Abortion and God

by Herb Silverman

In years past, Roman Catholic clergy led the effort to prevent abortions in this country. Lately, evangelical Christians have been even more zealous in that fight. Clergy in both these religions want to set the rules about abortion to apply to everyone, starting with sex. A precondition for abortion, of course, is a result of having sex — which Christian clergy condemn when it is outside of marriage; when it is between homosexuals (whose marriage they would also condemn); and even when it is with oneself (masturbation). Catholics go even further, forbidding sex within marriage if birth control is used.

Reasons people have abortions vary greatly, and include pregnancy that threatens the mother's health or life, or a pregnancy that comes from rape or incest, or the likelihood of bearing a seriously deformed or incurably ill baby. Other abortions stem from an inability to support and care for a child, or even a simple dislike of children. Many anti-abortion Christians ignore the motivation behind individual cases with their one-size-fits-all pronouncement about abortion.

On the other hand, the rest of us insist that Americans should be allowed to make up their own minds about the need for and morality of abortion. And, particularly, we don't think that abortion should be denied on the basis of the evangelical theology of sin.

Meddling Christians have injected themselves into Congressional deliberations over healthcare reform for one primary reason: concern about the possibility it will include the scarlet A — abortion. However, Congress needs to make sure its policies are backed by good secular reasons.

I see nothing wrong with religious people advocating for reform. But, unfortunately, if Christians don't get their way on abortion, signs indicate that they will try to scuttle healthcare reform for millions of Americans. The irony is that some women have abortions because they can't afford contraception, and can't afford to provide for a baby.

As far as I can tell, the biblical Jesus said nothing about abortion, but had a lot to say about the poor. Perhaps some evangelicals should ask themselves, "What would Jesus do?" Let's see what "God" had to say about abortion.

God aborts millions of human fetuses every year. And he never equates his abortions with murder. Calling these abortions miscarriages does not excuse God. God has a terrible abortion record.

In Genesis 6:6, God grieved in his heart that he had made humans. So he brought a flood that drowned all but eight people. God didn't seem to mind drowning all those infants and children.

Wouldn't an omniscient God have been able to know in advance what humans would be like?

God did send a rainbow to indicate he would not kill other humans by drowning, but he has many more ways to kill people. Sending ten plagues, including the killing of first-born Egyptian children, was one way. God told the Israelites to kill all Midianites, except for the virgin women that the Israelites could keep for themselves (Numbers 31:49).

God said he wants us to put to death those who commit adultery with another man's wife (Leviticus 20:10); or bestiality (Exodus 22:19); or witchcraft (Deuteronomy 18: 10-12). And he condemns, maybe worst of all, picking up sticks on Saturday (Number 15:32-36).

God said that a miscarriage caused by a man who attacked a pregnant woman is not considered murder (Exodus 21:22-25). The penalty is a fine that must be paid by the attacker to the husband.

And, of course, many fetuses were destroyed by God at Sodom and Gomorrah because of the wickedness of the people who lived there (Genesis 19:24-28).

The Bible contains many other passages where God kills fetuses and children or tells his people to do that for him. Killing infants and children does not seem to sadden God.

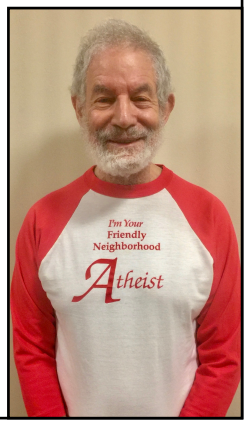
So here's the bottom line: People certainly have the right to personally oppose abortion, but I'd like to hear how they explain the mega-abortionist they worship.

Herb Silverman is a regular contributor to the quarterly publication *The Freethought Society News*.

His past submissions can be found at the following Freethought Society web-site page:

https://www.ftsociety.org/herb-silverman-articles/

Silverman is the author of two books, *Candidate Without a Prayer* and *An Atheist Stranger in a Strange Religious Land*. Both books are available online and at your local bookstores.



Silverman welcomes communication from readers. He is also available for national and worldwide speaking engagements. Contact him at the following email address:

silvermanh@cofc.edu

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