June 2012

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THE PERVERSITY OF ABORTION

I must confess that I have always, even before seeking factually correct information, believed that abortion is wrong. (The title of this article gave that away, didn't it?) I still believe that. And at the end of this article that is still my unequivocal position. However, between now and the end of this article I will present some explanations with which a number of readers, who also believe abortion to be wrong, may disagree?

I know that I have a bias against abortion. But that does not mean that I am not open to the facts. I am open to examining the facts because I face up to my own bias. I try to face up to all the facts that come to my attention. Now in all likelihood you too have a bias against abortion. That's also not a problem, provided that you too will face up to any and all facts as they come to your attention. And, as already stated, there is nothing to challenge the conclusion that before God abortion is a practice which, like murder, is unequivocally wrong.

SOME FACTS ABOUT ABORTION

Many of us don't realize just how many abortions are performed every year. Worldwide every year there are 29 abortions for every 1000 women in the age-group 15-44 years. The official worldwide figures for abortions for sample years were: 45.6 million in 1995, 41.6 million in 2003, and 43.8 million in 2008. In other words, currently every year there are over 40 million abortions worldwide. That amounts to over **112,000 abortions EVERY DAY** worldwide, or over one million every nine days! In our world abortions are big business!

Of the over 7 billion people on earth today, there are over 1.5 billion women in the age bracket 15-44 years. [COMMENT: Worldwide statistics consider age 15 years as the potential start of sexual activity for girls. I myself certainly don't consider a 15-year old girl to be "a woman". I am here simply using the term "women" as it is used in certain official reports.]

Without arguing about precise statistics the point is that worldwide there are **OVER ONE BILLION ABORTIONS EVERY 25 YEARS!** The scale on which abortions are performed is absolutely horrendous! **Every year** there are now almost as many abortions as there were total deaths worldwide, military and civilian combined, for the whole of World War II (i.e. 40 million plus).

[**COMMENT:** In spite of one billion abortions every 25 years and around 1.4 billions deaths every 25 years, the world's population is currently still growing by TWO BILLION people every 25 years. Without all those abortions, at the present rate of increase the world's population would grow by ONE billion every 8 years.]

Abortion is a monumental evil. But we should base our views regarding abortion on accurate information, rather than on nothing more than some spontaneous bias against this perverse practice. And let's consider one specific situation that unfortunately also arises at times.

THE PROBLEM OF RAPE

Rape is a horrendous crime. It is a devastating experience for a woman, and it is certainly just as evil as murder. I admit that my own views here are perhaps somewhat extreme. I believe that there should be **the death penalty for rape**, based on Scriptures like Deuteronomy 22:25.

But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: **then the man only that lay with her shall die**: (Deuteronomy 22:25)

In Old Testament Israel this principle applied when the woman fought against her attacker but was overpowered by the rapist. Today rapists frequently threaten to kill their victims with a gun or a knife if they dare to scream. Or they may drug their victims before raping them. Thus today even cases where the woman did not scream should therefore be judged just as if the woman had screamed for her life while she was being raped.

So my personal view is that in cases where it is **clear beyond any doubt** that a man raped a woman, then the man deserves the death penalty, though in our societies that is not the penalty that is usually imposed. (False rape accusations obviously also complicate the picture.) And this article is not a crusade for the death penalty for rape. This is not an article about rape. I mention this personal view only because I believe you should know where I stand on the matter which I will now discuss.

The reason I bring up the subject of rape is because some of the 40 million abortions every year are also impacted by the matter of rape. Specifically:

IS A RAPE VICTIM WHO BECOMES PREGNANT EXPECTED TO BEAR THE CHILD OF THE MAN WHO RAPED HER?

What is a woman who has been raped expected to do? Would you, the reader, make the same decision on this matter if YOU were in the shoes of the raped woman, or if the raped woman was your wife or your daughter, as the decision you make right now? We need to answer this question not as some abstract theoretical judicial decision, but with a clear focus on the rape victim. The rapist can go to hell, for all I care! It is the victim we should be concerned for, because that is also God's concern. God is concerned primarily for the victims of crimes, not for the criminals who have deliberately committed those crimes.

So let's consider some basic biological facts surrounding childbirth.

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

Here I start with the premise that God is the One who created the reproductive process for human beings. I believe that there is a purpose for every aspect of that process. Nothing forced God to create the reproductive process in the way that it exists. There are any number of things in the reproductive process that God could have designed differently, had God wanted to do so.

To be specific:

God could have designed the time of pregnancy to be longer or shorter. God could have designed it so that men ejaculate far more or far less sperm in each sex act. God could have changed hundreds of details in the whole process of a child being born. So my point is that **there is a purpose for everything** within the begettal and birth process. There is nothing in that process for which we could say: God did it

this way because that is the only possible way it could be done.

So let’s look at some basic biological facts:

For a **pregnancy** to occur there must be **three things**:

1) There must be **a mature ovum** present. That ovum is a living cell.

2) There must be **viable sperm cells** present to fertilize the ovum. Those sperm cells are also living cells.

3) The fertilized ovum must **attach itself to the lining of the uterus** in the woman’s body, the endometrium.

If any of these three things is not present or does not occur, then no pregnancy can take place. Thus, if there is no mature ovum present, then there will not be a pregnancy. And if there are no sperm cells to fertilize the ovum, then again there will not be a pregnancy. And **if a fertilized ovum does not manage to attach itself to the lining of the womb**, then again there will not be a pregnancy.

[**COMMENT**: These three things are thus also the focus of the various methods of contraception. Some forms of contraception seek to prevent the presence of fertile sperm cells or of a mature ovum; other forms seek to prevent the union of a sperm cell with an ovum; and other forms still seek to prevent a fertilized ovum from attaching itself to the endometrium, known as implantation. This last form of contraception is known as IUD’s, for "intrauterine devices".]

That is all very elementary, I know. But the point is: God allows most ova to die without ever being fertilized by a sperm cell. So the fact that all these ova were "alive" at one point is not a criterion regarding whether or not they will be allowed to die without ever being involved in a pregnancy. The "life" which an ovum has is **not viable** unless the ovum is fertilized within a very limited period of time.

Likewise, there are anywhere from about 40 to 150 million sperm cells per ejaculate and in most cases not a single one of them will manage to fertilize an ovum. So for every married man over the course of his marriage multiple billions of his sperm cells will die without ever initiating the process towards a pregnancy. The fact that all these billions of sperm cells had actually been "alive" at one point is likewise not a criterion regarding whether or not they will be allowed to die without ever being involved in a pregnancy. The point is that the "life" a sperm cell has is also **not viable** unless that sperm cell manages to fertilize an ovum, likewise within a very limited period of time.

SO WHEN DOES LIFE ACTUALLY START?

Most anti-abortion people will answer this question by saying: life starts when an ovum is penetrated by a sperm cell, i.e. when the ovum has been fertilized by a sperm cell.

I BELIEVE THAT THIS QUESTION CREATES A WRONG FOCUS, AND THEREFORE THE ANSWER IS MISLEADING!

Asking "when does life **START**?" is the wrong question when we are talking about the subject of abortion. The correct question we need to ask is:

WHEN DOES VIABLE LIFE START?

