

## VII. Abortion

- I. Is an unborn child a person?
  - A. Verses suggesting that an unborn child is a person:
    - Lk. 1.41, 44 (John the Baptist) <sup>41</sup> And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ...<sup>44</sup> For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.
    - Ps. 51.5 (David) <sup>5</sup> Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
    - Gen. 25.22-23 (Jacob & Esau) <sup>22</sup> The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. <sup>23</sup> And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger."
    - Ps. 139.13-15 (David) <sup>13</sup> For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
  - B. Exod. 21.22-25 (a legal passage of special significance) Exodus 21:22 "When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out,\* but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. (ESV)
    1. \*Alternative translation "she has a miscarriage" (RSV, NRSV, pre-1999 NASB): incorrect
      - (i) Literal translation: "so that her children/child comes out"
      - (ii) yēlēd (89 times in OT) = "child"; yātsā' (1068 times in OT) = "come out"
      - (iii) Not "miscarriage" (= nēphel, Job 3:16; Ps. 58:8; Eccl. 6.3, or shākol, Exod. 23:26, but these words are not used in Ex. 21:22)
      - (iv) Reason for "miscarriage" translation:
      - (v) Even with this translation:
    2. The translation "so that her children come out," or "and she gives birth prematurely" is correct (ESV, NIV, NASB margin, NASB update after 1999, NKJV)
    3. Implications of this law
      - (i) Accidentally causing a premature birth is wrong (fined) – even if mother & baby not harmed
      - (ii) Accidentally causing the death of an unborn child results in death penalty (vs. 23: life for life)
      - (iii) Therefore, God places a very high value on the unborn child's "right to life" [only place in Mosaic law where accidental killing => death penalty]
      - (iv) If accidental killing of unborn child is so serious in God's eyes, then intentional killing must be even worse
  - C. Conclusion: Scripture requires us to protect the unborn child as a person from conception.  
→ but what if someone here has had, or has encouraged someone to have, an abortion?
  - D. Significant and increasing medical information on personhood of unborn child
  - E. Objections
    1. Not a person because:
      - a. Unable to survive without its mother (or: survive outside mother's womb)
      - b. Unable to talk, interact with other people, perform moral actions
    2. Children w/ birth defects:
      - a. Would we kill the child after birth?
      - b. "Possible" or "probable" diagnosis can be in error
      - c. Birth defects can be very small, and even when significant, the child can lead a happy life and bring much joy, blessing to family and to others (example: Down's Syndrome children)  
Exodus 4:11 <sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?  
John 9:1-3 <sup>1</sup> As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.
      - d. Example: "The father had syphilis and the mother had tuberculosis. Of four previous children, the first was blind, the second died, the third was both deaf and dumb, and the fourth had tuberculosis. What would you advise the mother to do when she finds she is pregnant again?" Abortion? (from Randy Alcorn, *ProLife Answers to ProChoice Arguments* (Portland: Multnomah, 1992, p. 175)
    3. Rape or incest
      - a. Would we kill the child after birth?
      - b. Very rare: max. of 1% of all abortions, probably much less (0.1%?) ("hard cases make bad law")

