

164 "Gene editing"

Unfortunately this week in Britain secularism has taken another giant step forward, and yet this step has aroused very little comment. The "Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority" (HFEA) tells us in a statement of February 1st - "Our Licence Committee has approved an application from Dr Kathy Niakan of the Francis Crick Institute to renew her laboratory's research licence to include gene editing of embryos. The committee has added a condition to the licence that no research using gene editing may take place until the research has received research ethics approval. As with all embryos used in research, it is illegal to transfer them to a woman for treatment".

So there we have it! These bland words give permission for human embryos deemed "surplus" in IVF treatment to be used for "gene editing". Britain is the first country to allow this "editing" - (what a chilling euphemism) - which appeared to be a source of pride for those announcing this new permission. Our country is seen to be at the "cutting edge" of this highly-controversial research, the overall message being - "Isn't this so exciting, and aren't we just so clever?".

As always on such occasions of so-called "advance", which in practice carry us further and further away from the pure Word of God, the possible benefits arising from this research are loudly trumpeted. But when all is said and done, we see this new permission is just one more example of "the end justifies the means".

From even a passing knowledge of God's Word we learn that as far as God is concerned, "the end does NOT justify the means". If, in seeking to achieve an end that is beneficial, the means are sinful, it is a wrong path: no ifs, buts or wriggles - it is a wrong path. Think of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3); of Abram, Sarai and Hagar (Genesis 16); of Achan (Joshua 7); of Saul and the burnt offering (I Samuel 9.8ff), and then over the spoils from the Amalekites (I Samuel 15.13ff); of David, Uriah and Bathsheba (II Samuel 11); of Pilate with Barabbas and Jesus (Mark 15.15); and as we have often noted in the Reflections, the frequent, sinful cosyng-up of Israel and Judah with other nations in trying to produce benefit for themselves, in defiance of the Lord and His covenant.

But unfortunately in this latest example we see the HFEA committee members sweep grandly onwards in their well-entrenched secularist assumptions. They have gone along with the hideous notion that these supposedly "surplus" in-vitro embryos are merely tiny bunches of cells offering wonderful research opportunities to benefit the rest of us - before they are "destroyed".

But these tiny embryos are "of us"! They are made in the image of God! Each is known to Him, unique in His sight, wonderful, unspeakably precious. We think of Psalm 139, especially verses 13 - 16; and of Jeremiah 1.5, Psalm 22.9-10, Job 31.15, Isaiah 44.2 and 46.3, Galatians 1.15 and Matthew 10.29-31.

Yet the HFEA grandees, whoever they are, brush all this aside - they know best; indeed we are told on the HFEA website - "The members of the Authority are all specialists in their field. They provide objective and independent advice to steer the HFEA". So that's alright then! - or perhaps not.

Western societies have been in the grip of such godless thinking for decades, with its ugly fruit now on clear display all around us. This recent HFEA decision is merely the latest step in the downgrading of the embryo. Yet for decades we have also seen the downgrading of the unborn child, euphemistically termed the "foetus", leading for example to there being in England and Wales in 2014 no fewer than 184,571 abortions.

Do we really think that Almighty God our Creator shrugs His shoulders over all this? Just look at Genesis 4.10-11 and 9.5-6: the shedders of innocent blood are answerable for that blood. Can anyone deny that with embryonic research and abortions there are horrific amounts of innocent blood being shed?

Nations who indulge in persistent, wilful godlessness - of which there have been so many since creation - never, ever get away with it. It falls to Christian people like us to keep blowing the trumpet of warning (Ezekiel 33.1-6), raising our Christian, God's-Word voices, wherever necessary and whatever the reactions (which are likely to be dismissive, patronising and arrogant!).

A good place to start is the HFEA itself. Tell them they are wrong, and why!
www.hfea.gov.uk.

© 2016 Faithful Sheep Ministries - www.fsmins.org