By "viable life" I mean life that is capable of producing a live birth. And viable life does not start when an ovum is fertilized by a sperm. **Viable life** really only starts **when the fertilized ovum implants itself in the lining of the uterus**. Prior to that implantation (or attachment) everything is still tenuous.

Life cannot possibly come from the non-living! The fertilization process can only lead to life because the components of that fertilization process (i.e. the ovum and the sperm) themselves already had life. The fertilization process utilizes those two living components to create the potential for a new life to start.

I am using the term "viable life" to refer to **the likelihood for a new life**. There are a number of potential obstacles between the potential for a new life (the time of fertilization) and the likelihood for a new life (the time of implantation).

So the question "when does life start?" has a wrong focus. The correct focus of our question should be: when does **viable** life start? The point is that a fertilized ovum does not have viable life **UNTIL** it attaches itself to the endometrium.

The reason I believe that **viable life starts when the fertilized ovum attaches itself to the lining of the uterus** is as follows:

Worldwide in any given 24-hour period there may be as many as 500 million people engaging in having sex. The number may well be higher or lower, but since this is only for illustration purposes, therefore the correct number is not important. For illustration purposes let's just say that worldwide there are 250 million sex acts per day (i.e. 500 million people). That means that every year there are over 90 billion sex acts worldwide. (There is a reason why I mention these hypothetical statistics, so please bear with me for a while.)

Currently worldwide there are about 130 million live births per year plus another 40 million abortions per year. So in all there are about 170 million pregnancies per year. In very approximate terms (since all these figures are only approximations) worldwide there is one pregnancy for every 500+ sex acts.

Yes, certainly, a part of the reason for such low pregnancy rates, when compared to the total number of sex acts, is contraception. But contraception is practiced mostly in the Western world, where as one result the minority of pregnancies occur. And a part of the reason for such low pregnancy rates is also that the sex acts occur at the wrong time in the women's monthly cycles (i.e. too long before or after ovulation). But these things (contraception and wrong timing) are clearly not the whole answer for the overall low pregnancy rates compared to the total number of sex acts that are involved.

Now consider the following point:

While there is only **ONE PREGNANCY** for every approximately 500 sex acts, there are very likely an additional SEVERAL cases of an ovum actually being fertilized by a sperm cell for every 500 sex acts. The point is that **not every fertilized ovum results in a pregnancy**!

This brings us to **the third requirement for a pregnancy** that I listed above. It is well known that in many cases a fertilized ovum does NOT manage to attach itself to the lining of the uterus for any number of natural reasons. (By "natural reasons" I mean reasons that don't involve an IUD.) And in those cases the fertilized ovum dies and is expelled from the woman's body with the next menstruation.

Reliable statistics here are obviously not available. But the point is that worldwide there are also MILLIONS of cases every year (and I am here excluding the use of IUD's) where a fertilized ovum did not manage to attach itself to the woman's body and therefore **no pregnancy resulted**.

For those people who wish to challenge the claim that "millions" of these cases occur naturally every year, I will say that even if there were just "thousands" of these cases amongst the 90 billion annual sex acts worldwide, it would still make the same point that I am going to make shortly. It makes no difference whether the number here is thousands or millions.

BIOLOGY IN SIMPLE TERMS

The ovaries alternate in releasing one ovum every month (in very general terms). As long as that ovum was within the ovary, it was securely contained within the woman's body. Now once an ovum has been released by one ovary into one of the fallopian tubes, that ovum is free-floating! It is NOT in any way attached to the woman's body! That free-floating ovum has no effect on the woman's body, provided it stays unfertilized.

You follow?

An ovum in one of the fallopian tubes is IN the woman's body, but it is NOT A PART OF the woman's body. The ovum has in fact started its migration out of the woman's body. And the only way that outward migration can be stopped is by a pregnancy.

Now when a husband and wife have sex and the husband's sperm are released into the wife's body, then that does not mean that the wife will become pregnant immediately. In fact, worldwide she will not become pregnant at all 499 times out of every 500 times they have sex. However, if the wife DOES become pregnant, here is what happens:

After the 40-150 million sperm have been released into the wife's vagina, they try to swim up into the fallopian tubes. Only a few hundred out of that number will actually reach the vicinity of the ovum; i.e. less than one-thousandth of one percent will reach the vicinity of the ovum, while 99.999%+ will never get anywhere near the ovum even in the best circumstances.

Assuming the situation where an ovum has been released and is available in one of the fallopian tubes:

The sperm typically take **1-2 days** before they reach the ovum. If one sperm cell actually manages to penetrate the ovum, THEN it takes **a further 24 hours** for the actual fertilization process to be completed. This means that the actual fertilization is typically completed **2-3 days after the woman had sex**.

To state this in very plain terms: even when a pregnancy occurs, the woman was in fact not actually pregnant for the 3 days after she had had sex! Her ovum was only completely fertilized about 3 days after that sex act, if not later.

BUT EVEN AFTER THE OVUM IS FERTILIZED SHE IS STILL NOT PREGNANT!

Worldwide there are millions of instances every year where an ovum was in fact fertilized 2-3 days after sexual activity, but the woman never knows that her ovum had been fertilized because that fertilized ovum never managed to attach itself to the lining of her uterus.

The fertilized ovum is still free-floating in the woman's fallopian tube. And after fertilization it begins to divide rapidly into many cells. Only **another 3-6 days later** does the fertilized ovum leave the fallopian tube and enter the uterus. Only then does the fertilized ovum attempt to attach itself to the endometrium, the uterine lining.

Now once the fertilized ovum manages to implant itself in the uterine lining, **THEN A PREGNANCY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED**! THEN THE OVUM IS ATTACHED TO THE MOTHER'S BODY!

As already mentioned, worldwide every year there are millions of instances where the fertilized ovum NEVER manages to attach itself to the endometrium. And in those millions of instances the woman is not pregnant, even though for a short period of time there actually was a fertilized ovum with rapidly dividing cells within her body. Excluding some extremely rare situations, **her next menstrual cycle shows** that she was not pregnant during the preceding month.

The fact that she was not pregnant immediately after having had sex is also demonstrated by the fact that it takes **a week after fertilization of the ovum** for the hormone **hCG** (human chorionic gonadotropin) to be detected in the woman's blood and urine even in a highly sophisticated hospital setting. (With home-pregnancy-tests these levels can only be detected one or two weeks later.) It is the presence of this hormone that identifies that the woman is pregnant.

For that week before even minute levels of hCG could be detected she wasn't really pregnant yet, because the ovum had not yet attached itself to the lining of the uterus; it was still free-floating in her body. And the pregnancy hormone hCG is not produced before the fertilized ovum has attached itself to the endometrium, because hCG is only produced by **the cells that form the placenta** after the ovum has attached itself to the uterine lining. That hormone production signals the start of pregnancy.

LET'S CONSIDER WHAT GOD HAS DONE

You're not buying my argument? You're not yet convinced? You feel confident that from the time of having had sex onwards or even from the time of fertilization of the ovum the woman (who later has a baby) was already pregnant? Then consider the following questions:

1) **WHY** did God design the human reproductive process in such a way that there is **A CLEAR TIME-LAG** of 1-2 days between the time when the sperm are deposited in the woman's body, and the time when 0.001% of them may perhaps reach the ovum in the one fallopian tube? Don't tell me that God could not have done it any other way, because that is simply not correct. God clearly and deliberately built a time lapse between these two events. Did God perhaps build this time gap into the process as **a form of safety valve**, to deal with unexpected or undesirable situations?

2) **WHY** did God design it so that there is **a further time-lag** in the form of the process of fertilization itself taking about 24 hours? Don't tell me it simply had to take that long. There are some highly toxic substances which, if injected into the body, can cause death in anywhere from a few seconds to a few minutes. The biological processes involved are almost instantaneous. It follows that God could **likewise** have made the process of fertilization of an ovum by a sperm almost instantaneous with the time when that sperm penetrated into the ovum. But God didn't do it that way, did He? Is this 24-hour period perhaps **another safety valve**?

3) **WHY** did God design it so that there is **a further 3-6 day time-lag** between the ovum being fertilized and the fertilized ovum then attaching to the woman's uterine lining? **WHY WAIT 3-6 DAYS?** Is this perhaps **a third safety valve** that God has built into the process?

4) **WHY** did God design it so that **the pregnancy hormone hCG** is only produced AFTER the fertilized ovum has attached itself to the endometrium? WHY is this pregnancy hormone not produced from the time that the ovum was fertilized? If God views the time of the fertilization of the ovum as the start of life, why not show this by starting the production of hCG right then? Why wait until the ovum has attached

itself to the lining of the uterus? Is this perhaps God's way of showing us that **the ovum's attachment** to the endometrium **is the deciding factor** in establishing a pregnancy?

5) **WHY** did God design it so that worldwide **MILLIONS OF FERTILIZED OVA** (even apart from the use of IUD's) never manage to attach to the endometrium? This is a natural process. And the women involved will never know that the processes within their bodies had in fact proceeded to the point of the ova actually being fertilized, but then those fertilized ova simply passed out of their bodies.

Now consider this last point very carefully.

If GOD considers **a fertilized ovum before it attaches to the endometrium** to already be a human life, and if human beings have not in any way interfered in the process of the fertilized ovum having tried in vain to attach itself to the lining of the uterus, showing that in these cases this process is out of man's control, **WHY would God freely allow something like this to happen** millions of times every year? And since the women involved are in most cases not even aware of this process (of the fertilized ovum trying in vain to attach to the endometrium) there can hardly be any moral guilt involved.

I understand that some people like to refer to "**conception**" as: the time when the ovum is fertilized by a sperm. I don't believe that position really makes sense! That position would imply that millions of women **"have conceived" without becoming pregnant** and without knowing that they had conceived, simply because in their specific cases the fertilized ovum never attached to the woman's body and passed out of her body with her next menstrual cycle.

It seems much more logical to refer to "**conception**" as: **the time when the blastocyst, the fertilized ovum, attaches itself to the woman's body**, to the endometrium. That is the time when the woman's body starts to produce the hormone hCG, to indicate pregnancy. And that should be the point in time that identifies "conception".

The difference between the day of fertilization and the day of attaching to the endometrium is typically only from 3-6 days. But this 3-6 day gap, together with the additional 2-3 day gap between the sex act and completion of fertilization, can have some profound consequences. [COMMENT: I am being conservative here, to err on the safe side. Many authorities will point out that the whole process will typically take from 7-10 days.]

Incidentally, you can find various websites on the internet, where this question (should conception refer to the time of fertilization or to the time of implantation?) is also argued both ways. I mention this to point out that I am neither the only one nor the first one to believe that conception should correctly refer to the time when the blastocyst attaches itself to the endometrium. And even some of those who insist on referring to the time of fertilization as "conception" will concede that this is not the same as pregnancy. For example, the website ovatel.com has the following statement:

"The term conception is when the sperm and egg combine in that precious magic moment. **This does not mean that you are pregnant**." (my emphasis)

Now I don't believe that it makes sense to say that a woman who has "conceived" is somehow not yet "pregnant". And I don't believe that a woman is already pregnant as soon as her ovum is fertilized. I believe that she is only pregnant from the time of implantation. Therefore I believe it is much more appropriate to refer to the time of implantation as the time of conception.

WHAT ACTUALLY CONSTITUTES "AN ABORTION"?

In the first 8 weeks after fertilization the developing human being is known as an embryo. After 8 weeks it becomes known as a fetus (or "foetus").

An abortion is the forced removal of an embryo or a fetus from the mother's uterus. The key is always that a developing human being is **forcefully removed from the uterus**.

HOWEVER:

I do not believe that any action that is taken for the purpose of preventing a pregnancy BEFORE a fertilized ovum actually attaches itself to the endometrium constitutes "an abortion"!

This means that there is no such thing as an abortion being involved in any actions taken by the woman during (to definitely err on the safe side) **the first 5 days** after a specific sexual activity.

For a start, there could not possibly be any indications that a pregnancy is in the process of taking place. Any actions taken right after sexual intercourse, or even the morning after, in no way qualify for the term "abortion". Thus, whether a married woman takes certain actions after having had unprotected sex with her husband because they don't wish to have another child, or whether a woman who was raped takes the same actions because she likewise wants to prevent becoming pregnant from that rape, I believe there is no condemnation from God for such actions on the part of either woman.

So here is the way I understand the difference between contraception and abortion:

CONTRACEPTION = Any action that is taken either before sexual intercourse or in the first 5 days after sexual intercourse, for the explicit purpose of PREVENTING a pregnancy.

ABORTION = Any invasive action taken 10 or more days AFTER sexual intercourse, for the explicit purpose of TERMINATING a pregnancy.

The difference is between preventing a pregnancy and terminating a pregnancy.

Now we are mostly accustomed to thinking that "contraception" is something that can only be practiced BEFORE engaging in sexual activity. I believe that this view is not correct. When God built **three very clear time lapses** into the process between the sex act occurring and the fertilized ovum attaching itself to the woman's body, then that indicates to me that God made provision for still preventing a pregnancy during at least the first 5 days after sexual intercourse.

[**COMMENT:** As an aside, these time lapses also show that God did not intend procreation to be the only purpose for the sexual relationship between a husband and his wife. God provided ample time for a married couple to take contraceptive steps even after sex to avoid a pregnancy. We need to be careful that we don't approach the subject of a sexual relationship between a husband and his wife from the "strict religious perspective" which was imposed on the "Christian world" by the Catholic Church and then accepted by a number of Protestant churches, the "**sex is evil except for the purpose of having a baby**" attitude, which was fairly prevalent in bygone ages.

That attitude is likely to prevent someone from acknowledging that a pregnancy has not been started until the blastocyst attaches itself to the endometrium. That attitude is likely to insist on defining the moment of fertilization as the start of pregnancy, even though in millions of cases the women will not become pregnant. That attitude is likely to deny that God also intended sex within marriage to be a mutually enjoyable experience, one that can strengthen the bond between a husband and wife.]

I believe that one reason why God made this provision for contraception during at least the first 5 days

after sexual activity was to give any woman who has been sexually violated the opportunity to avoid becoming pregnant as a result of that sexual violation.

Rape is a horrendous crime against a woman. The woman is the victim. To then be forced to carry a baby for the pervert who raped her would severely compound the suffering for the woman, in addition to imposing an enormous responsibility upon her (caring for a child) for the next 20 years or so, which responsibility is totally unjustified.

To be forced into establishing a pregnancy would in fact amount to imposing **a very severe penalty on the victim** of a terrible crime. And that would be unequivocally an enormous injustice forced upon the victimized woman. I DON'T BELIEVE THAT GOD WOULD FORCE THIS PENALTY UPON THE INNOCENT WOMAN WHO WAS RAPED! And therefore God built a "safety valve" period of about 5 days into the process of conception before a pregnancy is actually established. In this way God made provision for preventing a pregnancy even after sexual activity has taken place.

CONTRACEPTION AFTER SEX

The idea of contraception goes back into antiquity. However, where today people mostly use contraception before sexual activity, anciently people tried to mostly use contraception after sexual activity. The success rate in preventing pregnancy after sexual activity may not necessarily have been very high, but it was attempted nonetheless.

[COMMENT: As far as the use of IUD's is concerned, while they are intended to prevent a fertilized ovum from attaching to the endometrium, these devices are normally inserted into the woman's body in advance of any sexual activity.]

The most common method of contraception that was practiced before our modern era was vaginal rinsing, where a woman washes out her vagina after intercourse has taken place.

In the late 17th century the French invented the bidet, a word that is derived from an old French word meaning "pony", because a woman was expected to sit on the bidet much like sitting on a pony. The true purpose for bidets is usually hidden, by pretending that bidets were intended for hygienic purposes. The true primary purpose for a bidet was for a woman to practice contraception by rinsing out her vagina after intercourse. (In older German literature this vaginal rinsing is referred to as "Unterdusche", a form of emergency contraception. This German word literally means "a shower for the lower parts of the body".)

Obviously this method of contraception (using a bidet) is not perfect. But it is frequently reasonably effective, considering that even in favorable conditions only 0.001% of sperm manage to get into the vicinity of the ovum (though this method is certainly not consistently reliable). Anyway, the degree of effectiveness is unimportant. What we should note is this: people have tried to use contraception **after sex** for at the very least the past several hundred years. And **the use of a bidet does not constitute abortion**! The use of a bidet constitutes contraception, seeking to prevent a pregnancy from occurring. There is nothing whatsoever wrong in seeking to prevent a pregnancy even after sexual activity has taken place (though the Catholic Church obviously disagrees with this position).

As far as we are concerned:

We need to understand that a pregnancy has not yet been established in the, to again err on the safe side, first 5-7 days after sex, even if the ovum may already have been fertilized by a sperm cell. And a

pregnancy has most certainly not been established within the first two days after sex, at which time the ovum is commonly still unfertilized. Therefore, if it is desirable to avoid a pregnancy (e.g. in the case of rape), then it is certainly proper and appropriate to within those first few days take whatever reasonable steps may be necessary to ensure that a pregnancy will not occur.

EXTRA PROTECTION FOR WOMEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Apostle Peter referred to a woman as "the weaker vessel" (1 Peter 3:7). This implies that women should be protected, first by their fathers, and after marriage by their husbands.

Now in the Old Testament God gave a law that was specifically aimed at protecting women. That law states that if a married woman or a single woman who is still living in the house of her father makes a binding agreement (or commitment) without the knowledge of her husband (or father), then the husband (or father) has the right to annul that agreement when he first finds out about it. This is recorded in Numbers chapter 30. See especially Numbers 30:6-15. Verse 13 sums it up as follows:

Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the soul, **her husband may establish it**, or **her husband may make it void**. (Numbers 30:13)

The purpose of this law was to protect a woman from adverse consequences that might arise from foolish decisions she might have made without knowledge of her father (if she is single and still living in her father's house) or her husband (if she is married).

However, one key stipulation regarding the husband's right to make void any commitments his wife had made was that the husband could **ONLY** make them void **on the same day** that he first found out about those commitments. On the other hand, IF the husband did not on the same day that he found out about it clearly show his disapproval and rejection of the commitment the wife had made, THEN he forfeited the right to later make her commitment void, and the commitment would stand.

God did not want to give the husband the opportunity to get out of commitments his wife had made at a later time, when it had become obvious that the commitment was foolish and should never have been made in the first place. God did not want the husband to do any "Monday morning quarter-backing". We are all wiser and more knowledgeable after undesirable consequences to some of our actions begin to appear.

God only gave the husband the right to SPONTANEOUSLY (i.e. on the same day) make void any foolish commitments his wife had made. Later we all know better. This law is aimed at getting the husband to **exercise wise family leadership spontaneously**, as well as protecting the woman from the consequences of foolish decisions.

So here is the principle:

If a woman has been involved in sexual activity (be it rape, or be it sex with her husband) and the possibility exists that the woman could become pregnant with an, for whatever reason, undesirable pregnancy, then it is perfectly acceptable to take within the first few days after that sexual activity whatever reasonable steps are available to prevent a pregnancy from occurring.

And in the case of rape **I would strongly urge the woman to take such steps as quickly as possible**! Where the principle of Numbers chapter 30 applied to "the same day", in the case of rape there are other factors that enter the picture, like shock, humiliation, fear, reporting the rape, a possible medical examination, etc. And so the victimized woman may take contraceptive steps for several days after the rape, without fear that she is already pregnant when she takes those steps.

She is NOT YET pregnant on the second or third day after the rape! God built an at least five to seven day buffer between the sex act and the establishment of a pregnancy, when the fertilized ovum attaches itself to the endometrium. And in the vast majority of rape cases the woman never becomes pregnant, even without any specific contraceptive steps being taken.

ADVICE FOR RAPE VICTIMS

If I was approached for advice by a woman who had been raped, I would strongly suggest the following:

First and foremost I would encourage the woman to report the rape and to seek qualified medical help and advice. I am not a doctor, and therefore am not qualified to give medical advice. But there are a number of agencies available that specialize in helping rape victims, and the woman should seriously consider contacting someone like that.

After reporting the rape and being examined by a doctor, the woman should ask the medical help about the merits of engaging in some form of **vaginal rinsing**, both for hygienic reasons and also to minimize the risk of pregnancy.

At the same time she should also seek medical advice regarding the most effective ways to avoid a pregnancy resulting from the rape. She should ask about "**the morning-after pill**" and perhaps also the use of **an IUD** to prevent a fertilized ovum from attaching to the endometrium. An IUD would have to be inserted by a qualified medical practitioner, and it could be removed again after her next menstrual cycle.

The important thing is that the woman takes whatever actions she intends to take **as quickly as possible** after the rape, within hours rather than days. The whole emphasis should be on maintaining the woman's health and avoiding a pregnancy from taking place. A medical practitioner will explain the effects of any method of post-sex contraception that the victimized woman chooses to utilize. And the quicker any actions are taken, the more effective they are likely to be.

And because in our church context the woman is likely to have a moral conviction against abortion, therefore it is very important that the woman understands that she is certainly not yet pregnant during the first five days after the rape.

Any hormonal pill taken as soon as possible after a specific sex act does not "terminate" a pregnancy. **It PREVENTS a pregnancy from taking place.** Women need to clearly understand this distinction! There is nothing wrong with taking "the morning-after pill" to prevent a compounding of the cruelty to which the raped woman has already been subjected.

I would also encourage any woman who has been raped to talk to her doctor about engaging in the most **vigorous physical activities** she is capable of performing, as soon as possible. Today many women run marathons, and some women run a marathon the morning after having had sex with their husbands the night before. So if a raped woman is reasonably fit and capable of running, she should ask her doctor about doing lots of running and other vigorous physical activities like swimming, bicycle riding, gymnastics, etc. during the two weeks following the rape.

Extremely vigorous physical activities may not do anything, but they may also sometimes make it more difficult for a fertilized ovum to attach itself to the endometrium. Vigorous physical activities certainly do not take the place of the things that have already been mentioned. But a medical practitioner can advise on the suitability of such activities. Such vigorous activities may also have a beneficial psychological effect for the traumatized woman, to help her in the recovery of her emotional equilibrium.

God is on the side of the rape victim!

However, the principle of Numbers 30 would imply to me that if the woman actually **chooses** not to take any of these contraceptive steps during those first two days after having been raped, then she needs to be prepared to cope with a potential pregnancy, if it turns out that way. In most cases there should not be any reasons why a decision cannot be made within the first 48 hours. **It is important to act quickly after a rape.**

Now if there are reasons why she could not take any contraceptive steps during the first two days (e.g. she is severely injured, or traumatized, or lying in hospital and unable to do anything, unable to obtain the morning-after pill, etc.), then I believe this period should freely be extended to the first five days or so after the rape.

You may ask: why don't you just say five days from the start? Why try to focus on only two days? The answer here is: it is very important to act as quickly as possible after a rape. A violent crime like rape demands an almost spontaneous (i.e. same day) response, in line with the principle of Numbers chapter 30. The decision regarding what to do after a rape should not be delayed except in rare cases. In the case of rape there is an urgency to reach a decision quickly.

This also highlights the matter that in the case of a woman who is hospitalized due to such a rape experience, then **the people who are responsible for her** should help her make that decision in those early days. The whole point here is **to prevent a pregnancy from taking place**, rather than later resorting to terminating a pregnancy that has been established.

To summarize thus far:

While I am firmly opposed to abortion, I do not view any actions taken in the first few hours or days after sexual activity as an abortion. I believe we should correctly refer to all such activities as a form of contraception. And I would always strongly urge any rape victim to take such post-rape contraceptive measures based on competent medical advice.

Now let's look at another matter.

HOW GOD CREATED ADAM

In Genesis 1:26 we read:

And God said, Let us make man **in our image**, **after our likeness**: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (Genesis 1:26)

I have discussed this verse at length in my April 2009 article on "80 Mistranslations in the Bible", as well as in a number of other articles. Briefly, in this verse God tells us that a human being is defined by **two attributes**. Those two attributes are:

1) Human beings are created **in the IMAGE of God**.

2) Human beings must also be **in the LIKENESS of God**.

In recent times I have been searching for the best way to describe the situation where (for whatever

reason) the second of these two attributes is missing. Sometimes it is difficult to express something in words without creating some ambiguity. So I have been grappling with trying to find the best way to express this situation. To say that without this second attribute an individual is not fully human is not correct, and I will change that expression in my earlier article.

I have tried to find a better way to express this situation, though even now my way of expressing this is still not perfect. It is just a difficult concept to express. Here is what we should consider:

It is never a case of the first of these two attributes (i.e. in the image of God) being missing. Therefore **we are always dealing with "human beings"**.

HOWEVER:

When the second of these two attributes (i.e. in the likeness of God) is missing, then we are dealing with **AN INCOMPLETE HUMAN BEING**! It is "an incomplete human being" because one essential attribute for human beings is still missing. When this second attribute is missing we are dealing with **a human being without a human mind**.

Now lest you misunderstand:

As a being we are always dealing with "a human being". Physically there is no deficiency, and so the individual is certainly a human being. However, when we evaluate the ability to function as a human being, then someone who does not have this second attribute (in the likeness of God) is completely incapable of functioning on the human level. It is this inability to function as a human being that I am trying to pinpoint with the expression "an incomplete human being". At some point I may find a better way to express this?

Now the only individuals who lack or have lacked this second attribute are:

1) The Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, for a period of 7 years.

2) All babies in the womb prior to birth and drawing their first breath.

Without this second attribute, such a human being will lack 100% of the ability to function on the human level, in every area of life. Put another way, without this second attribute, the human being involved is totally incapable of **functioning** as a human being **in any area of life**. THAT INABILITY to function as a human being in any area of life is what I mean with the expression "an incomplete human being". Something essential is still missing in that person.

It is not enough for someone to be "in the image of God". If anything, it is the attribute of being "in the likeness of God" that is decisive in establishing an individual’s ability to function as a human being.

We need to understand that God was not repeating Himself in Genesis 1:26, and neither was God saying anything that was superfluous. Both of these attributes in this verse are absolutely vital.

Now when God created Adam, then God did two distinctly different things.

1) **FIRST** God **CREATED** the physical body of Adam out of earth.

2) **SECONDLY**, after having created Adam’s body, God then **GAVE** something **TO** Adam.

Now what God **created** has to do with "**the image of God**". And what God **gave** to Adam has to do with

"**the likeness of God**". These are two distinctly different things.

Note! **Man being "in the likeness of God" is not something God created!** Man being in the likeness of God is the result of something God **gave** to Adam! This distinction is important to understand!

The Genesis account is very condensed. Both these steps are covered in one verse, in Genesis 2:7. Let's look at each step in turn.

"And the LORD **God formed man** *of* the dust of the ground ..."

This statement describes **step #1** in the creation of Adam. Now we need to understand the following point.

Once God had created Adam's body out of soil, then Adam's body **ALREADY had a heart that was pumping blood** around the whole body. That body was composed of **living tissue cells**, not dead tissue cells. It was no longer soil; it was already living flesh. Adam was **not yet breathing** any air, in the same way that a fetus in the womb is not breathing any air. **But all of Adam's organs were ALREADY functioning perfectly**, just like a baby in the womb.

The way God created the physical reproduction of human beings shows us that every bodily system is capable of fully functioning before that human being (i.e. a baby) is born. It is interesting that **the lungs** do not start to function until **the first breath** is drawn. Likewise, when God created Adam's body, then all of it (the heart and the circulation, etc.), except for the lungs, was already fully functioning **before** God breathed that first breath into Adam's lungs. God created a body that was composed of **living tissue cells**.

The birth of a baby points to the way God created Adam.

So when you think of Adam's creation, don't think of some lifeless body lying on the ground, as you would think of a dead person, all of whose bodily systems have ceased functioning. That's NOT the way it was! **God did NOT start by creating a non-functioning corpse! God did not create dead flesh!**

When God had formed Adam out of the ground, **before God breathed into Adam's nostrils**, Adam had a beating heart and all the other functioning organs just like a baby in the womb. It is just that Adam had not yet drawn his first breath, much like a baby up to the time before it emerges from the womb. There was life in the body God had created, but that body was not yet breathing. And the spirit in man was also not yet in that body.

