Day of Judgment when he will be brought forth again on earth with the opportunity for everlasting life in God’s earthly kingdom. We must also say that as Christians we rejoice twice when a baby is born. We rejoice not only for the miracle of life now, but also for the surety, due to Jesus’ incredible sacrifice, that the child will have of becoming part of either the heavenly or earthly class in God’s kingdom.

We believe the specific quote you mentioned, although it may have some biblical connotations, is Buddhist. We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio

