

Sunday, October 20, 2024 pm

## **The Babe Leapt In the Womb - Luke 1:41 (A study of the Bible and abortion)**

Tonight, I want to address an uncomfortable subject – abortion. I have been asked to preach on this, and because I have said repeatedly that we cannot ignore ANY Biblical topic (2 Timothy 4:2-3), moral and social matters need to be addressed from time to time – including this one. I realize that what I will say is “politically incorrect”, but that does not bother me. Biblical “Christianity” has always been unpopular in culture and villainized by the worldly (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25).

In this lesson, I will not be able to answer every question, but we will look at what the Bible says about the unborn and some factors associated with this heinous act. Let me state at the outset, I firmly believe that abortion is sinful, and the main reason is because the child in the womb is a person.

### **I. Observations about abortion**

- a. In 2023, according to Guttmacher.org, 1,032,600 abortions were performed in the US in states that do not have a total ban.<sup>1</sup>
- b. In California, the same survey noted there were 179,200 abortions.<sup>2</sup>
- c. In the past 2-4 years the number of abortions has been on the rise (an increase of 11% since 2020).<sup>3</sup>
- d. Since Roe v. Wade was passed in 1973, there have been more than 65 million abortions in the US (according to the National Right to Life Committee).<sup>4</sup>
- e. According to Statista, in 2021, there were 20.4 abortions for ever 100 live births in the U.S.<sup>5</sup> (~17% of pregnancies aborted).
- f. As of May 2024, Gallup, in a summary report noted that about 85% of Americans believe that abortion should be legal – either totally or under certain circumstances (33% only in a few cases), while only 12% said all abortion should be illegal (3% – no opinion). Also, polls for 2023 & 2024 show that 54% believe abortion is morally acceptable, while 37% believe it is morally wrong.<sup>6</sup>
- g. These statistics show that abortion is a concern that we need to consider. It is also a reflection of the moral fiber of our country. Many more statistics could be presented, but our focus is what God’s word says about abortion.

### **II. The Bible defines humanity prior to birth.**

- a. Genesis 1:26 tells us that God determined to make man after His own likeness. IT goes without saying, when conception takes place between a man and woman, it is a human that is being formed. It will NEVER be anything different. Genesis 2:7 says, *And the Lord God formed man of*

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<sup>1</sup> October 18, 2024, <https://www.guttmacher.org/monthly-abortion-provision-study#the-estimates>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, California Statistics.

<sup>3</sup> October 18, 2024, <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/induced-abortion-united-states>

<sup>4</sup> October 18, 2024, [StateofAbortion2024.pdf \(nrlc.org\)](https://www.nrlc.org/StateofAbortion2024.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> October 18, 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/185286/legal-abortion-per-100-live-births-in-the-us-since-2000/>

<sup>6</sup> October 18, 2024, Where do American’s Stand on Abortion?

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/321143/americans-stand-abortion.aspx>

*the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.* And he/she is recognized as such in scripture.

- b. **Luke 1:41** (our text), Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist) is about 6 months pregnant and when Mary (the soon to be mother of Jesus) visits. *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.*
  - i. NOTE: The word for “babe” (βρέφος, brephos) is used to describe Jesus in the manger in Luke 2:12, 16. The term, “babe” was applied both BEFORE and AFTER birth.
  - ii. NOTE also in vs. 42-43, we find Elizabeth speaks concerning Mary. She declares, *“blessed is the fruit of your womb!”* (“blessed” is a perfect tense verb that describes, “the present state of affairs”). Further Mary is described as “the mother of my Lord...”
- c. **Job 31:13-15**, Job declares, *Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One **fashion** us in the womb?* He is speaking of both himself and his servants.
- d. **Job 3:3**, earlier as he was addressing his suffering he said, *“May the day perish on which I was born, And the night in which it was said, ‘A male child is conceived.’*
- e. **Psalms 139:13-15**, *For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*
- f. **Isaiah 49:1**, *“Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar! The Lord has called Me from the womb; From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name.*
- g. **Genesis 25:21-23**, a Rebekah conceived we read, *But the children struggled together within her; and she said, “If all is well, why am I like this?” So she went to inquire of the Lord.*
- h. **Exodus 21:22-25**, *“If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman’s husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.”*
  - i. **NOTE:** In essence if striking a pregnant woman results in death of the child, the man is to be treated accordingly. Why? Consider that according to Genesis 9:6 (after the flood), to shed the blood of a man was to result in his execution. Exodus 20:13, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 21:12 - “*He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.*”)
  - ii. **The obvious conclusion** from Exodus 21:22ff is that killing an “unborn child” (a fetus) is murder. Therefore, abortion is murder! Why because God recognizes that child as a person.
- i. Putting all these texts together, we can CLEARLY see that an unborn fetus IS a child. I can find no passage of scripture that speaks to the contrary. There is often debate about at what point “fetal tissue” becomes a person (and the debate is always along the lines of one’s efforts to justify/condemn abortion). At best, we DO NOT KNOW. And to act based upon silence is dangerous, and in this case, sinful. Consider Romans 14:22-23 – if there is any doubt, to act is to sin.
- j. It is on this basis that I affirm personhood takes place at conception. It is the ONLY safe course that ensures your convictions are acceptable to God. To say arbitrarily that the first trimester, the “fetus” is not yet a child, is guessing. It is MAN imposing his standard and definition of the term, “person.”

### III. Why do abortions take place?

- a. The overwhelming majority of abortions are for social reasons (about 93-95%).
- b. According to an article in Medical News Today<sup>7</sup> (released after the Dobb's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade), reasons stated for having an abortion included:
  - i. Financial reasons – about 40%
  - ii. Timing (36%) – they stated the time to have a family was not right (emotional or financial).
  - iii. Partner related issues – 31%. Either they were in unstable relationships, unsupportive partners, not married (8% said they wanted to get married before having children).
  - iv. Focus on other children – about 29%
  - v. Emotional and mental health – 19% - emotionally unprepared for a child.
  - vi. 12% expressed health reasons – concerns for their health or the health of the fetus, drug use or birth control use, existing health issues (e.g. – back pain, diabetes), mental health reasons, the effect of medications for existing conditions, etc.
  - vii. 12% cited their desire for a better life for the child than they could provide (feeling inadequate or unable to care for themselves or the child).
  - viii. ~7% cited a lack of maturity (too young)
  - ix. 5% - the influence of family and friends.
- c. NOTES: This article is clearly supportive of abortion as an option. (And while stated, it is clear that some cited multiple factors). BUT you will also notice that it is primarily social concerns and problems. And while these are serious, they do NOT warrant the termination of the life of an INNOCENT child.
- d. According to [www.Abortionno.org](http://www.Abortionno.org)<sup>8</sup>, in a somewhat dated article (about 10 years ago), 93% of these procedures occur for social reasons, with ~1% for incest or being violated and 6% for potential health problems with either the mother or the child (NOTE how this number is lower than the above stated reasons – because that list is vague and includes health issues of inconvenience or irresponsibility). Also stated there is that 46% are performed by never-married women (married women account for 14%).
- e. NOT mentioned in the list is moral failures and other sinful concerns. But as you consider the list you see many issues from a Biblical standpoint.
  - i. Fornication – defined as relations outside of a lawful marriage (between a husband and wife). The Bible condemns this, including cohabitation and pre-marital relations – 1 Corinthians 6:18, 9, Hebrews 13:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:3. NOTE: This will guarantee that you do not have an unwanted pregnancy.
  - ii. Lack of self-control – 2 Timothy 3:1-3, in what I describe as a list of selfishness, we find many characteristics that are far too prevalent today, and factor into decisions like the subject we are addressing.
    1. **Selfishness** – men will be lovers of themselves. They think only about what they want. Looking at the above “sympathetic” list, you can see selfishness in many of the reasons.
    2. **Proud & boasters** – not all are prideful, but often it enters into the picture today. It is one thing to want to end your pregnancy, but when you wear a t-shirt

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/reasons-for-abortions> December 23, 2022

<sup>8</sup> <https://abortionno.org/abortion-facts/>

bragging about it, that is another dimension. 1 Peter 5:5 tells us that God resists the proud.

3. **Unloving** – ESV says “heartless” and the KJV says, “without natural affection” (see also Romans 1:31). WHAT is the typical and NATURAL way that a mother feels about her children? Most parents would go to great lengths and sacrifice to care for the needs of their children. It is what love is about.
  4. **Without self-control** – many are facing their situation because they failed to exercise self-discipline in the decisions they made. Self-control is a key element of faithfulness to God AND being productive in every aspect of life.
  5. **Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God** – this is putting our lusts and wants ahead of what is right AND best.
- iii. A failure to value human life – God has always put a premium on life.
1. We have already noted that in God’s instructions of the one who murders is to be put to death.
  2. Consider Genesis 8:4-6 – the command to not eat blood and then the demand for the shedding of blood.
  3. Consider Psalm 106:37-38 as the psalmist describes some of the sinful acts of Israel. *They even sacrificed their sons And their daughters to demons, And shed innocent blood, The blood of their sons and daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood.* QUESTION: What is the difference between the infant that has already been born and the unborn child? Why is it, that once he/she enters the world SUDDENLY they become human with rights?
- iv. Proverbs 6:16-19 – 7 things God hates – hands that shed innocent blood.
1. I would not want to be a doctor whose livelihood was based on killing innocent and defenseless humans (nor for the advocates of such – whether legislators or advocates) as he stands before God in judgment.
  2. In the above list of selfishness, included in that list is “brutal” (2 Tim. 3:3). If you have seen pictures of an aborted baby, or if you read about the procedures sometimes involved in extracting the child, you would see the violent nature of it. The condemned “fetus” does not even receive the rights and dignity of someone on death row.
- f. A baby is its own person – he/she is NOT a body part any more than a growing tumor is a part of your body (though clearly we ought to treat those 2 in opposite ways). From the time of conception, the embryo becomes its own entity – though it is DEPENDENT on the mother for survival. Time will not permit a discussion of the development of an embryo throughout pregnancy, but you would be surprised at how early its unique qualities are manifested.

#### IV. **Where do we go from here?**

- a. There are 3 things we need to consider as we conclude this topic:
- b. How do we prevent this from happening? The answer is abstinence until you get married. It is the ONLY guaranteed method of birth-control. And if we love God we will respect His wishes even in this (1 Corinthians 6:19-20, cf. Hebrews 13:4, etc.).
- c. What do we do if one is considering having an abortion? The answer is to show them the love you would anyone else. If they regret what they have done (and repent) – you need to forgive them. They are scared and facing trauma in their lives. They need love and compassion (but not

- approval of what they have done). THEN help them make the right decisions and support them as they do. There are plenty of godly families seeking to adopt children, if another alternative is not available. If they choose to keep the child, are you willing to sacrifice for them? **WHATEVER YOU DO**, remember that child is totally innocent! Do **NOT** blame or reject him/her.
- d. What do we do if one has had an abortion. Anyone with a good conscience will regret what they have done. They have taken an innocent life, and likely engaged in other sins. **ASSURE** them that God loves them and they can be forgiven. How? The same way as anyone else? By obeying the gospel, or returning to God (1 John 1:9). Again, they desperately need love and compassion for what they have done. It may require professional help, but it is available. But they also need God – Philippians 4:6-7. And we can all help them with that in whatever way you can – 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

And thus we have seen, that Biblically, abortion is wrong and requires repentance, usually for more than just the act itself. But forgiveness is available for this or any other sin we may be guilty of or struggling with. If there is some way we can help you with this, let us know. Think about it!