Consider also the following perspective:

God created all matter. Now there is no atomic movement (of atoms and electrons, etc.) that is too fast for God to observe. God can act in a nanosecond, and even faster, for that matter. Now in Genesis chapter 1 there were no spectators when God created Adam and Eve. And God didn't make "emphatic pauses" between any of His actions. God did what He intended to do, and God did that with the normal speed that God usually uses to work.

The point we should understand is that there was probably no more than a millisecond between when God finished creating the body of Adam and when God then breathed into Adam's nostrils. Don't be confused by the pace of action that seems to come across in the Genesis account. That account is written for human benefit. But without any spectators God didn't necessarily slow down to a snail's pace (from God's point of view) when God created Adam.

When God had created a body consisting of living tissue with a functioning heart and circulation, Adam was like a baby in the womb the split-second before birth. And an instant later God had breathed into Adam's nostrils, and Adam's lungs also started functioning, and Adam had also received the spirit in man. All these things happened at a God-pace and not at a human-pace.

There is absolutely no way that God created a carcass, dead flesh with stagnant blood, in which every bodily system suddenly and spontaneously sprang into life with that first breath that God had breathed into Adam's nostrils. A baby is ALIVE for approximately nine months before it draws its first breath at the time of birth. And Adam's body was likewise **alive** before Adam drew his first breath, even if there was only a millisecond between those two things. **Adam's body was alive before Adam received the spirit in man.**

And likewise a baby in the womb is very much alive before it receives the spirit in man with its first breath. This is vital to recognize when we talk about abortion.

Don't make the mistake of thinking about Adam's creation in terms of some modern electrical machine. Our machines are "totally dead" when the electric power is switched off, and the whole machine instantly comes "to life" when the electric power is switched on. **THAT IS NOT WHAT HAPPENED AT ADAM'S CREATION!** Adam was not "a machine". Adam's flesh was alive before God breathed into his nostrils.

To get back to the point before Adam took his first breath: at that point **the creating part of Adam was complete**! There was nothing more that God still had to create. But Adam was not yet a complete human being because he did not yet possess **the second essential attribute** that identifies all human beings. Simply put: Adam was already in the image of God, but he was **not yet in the likeness of God**.

Now some readers may question that Adam's body already had life that millisecond before God breathed into Adam's nostrils? So let's examine Genesis 2:7 more closely, before we continue with "step #2" in Adam's creation.

GENESIS 2:7

There is **only one single verse** in the entire Bible that may create the impression that God created a corpse which God then brought to life. That one single verse is Genesis 2:7. There is no other verse anywhere else in the Bible that would support the idea that God created a lifeless body consisting of dead flesh, which God then supposedly brought to life by breathing into the nostrils of that lifeless body. So we need to examine this verse very closely.

This idea that God created a corpse (i.e. a lifeless body) which He then brought to life is just one more of the numerous deceptions Satan has foisted upon an unsuspecting humanity. It always gets back to Revelation 12:9, that Satan has indeed deceived all of humanity in so many ways.

So let's look at Adam's creation.

Genesis 1:27 tells us that "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them". Therefore at that point both Adam and Eve are alive! They have both been created by God!

Notice that in Genesis 1:26 God had explicitly stated that He would create man "in the image of God" and also "in the likeness of God". But in Genesis 1:27 it mentions only "in the image of God". Verse 27 does NOT say anything about "in the likeness of God", showing us that the information regarding "in the

likeness of God" would only be presented later. However, both Adam and Eve are alive before the end of Genesis chapter 1. Do you agree?

This means that Genesis chapter 2 is **not** a description of Adam's creation **AS IT WAS TAKING PLACE**! Genesis chapter 2 is a discussion of Adam's creation **AFTER** Adam had in fact already been created. Can you see that? Now the purpose for going back to something that had already taken place in Genesis 1:27 was to provide **additional information** regarding something that had already happened. This information in Genesis 2 is provided from the perspective of describing things that had occurred previously, back in chapter 1.

Specifically, while Genesis 1:27 covered the aspect of human beings having been created "in the image of God", the first part of chapter 2 would add the details regarding the matter of "in the likeness of God".

So now let's look at this verse.

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 soul. (Genesis 2:7)

There are three verbs in this verse. In the Hebrew text all three of these verbs are used with the **qal root** in the **imperfect mood** ("moods" in Hebrew verbs are somewhat like "tenses" in our English verbs, though there are also distinct differences between Hebrew "moods" and English "tenses").

In biblical Hebrew the imperfect mood is very commonly used to refer to **a single action in the past**. And that is precisely the case here in Genesis 2:7. This verse is describing something not from the perspective of while it is happening, but from the perspective of describing something that had happened in the past. This fact is somewhat obscured in many English language translations.

All three verbs refer to things that had happened BEFORE the time of Genesis chapter 2. The purpose of this statement in Genesis 2:7 is to provide additional details regarding **certain things God had already done** in Genesis 1:27.

A suitable translation of the three parts of this verse is:

1) And the Eternal God **HAD FORMED** man of the dust of the ground.

2) And (the Eternal God) **HAD BREATHED** into his nostrils the breath of life.

3) And man **HAD BECOME** (or HAD COME TO BE) a living soul.

Now consider this very carefully.

These three statements are all one long thought. The third part ("and man had become a living soul") is a consequence of what went before. Now people universally **ASSUME** that "had become" was a consequence of "had breathed". But that is not the case at all! In fact **"had become" was a consequence of "had formed"**!

Can you understand this?

When God "had formed" something, then that had to have a consequence. And the consequence of what God "had formed" was "a living physical body", i.e. "a living soul", composed of living flesh, just like a baby in the womb. And after that **God then "had breathed" into that living body "the breath of life"**, not only to get the lungs started (like a newborn baby), but TO IMPART THE SPIRIT IN MAN to

that living physical body.

THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENS AT THE BIRTH OF A BABY!

The baby in the womb is a living physical body, and at the moment of birth two things happen: the baby draws its first breath, and at the same moment God gives that baby the spirit in man. **That's how it happened for Adam**, and **that's how it happens for every single human being**. At birth we draw our very first breath, and at the same moment God gives us the spirit in man, which spirit returns to God as we exhale our very last breath (see Ecclesiastes 12:7). [COMMENT: God obviously knows whether or not someone's breathing will be restored by artificial respiration after a short period of non-breathing. So we should not get side-tracked by hypothetical questions along that line.]

Consider that when God breathed into Adam's nostrils, God was NOT doing any creating! God was only GIVING Adam something! That something was "the breath of life", and that also represents the spirit in man. Breath and the spirit in man are commonly identified with one another in the Old Testament.

Consider what Job said:

All the while **my breath** *is* in me, and **the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils**; (Job 27:3)

The Hebrew word for "breath" in Genesis 2:7 and in Job 27:3 is "neshamah". This is the main Hebrew word for "breath", though it is also occasionally used with the meaning of "spirit". The Hebrew word for "spirit" in Job 27:3 is "ruwach". This is the main Hebrew word for "spirit", though it is also freely used to mean "breath".

The point is that in Old Testament Hebrew the concepts of "spirit" and "breath" have considerable overlap, and they are freely linked to one another. And that link goes back to the time when God had created Adam.

It should be easy to understand that God used His action of breathing into Adam's nostrils **to show us** that we receive the spirit in man as we start breathing.

