

Myths and misconception about abortion leading to stigma and shame has its roots in religious scriptures. Religious scriptures Considering that most religious scriptures have been interpreted and used to subordinate women. In this context I would like to discuss some religious connotation of abortion.

Hinduism and abortion: The mother and father, the foetus and society¹

- Breach of 'State Duty': In Hinduism, bearing children and giving birth has been seen as a state duty and abortion has been seen as a breach of this duty.
- Abortion a Karmic setback: If a foetus is aborted, the soul within it suffers a major setback. It is deprived of the opportunities its potential human existence would have given it to earn good karma, and is returned immediately to the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Thus abortion hinders a soul's spiritual progress. This stems from the doctrine of reincarnation, which sees life as a repeating cycle of birth, death and rebirth, is basic to Hindu thinking.
- Ahimsa or non-violence: Ahimsa - non-violence - teaches that it is wrong not only to kill living beings, but to also to kill embryos.

Christianity and abortion: The Sanctity of life²

- **Pro-life** - Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, believe that abortion is morally wrong because of their belief that human life begins at conception. They may make an exception if an abortion is essential in order to save the life of the mother (the 'principle of double effect'), assuming all efforts have been made to save the fetus.

Islam Teaching on abortion: Haram³

- All schools of Muslim law accept that abortion is permitted if continuing the pregnancy would put the mother's life in real danger. This is the only reason accepted for abortion after 120 days of the pregnancy.
- Different schools of Muslim law hold different views on whether any other reasons for abortion are permitted, and at what stage of pregnancy if so. Some schools of Muslim law permit abortion in the first 16 weeks of pregnancy, while others only permit it in the first 7 weeks.
- However, even those scholars who would permit early abortion in certain cases still regard abortion as wrong, but do not regard it as a punishable wrong. The more advanced the pregnancy, the greater the wrong.

Discussion

However, discourses say that a lot of these religious scriptures do not directly oppose abortion. However, interpretation of these scriptures is used against cis women and others genders to subdue their choice of abortion by instilling fear, fear of God, fear of medical complication, fear of trauma. The society shames and makes one remorse as their so called 'maternal nature' recoils.

¹ 2014, BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/hinduism/hinduethics/abortion_1.shtml

² 2021 BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/hinduism/hinduethics/abortion_1.shtml

³ 2014 BBC http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/islamethics/abortion_1.shtml

