

Incurring an eye for an eye; a life for a life

To the editor:

Charles Preston was correct in his May 2 letter, that the context of Genesis 2:7 in which Adam was created by God involved neither a conception nor birth in the traditional sense. However, there's no argument that by deliberate divine design both Adam and a baby born in the traditional sense share a common bond in the culmination of their creation, a culmination characterized by the breathing of the breath of life through the nostrils.

Neither God nor I have ever argued that the fetus isn't alive, but that fact doesn't speak to the official recognition by God of the beginning of human life. A fetus, though alive as we understand the word, isn't granted official recognition of being alive by God till it breathes through its nostrils. If anti-abortion extremists have a problem with that truth, they'll have to take that up with God himself on judgment day.

Exodus 21:22-23 says, (Revised Standard

Version) "When men strive together and hurt a woman with child so that there is a miscarriage, (King James Version: so that her fruit depart from her) and yet no harm follows, the one who hurt her shall be fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, and life for life."

Robert Morse, in his May 4 letter, fails to prove that these verses deal only with a premature birth rather than a miscarriage and that the "harm" doesn't refer only to the woman. First, the phrase "with child" is merely descriptive of the woman and doesn't change the object of the word harm, that being the subject of the sentence, the woman.

Second, in Morse's interpretation, a premature birth of a healthy fetus wouldn't require any punishment for evil done because no evil would have been done. But, it's very clear in these verses that a fine for something is being required, that something is a miscarriage.

Third, these verses don't specify a particular time in a pregnancy. That's significant because a premature birth of a healthy fetus cannot occur in the early stages of pregnancy. The law

God articulated in these verses is applicable during all stages of pregnancy, which renders Morse's interpretation invalid.

Finally, if the fetus were miscarried while the woman loses an eye, several teeth and an arm, harm having then befallen both, in light of Morse's interpretation what would the remedy be? The perpetrator would lose an eye, several teeth, an arm and then his life? What purpose would a fine serve then?

If this scenario, based on Morse's interpretation, sounds ludicrous, it's because God is very clear in these verses; the loss of the fetus was to incur only a fine, but if the woman was hurt or killed, then the perpetrator was to suffer an eye for an eye or life for a life.

Peggy Loonan, executive director
Life and Liberty for Women
Fort Collins