

Abortion: What Does God Think?

by Bob Pulliam

It happened at the UCLA medical school. Professor Agnew said, 'Let me give you the family background. The father had syphilis. The mother has TB. They already have four children. The first is blind. the second has died. The third is deaf. The fourth has TB. The mother is pregnant. The parents are willing to have an abortion if you decide they should.' The professor allowed them to think about it for a moment and then said, "What do you think? Do you vote for abortion?" The students replied in unison, "Yes, it is time to abort." "Congratulations," said the professor, "you have just murdered Beethoven."

I have no way to verify that the above happened; but it makes a clear point. Man has no ability to judge the "wisdom" of abortions in "extreme cases". "Extreme cases" are continually upheld as a justifiable reason for continuing the practice of abortion in this country.

In this study, we want to look at some facts regarding abortion, and in particular see what God has to say about it. We will find that the Bible never specifically uses the word "abortion"; but it does, however, teach us how we are to view such a practice.

Why Do Women Get Abortions?...

There are many reasons offered for seeking an abortion. The reasons emphasized by abortion rights activists are rape and incest. These are used as an emotional ploy to justify the practice for **all** who seek an abortion. Note the following run-down of reasons why women get abortions in this country:

Has all the children she wants.....	8%
Can't afford the child.....	21%
Not ready for the responsibility.....	21%
Concerned about how it would change things.....	16%
Victim of rape or incest.....	1%

There are several other categories; but these are the largest and smallest. While the information is a little bit >dated', I'm sure the percentages haven't changed that much. Notice that a majority of abortions are performed for lack of finances and "lack of maturity". Sixteen percent are worried about losing a boyfriend or not being as "free", if they have their child. The abortion issue is not about women who have been raped. Yet this is one of the great arguments used to keep this practice alive.

When Does Life Begin?...

Science must agree that the embryo, blastocyst and fetus are alive. But is it the type of life that should invoke a charge of murder for taking it? After all, grass is alive, and people go out and cut their grass every week, leaving the living blades lying on the ground to die. We are not just talking about killing something that is alive. We are talking about human life. Is the fetus human life? Many contend that the fetus is nothing more than living tissue, like an appendix or gall bladder. But there is a fundamental fallacy in this analogy. A fetus will soon be living outside the body of the mother. Find an appendix or gall bladder that can claim the

same! The fetus also contains these same organs! The fetus has a gall bladder, appendix, heart, brain, eyes, etc... Notice at what point in development various functions begin:

3 weeks - heartbeat begins.

6 weeks - measurable brain waves.

5-7 weeks - mother now sure she is pregnant.

8 weeks - feels pain, sucks thumb, grasps instrument placed in hand, swims.

10 weeks - body fully formed (even fingerprints),
all organs functioning within another week.

One abortion technique in use is the hysterotomy. The fetus is delivered as in a caesarian section. This procedure, done 21 weeks and later, yields a living child which sometimes survives. Even if the child dies, such cases can be used as a full deduction on one's federal income tax. (Handbook on Abortion, p29) Cases of aborted fetuses living and growing up to lead normal lives are becoming more and more common place. The Demoss Foundation ran a series of TV ads several years ago which were narrated by teens who had been aborted by their mothers. Many such cases are living all over the United States. Such points out the dishonesty of the abortion rights movement regarding when human life begins. They know human life is being taken; but to them such is not really the issue.

Attempts to Justify Abortion From the Bible...

It is hard to believe that some would actually try to justify the practice of abortion from the Bible. But some do. Here are a couple of their arguments.

Some would argue that the fetus does not have the breath of life. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Gen 2:7) Breathing is the point at which "man became a living being"; therefore, the fetus is not a living being because the fetus is not yet breathing air. No one can honestly argue that "breath" is not a very important ingredient of physical life. Man can go for 40 days without food. He can go 2 or 3 without water. But he'll only last about 10 minutes without breathing. But is God offering the criteria for determining the point at which life begins? To answer such, we might ask another question... Does God have to breath air to live? Obviously not!

Some would argue that the Law of Moses didn't recognize the fetus in legal judgments...

If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life... (Ex 21:22f)

It is argued that, "If she miscarries (aborts) then there is no murder; but if the woman suffers harm, the offender must be recompensed justly." Such is a foolish assessment of this passage. The word for "child", here, indicates a fully formed human. The "mischief" that would follow is not just harm to the mother; but rather includes harm to the child that "departs from her". The grammar of the passage would indicate wrong-doing toward the child as well. The New King James version makes this much clearer by rendering the passage: "If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely,

yet no lasting harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him..."

Exodus 21:22 and 23 is actually a proof of the human life of a child before birth. It commands the sanctity of that life by requiring "life for life". If such is not the case, verses 24 and 25 make no sense. If the child dies, what shall the offending party give if his wife is not also pregnant. But since the child is a human life, the passage makes sense, and is not contradictory. Life for life... If the child dies, the offender would be put to death! Capital punishment for murder. But you don't murder "living tissue". You can only "murder" human life. Such is what the child is in the womb of his mother!

The Bible On The Fetus...

What does the Bible say about the life of a fetus before birth? Luke wrote that at six months Elizabeth had a "babe" in her womb:

"Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this in now the sixth month for her who was called barren..."... And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.... "For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy." (Luke 1:36, 41, 44)

The word for "babe" in these verses is the same as that found in Luke 2:12 & 16 (Jesus after birth); Luke 18:15 (infants brought to Jesus); and Acts 7:19. You might also note that the babe in Elizabeth's womb leaped "for joy". That doesn't really sound like the same reaction of an appendix or gall bladder.

We find many other references to children still within their mother. For example, after Rebekah had conceived the record says, "the children struggled together within her" (Gen 25:22). In Genesis 16:11, Hagar was told by the Angel of the Lord that she was "with child". The word used by this angel is the same as that used in Isaiah 26:17 of a pregnancy that has come to term: "As a woman with child is in pain and cries out in her pangs, when she draws near the time of her delivery..." Luke 2:5 says of Mary that she "was with child."

The "Grave" of a "Non-being"...

It is interesting to ponder the thought of a "grave" of a "non-being". We bury people (dead human beings) in graves; but where would you bury a fetus? Jeremiah wrote:

"Because he did not kill me from the womb, that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb always enlarged with me." (Jer 20:17)

Why would his mother have been his grave rather than a specimen jar? It is because he knew that human life begins in the womb! David also knew this when he wrote Psalm 139:13 - 16. David's identity was woven and established in the womb of his mother. "Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them." (v16)

Conclusion...

Abortion cannot be justified from the Bible. The Bible clearly conceives (pardon the pun) of the fetus as a child... a human being. The Law of Moses prescribed the death penalty for anyone who caused the death of a child in his mother's womb.

We hear a lot about a woman's right to choose these days. The real issue is not choice. The woman exercised her choice when she conceived. The real issue is not medical (the mother's life endangered). The real issue is not legal (rape or incest). The real issue **is** a moral question... When is it right to take an innocent human life?