The spirit in man is only needed as long as we are breathing! When we stop breathing (i.e. die) then we no longer need the spirit in man. And before we start breathing we also don't need the spirit in man. The purpose for the spirit in man during this physical life is to make it possible for us to function on the human level from the moment we draw our first breath until the moment we exhale our last breath. Now after we have exhaled our last breath, THEN the spirit in man fulfills another purpose, because then it returns to God with a perfect record of our entire existence, from birth till death, somewhat like a fully-recorded DVD of our life. And then the spirit in man is available for God to use in resurrecting us to spirit life.

Consider also this:

IF God supposedly breathed into the nostrils of a corpse, i.e. dead flesh, THEN that "breathing" would have had to perform a miracle! It would have had to **create life in non-living tissue**! But the miracle of creating life in Adam was performed when God created Adam's body "from the dust of the ground". Breathing into Adam's nostrils did not entail any further creating. Breathing into Adam's nostrils simply imparted the gift of the spirit in man to Adam, in addition to starting the functioning of Adam's lungs.

Furthermore:

When God started Adam's independent existence as a human being with an independent spirit, by breathing into his nostrils, **God was demonstrating His unconditional commitment** to giving every

human being the spirit in man with that first breath after birth. This action expresses God's unconditional commitment to giving every human being the spirit in man at birth.

What God did for Adam, God in fact does for every single human being; God literally breathes the spirit in man into every human being at birth, just like God did for Adam! [As an aside: When you consider that worldwide at present over 350,000 babies are born during every 24-hour period, that gives you one indication of the speed at which God works in just one single small area of His creation.]

As I said near the start of this article, everything in the reproductive process has a purpose. That's what Paul also tells us.

For **the invisible things** of him from the creation of the world **are clearly seen**, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (Romans 1:20)

By looking at the physical process of human reproduction we can understand certain "invisible things".

To get back to the subject of abortion:

Life can only come from life. Life can never come from the non-living. And all human life, including Eve, has come from **the living tissue that God created for Adam's body**. So as far as the establishment of a new human life is concerned:

1) When two living cells (an ovum and a sperm cell) unite (i.e. when an ovum is fertilized), then there is **the potential** for a new life. This is commonly 2-3 days after some specific sexual activity.

2) However, the woman is **not yet pregnant**, because there is no guarantee that this fertilized ovum will attach itself to the woman's body. And therefore hormones to indicate the state of pregnancy are not yet produced. In this state the potential new life is not yet viable.

3) Once the blastocyst attaches itself to the endometrium, **then the woman has conceived and is pregnant**. And then the pregnancy hormone hCG begins to be produced. This is commonly 7-10 days after some specific sexual activity.

4) **Contraception** refers to efforts to prevent a pregnancy from taking place. This can be achieved either by preventing any sperm cells from reaching a mature ovum, or by preventing a fertilized ovum from attaching itself to the uterine lining. Thus contraception can be practiced both, before sexual activity, and also in the first few days after sexual activity.

5) **Abortion** refers to all invasive efforts to terminate a pregnancy that has been started by a blastocyst implanting itself in the endometrium. While a pregnancy may be established one week after specific sexual activity, in practice abortions are only performed at some point after the woman has missed at least one menstrual cycle, which may only become evident several weeks later.

6) Once a pregnancy has been established by the fertilized ovum attaching itself to the endometrium, then **a viable new human life** has been established. Until birth that new human life is incomplete, but it is without question a new human life.

Now let's look at step #2.

STEP #2

Once God had created Adam's flesh-and-blood living body out of earth, Adam was basically in the same state as a baby immediately before emerging from the womb. And in the same way that a baby at that point in time does not need any further direct input from the mother's body in order to become an independent individual, so also at that point in time the creation of Adam's body, with every bodily system already able to function, was complete.

All that was needed by Adam at that point in time was that God would give him two things: air to breathe and a spirit to enable him to function on the human level.

So step #2 in the process of Adam being created involved Adam becoming **empowered to function on the human level** by receiving from God the spirit in man. This happened when God breathed into Adam's nostrils. Recording this after all these things had taken place, Genesis 2:7 states (correcting the verbal tense involved):

"And the LORD God ... **had breathed** into his nostrils the breath of life ..."

It is clear that a baby in the womb is most certainly alive before it exits the womb and draws its first breath. And while breathing is assuredly required **to maintain** a physical life, it is equally clear that breathing is **NOT required** to start a viable new life. Every new life starts in the total absence of any breathing on the part of that new life. (Yes certainly, the mother does the breathing, but the new life itself is not involved in breathing for the entire duration of the pregnancy.)

It seems to me that God used the expression "the breath of life" to refer **PRIMARILY** to **THE SPIRIT IN MAN**! Without the spirit in man no human being would be able to function as a human being; no human being would be capable of **experiencing "human life"**! It is the spirit in man that is responsible for the difference between a merely physical existence like an animal, and an existence that enables one to function like a human being in every area of life.

And while God has bound Himself to unconditionally provide the spirit in man to every baby at birth, God has provided for us one single example of what it would be like if God either did not provide the spirit in man at birth, or else if God chooses to take the spirit in man away from somebody.

That example was King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

WHAT A HUMAN BEING WITHOUT THE SPIRIT IN MAN IS LIKE

This account is recorded in Daniel chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar had become extremely arrogant over his own supposed greatness. So God humbled him for a period of 7 years.

Without being sidetracked by the whole story, in our context the key verses in this regard are:

"... and ***let*** **his portion** ***be*** **with the beasts of the field**, till seven times pass over him" (Daniel 4:23)

"That they shall drive thee from men, and **thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen**, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee ..." (Daniel 4:25)

And they shall drive thee from men, and **thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall**

make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. (Daniel 4:32)

The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and **he was driven from men**, and **did eat grass as oxen**, and **his body** was wet with the dew of heaven, till **his hairs** were grown like eagles' *feathers*, and **his nails** like birds' *claws*. (Daniel 4:33)

So let's try to understand what happened here.

1) God took the spirit in man away from Nebuchadnezzar for a period of 7 years. In all of the above statements God is making the point that **He now classified Nebuchadnezzar as "a beast of the field"**. Can you see that? The whole emphasis in these verses is: you, Nebuchadnezzar are now like an animal. So go ahead and live WITH animals, and live LIKE an animal. In effect Nebuchadnezzar became "an incomplete human being".

2) The immediate result of this action was that Nebuchadnezzar could no longer function as a human being. He could not speak. He could not reason in any way. He could not understand anything on the human level. He could not communicate with anyone. **He couldn't think a single human thought!**

3) He didn't understand what clothing is, and it didn't take long before he was totally naked.

4) He no longer understood anything about hygiene, about looking after the human body and the purpose for toilets, about the processes involved in preparing foods, etc. Nothing on the human level was comprehensible to him. And he didn't have any "instinct", a word we use to describe the ability God has given to animals to function in the most effective way in their particular circumstances. The spirit in man in human beings is on a far, far higher level than any instinct in any animal species, and therefore the spirit in man eliminates the need for any instinct by human beings. But the downside here is that without the spirit in man a human being would be far less capable of coping with life than any animal.

5) Nebuchadnezzar's demeanor was that of a wild unrestrained animal.

