

The Burning Bush—Online article archive

The cloning of Human Beings - a step too far?



First it was the cloning of a sheep nearly two years ago. This was followed by a recommendation to the British Government from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority that the cloning of human tissue for transplantation be allowed, subject to certain restrictions. Such cloning is expected to take place within a year. The latest confident speculation is that soon it will be a human being that will be cloned.

Indeed, The Daily Express, on December 11, claimed in an exclusive article that seven international companies are competing to become the first to clone a healthy baby. This claim was made, according to the newspaper, by a "senior scientific government adviser." Some American and European companies are planning to move their research facilities to somewhere like the Caribbean [the Bahamas have repeatedly been mentioned], in order to avoid legal restrictions on such experimentation.

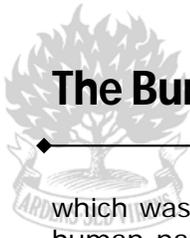
Following the cloning of a sheep, the research has moved on and recently a whole herd of cows was cloned in Japan. Experts claim that there is no great technical leap to the cloning of a human being.

Financially, researchers see a very lucrative market for such cloning. Wealthy couples would be willing to pay for the cloning of "a still born baby or a child lost in an accident." These were just two of the suggestions put forward by one geneticist, interviewed by the newspaper. One scientist, Richard Seed from Chicago, announced plans some time ago to clone his wife. He now admits that he is far behind in the race to be the first to clone a human being. He has claimed that there are half a dozen or more research groups, who, if they wished, could bring about a pregnancy with a human clone within eight weeks.

The method by which cloning takes place is set forth in simple terms by scientists. The nucleus [the DNA of any child which would normally develop] is removed from the egg and replaced by the DNA of the person being cloned. The egg thus reconstituted is given a 25 volt electric shock or immersed in a chemical called strontium chloride, to start the process which would normally commence when the female egg is fertilised by male reproductive cells. The egg thus stimulated begins to divide and, when it has multiplied into 64 cells, it is placed in the womb for "normal" development and birth.

The whole process raises questions of ethics, but, more importantly, of theology. The cloning process is effected without the normal fertilisation process involving male reproductive cells. The cloned being does not have a human father! That being so -- whence has it a soul? Ungodly scientists take no thought for such considerations, but the Christian has to be alarmed at just what it is man is on the point of doing.

One of the two most commonly held orthodox views on the origin of the soul is that of Traducianism -- the descent of the soul as well as the body by ordinary generation from Adam. If this view is correct, then since the involvement of a father is excluded in cloning, will such a being have a soul? We know that the Saviour Himself partook of human nature



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which was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost. His human nature was of Mary's substance and not that of a human father for none was involved in His birth. But was not His birth miraculous and unique?

Creationism is the other view of the origin of the soul. It states that the soul is created directly by God upon conception. Even if this view is correct, can we believe that God will infuse such a being as a human clone with a soul? answer This writer has not the answers to these questions but is very conscious of that short portion in Genesis which, it may be said with some measure of certainty, indicates that just before the universal judgment of mankind by the flood in Noah's day, there was a deviation from the normal process of procreation that met with God's disapproval and wrath. *The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. . . . There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown* , Genesis 6:2, 4. If this portion refers to a union between fallen angels and human females the offspring of which were superior to ordinary men, then it indicates an alternative source of life for a physical human body. Evil spirits certainly were sources of physical energy and power in those they possessed, as is evident from the supernatural actions of the demoniac of Gadara, Mark 5:1-5.

If this view is correct, then we see that a similar scenario is being recreated to that which existed before the universal judgment of the world by the flood. The term, sons of God, is used only in three other places in the Old Testament and that in the book of Job. They all refer to angelic beings, Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. Something out of the ordinary took place to produce giants, both in size and in sin. If such a union gave impetus to the exceeding wickedness of Noah's day, it might well be the source again of the exceeding wickedness that will invade the earth at the end of the age and the rise of the Antichrist just before the return of Christ.

Revelation 9:1-11 presents us with a picture of unrestrained evil being loosed upon the earth. Man's present experimentations with cloning, surely a tampering with that which is outside of the estate into which God placed him, could well be the beginning of an era which before was thought to be but the fevered imaginings of men and the foolish interpretations of prophecies from God's Word.