- c. We must not minimize genuine pain, hardship involved, but also the opportunity for God to work in remarkable ways  
(example: Ethel Waters (1896-1977), American blues and jazz vocalist, Broadway and film actress (nom. for Acad Award 1949); gospel singer: mother was raped at age 12, gave birth to Ethel) (Alcorn, *Answers* p. 179)
4. What if necessary to save life of mother?
- Extremely rare (far less than 0.1% of abortions)
  - When two lives would be lost with no action, and only one can be saved, doctors must save the life that can be saved (example: ectopic pregnancy)
  - Abortion to save the mother's life  $\neq$  abortion to save the mother's "health"  
(abortion supporters always want laws to have exceptions to protect the "life and health of the mother" - a huge loophole that would allow most abortions)  
example: T. Kelley (*World*, June 16, 2007, p. 20)
  - All pro-life proposals for legislation include exception to save life of mother
- II. Should government make laws against abortion?
- A. Yes: one fundamental responsibility of a government is to protect the lives of the people it governs  
Psalm 82:3-4 <sup>3</sup> Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.  
<sup>4</sup> Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.  
Rom 13:3-4 <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, <sup>4</sup> for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.
- B. Objection: "You shouldn't try to impose your moral standards on other people"  
Answer: (1) Almost all laws are based on some kind of moral principles (such as belief that murder is wrong)  
(2) First Amendment guarantees we are all free to argue and try to persuade others about which laws to have – are you saying I am not free to argue for my view?  
(3) The Bible claims that these are not our personal moral standards but God's. Examples in other cultures:  
Daniel (Dan 4:27 <sup>27</sup> Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you: break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity.)  
Jonah (Jonah 3:4 <sup>4</sup> Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!")  
John the Baptist (Mark 6:18 <sup>18</sup> For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.")  
Paul to Felix: (Acts 24:25 <sup>25</sup> And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you.")
- III. Are we in danger of God's judgment, as some people say?
- A. Note the warning of judgment to a nation that sacrificed its children:  
Jeremiah 7:30-34 <sup>30</sup> "For the sons of Judah have done evil in my sight, declares the LORD. They have set their detestable things in the house that is called by my name, to defile it. <sup>31</sup> And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind. <sup>32</sup> Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when it will no more be called Topheth, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth, because there is no room elsewhere. <sup>33</sup> And the dead bodies of this people will be food for the birds of the air, and for the beasts of the earth, and none will frighten them away. <sup>34</sup> And I will silence in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, for the land shall become a waste.
- B. Great tragedy of incalculable loss of human life since abortion was made legal by Roe v. Wade (Jan. 22, 1973)  
40 years: over 50,000,000 abortions. This =50,000,000 people never born (appx. 16% of U.S. population) compare total population of UK: 63M, France: 65M, Canada: 35M  
AZ: 6.5M, CA: 38M, TX: 26M, FL: 19M  
- U.S. birth rate now only 2.0 (or fewer?) children per woman (2.1 needed to maintain same population)  
- What would these children be doing now?
- C. Compare Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address re: slavery
- D. Yet: pro-life viewpoint is slowly gaining ground

- E. My conclusion:  
 U.S. is in the balance  
 Jeremiah 18:7 If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it.

- IV. The current status of our laws and of the controversy in the U.S.
  - A. Abortion has, sadly, become a (the?) primary dividing line between Democratic and Republican parties, at least on national level
  - B. Partial-birth abortion ban: took over 10 years to become law (!)  
 a ban was passed twice by House & Senate, vetoed twice by Pres. Clinton (4/96 and 10/97)  
 Then House again passed a ban Oct 2, 2003; Senate on Oct 21, Pres G W Bush signed Nov 5, 2003  
 Apr. 18, 2007: Supreme Court upheld the law (in *Gonzales v. Carhart*)
  - C. Can Roe v. Wade be overturned?
    - 1. Only by a different Supreme Court:

Would keep Roe v. Wade	Often in middle – unsure of vote	Would overturn Roe v. Wade
Ruth Ginsburg (BC)	Anthony Kennedy (RR)	John Roberts (GWB)
Stephen Breyer (BC)		Antonin Scalia (RR)
Sonia Sotomayor (BO)		Clarence Thomas (GHWB)
Elena Kagan (BO)		Samuel Alito (GWB)

- 2. No “right to abortion” is written in the U.S. Constitution  
 – upheld by judicial activism, not by those who interpret Constitution acc. to original intent

- V. What can we do?
  - A. Pray
  - B. Be informed
  - C. Vote
  - D. Many of you: several other things  
 write letters, give money, work for pro-life groups, work in crisis pregnancy centers  
 Support: Center for Arizona Policy (CAP), and Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF)
  - E. Not: resort to violence, taking law into own hands!
  - F. Change in Supreme Court, overturning Roe v. Wade, is necessary, but will not end our problems:
    - 1. Laws would need to be passed in all 50 states
    - 2. RU-486 approved by FDA in 2001
  - G. Reminder of God’s forgiveness if you have been involved in having or supporting an abortion in the past:  
 1 John 1:9

All of the class lessons and outlines are posted on the class website <http://www.christianessentialssbc.com>.