6) Apart from Daniel nobody at his court understood what had actually happened to Nebuchadnezzar. Everything about him indicated that Nebuchadnezzar, while he still looked like a human being, had for all practical purposes become like a wild animal.

7) So people at the court just wanted to drive Nebuchadnezzar away, thinking that he had become far worse than any lunatic. It was Daniel who explained to the key men in Nebuchadnezzar's administration that this was a temporary condition God had brought upon Nebuchadnezzar, and that this condition would last for exactly 7 years.

8) I suspect that Nebuchadnezzar's condition created fear in all of his court people, and they agreed to just drive Nebuchadnezzar into the very extensive royal gardens, in line with God's prediction in verse 23.

9) Very possibly Nebuchadnezzar's servants put out certain food items at regular intervals, to supplement Nebuchadnezzar's diet of grasses and other vegetation he could find in the gardens? Nebuchadnezzar was no longer capable of distinguishing between the merits of different food items, and he would eat whatever he happened to find.

10) His existence was that of a human being without the spirit in man. And God did this one single time, not only to teach Nebuchadnezzar a lesson, but also to teach all human beings that without the spirit in man we are no better than "the beasts of the field", that we would in fact be less capable of coping with

life than animals.

So please take note of the following:

It is GOD who compared Nebuchadnezzar to an animal! That isn't my idea or my interpretation. That is what God states very clearly in Daniel chapter 4. So when I try to find a way to describe this condition by saying that people without the spirit in man are "incomplete human beings", then keep in mind that GOD was even more blunt, by stating that a man without the spirit in man (i.e. Nebuchadnezzar) in effect has "a portion with the beasts of the field", a way of saying that **such a man should be classified with animals**! The words of Daniel 4:23 are not my idea; they represent a very clear message from God. Anyone about whom it can be said that "his portion is with the animals" is surely "an incomplete human being"?

Now let's examine some Scriptures that reveal God's view about abortion.

GOD'S VIEW OF ABORTION

One expression that is used a number of times in the Old Testament is "**the fruit of the womb**". This expression is in reference to God's involvement regarding what happens "in the womb". So notice what we are told in Psalm 127.

Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* **the fruit of the womb *is his* reward**. (Psalm 127:3)

The expression "the fruit of the womb is God's reward" in this verse implies that God is in control, and that **a pregnancy is a blessing from God**. The Hebrew word translated as "heritage" in this verse is "**nachalah**", and this is the main Hebrew word for "**inheritance**". So children are an inheritance with which God blesses us human beings.

An abortion is thus a way of destroying an inheritance that God makes available. This verse all by itself makes clear that abortions are wrong before God.

Notice one of God's blessings that Moses pointed out to the Israelites shortly before they crossed into the Promised Land.

And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: **he will also bless the fruit of thy womb**, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee. (Deuteronomy 7:13)

Again this shows God closely involved with "the fruit of the womb". By contrast Israel's enemies would destroy the fruit of the womb. Notice Isaiah's prophecy concerning Israel's treatment by Babylon.

Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and **they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb**; their eye shall not spare children. (Isaiah 13:18)

I don't think that Isaiah would have realized the magnitude of his statement for our world today! Today we "don't have pity on the fruit of the womb" over 40 million times every year worldwide!

After Jacob had married Leah and Rachel, Leah had children and Rachel did not have children. When Rachel envied her sister and told Jacob "give me children or else I die" (Genesis 30:1), the Scripture says:

And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, *Am* I in **God**'s stead, **who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb**? (Genesis 30:2)

The fruit of the womb is in God's hands, and anciently people understood this quite clearly. The more secular the world has become, the more selfish people have become, and the more babies have been aborted. High abortion rates go hand-in-hand with atheism and agnosticism. (In China abortion is enforced by an atheistic government in an attempt to limit population growth, a different problem from most other areas of the world.)

Now let's consider one of the main problems with abortion.

ABORTION IS AN ATTEMPT TO THWART GOD

We understand that God has committed Himself to giving every human being the spirit in man with the first breath we take. So note!

God only **GIVES** the spirit in man at the moment of birth, when that first breath is drawn. But God already **COMMITS HIMSELF** to giving the spirit in man at the time when the blastocyst firmly attaches itself to the endometrium, at the time when a pregnancy becomes established. In very approximate terms, God commits Himself to giving the spirit in man to a human being approximately nine months BEFORE that human being is even born, even though the actual giving of the spirit in man is held back until the time of the actual birth.

That's how God always works!

When we come to a genuine repentance, then God already commits Himself to resurrecting us to immortal life in His Family, even though He won't actually give us immortal life until the time of the resurrection. God in good faith calls those things that have not yet come to pass "as though they were" (Romans 4:17).

The same applies to pregnancy.

So once a pregnancy is established by the fertilized ovum attaching itself to the lining of the uterus, God commits Himself to giving the spirit in man to that baby at birth. In a sense, when the pregnancy is established God already "sets aside" as it were (for lack of a better way to describe this) the portion of spirit that is destined to become the spirit in man in that person.

It is somewhat like "the crowns" that are "laid up" for those who submit to God in this age (see 2 Timothy 4:8). In the same way there is "laid up" the spirit in man for every established pregnancy, to be given with the first breath at the time of birth.

Now if human beings forcefully intervene to terminate that pregnancy (i.e. perform an abortion), then **that actually opposes something God had already committed Himself to do**; i.e. give the spirit in man, which God had already set aside, to the human being that would have resulted from that aborted pregnancy.

As Jacob already understood, it is God who gives the fruit of the womb, and it is God who withholds the fruit of the womb (Genesis 30:2). Abortion is a way of usurping the prerogative of God by presuming to withhold the fruit of the womb after that process has already been set in motion.

PEOPLE WHO PERFORM ABORTIONS ARE ENGAGING IN PLAYING GOD!

That is a very dangerous thing to do! And that is also the reason for the title of this article: **it is perverse** for any human being to seek to play God and to oppose God and to seek to thwart God's intentions. And my bias against abortion is really based on my bias in favor of the ways of God.

And yes, an abortion amounts to taking the life of a human being, albeit, at that stage, a still incomplete human being. So abortions transgress the sixth commandment (Exodus 20:13). Also, the principle of Romans 4:17 again comes into play here.

So in summary:

It is clear that abortion is wrong before God. However, we also need to distinguish between contraception and an abortion, the latter involving the removal of an embryo or a fetus from the uterus. Contraception is certainly accepted by God. This is also indicated by the time lapses that God established between the sex act and the establishment of a pregnancy.

One last word of caution:

People who seek approval for abortion will at times present highly unusual and extreme situations, in an effort to obtain approval for abortions in general. What I have said in this article is not intended to apply to some extreme and highly slanted theoretical situation, where an abortion may be the lesser of two evils. **Extreme unusual circumstances do not establish the rule for normal situations.** There may sometimes be the situation where the life of the mother is at very great risk. Extreme and uncommon situations should always be evaluated on their own merits, the principle of David eating the shewbread which was intended only for the priest's family, and which bread David would certainly not have been allowed to eat under normal circumstances. But such extreme situations don't establish the right course of action for the other 99%+ of cases, where today in our world people also seek an abortion.

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