

THE PLEASANT VIEW PLUMB LINE

“I JUST CAME FOR THE PIZZA AND BEER”

Since the 1970s the term *Roe vs. Wade* has been equated with the abortion controversy. “Wade” was Henry Wade, the District Attorney of Dallas County (Texas) who was fighting to keep abortion illegal in this country. “Roe” was Jane Roe, the anonymous lead plaintiff who was allegedly leading the fight for this “pro-choice” cause. In reality, Jane Roe was a young lady named Norma McCorvey, who months earlier had entered her doctor’s office in an effort to terminate her pregnancy. Her physician put her in touch with foster attorney’s, who then organized a meeting between Norma and two eager lawyers, Linda Coffee and Sarah Weddington. These two ladies had been waiting for just the right person to help them file a court case that would liberalize abortion laws. With her name signed on the affidavit, Norma McCorvey went down in history as “the woman who made abortion legal.”

But what is the truth about her role in this monumental case, and how did it ever come into being? A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to spend several hours with Norma, and the story she revealed was a shocking one (2006). I should mention up front that Norma is now very much pro-life, and is fighting diligently to have the law overturned. In fact, she used her prerogative as a party in the original court case to re-open the case and have it overturned. However, on June 19, 2003, a Texas judge (David Godbey) ruled that too much time had passed and that her request was not made within a “reasonable time.” This was later followed by the Supreme Court refusal to grant a *writ of certiorari* on February 22, 2005, effectively eliminating her appeal.

Who was this woman, and what role did she really play? One of the biggest shockers I learned was the fact that Norma (aka Jane Roe) **never received an abortion or even entered a courtroom regarding this infamous court case.** She was simply a pawn who signed her name on a piece of paper in Texas. In conveying how it all began Norma noted:

I found myself pregnant for the third time, second time out of wedlock. I went to one doctor, and told him I wanted an abortion. I didn’t know what it was. I didn’t know what it meant, but I wanted one. Kinda like he could just put it in a package and I’d be outta there...I just knew I didn’t want to have the baby. I took a bunch of drugs. I threw myself down a flight of stairs. I’d thrown myself in front of moving traffic. I mean I did not want to have this child. I even went to a place they called an illegal abortion clinic. I don’t know if it was an abortion clinic or not, because I didn’t stay around that long.

Many people are under the impression that Jane Roe was a devout fighter for women—that he was a radical feminist who expanded the borders of women’s rights. The truth was she was simply trying to make a living. She told me: “I was more involved with the Vietnam War efforts that I was equal rights or ERA or anything like that.”

Realizing that her child was going to be born into this world, she finally talked her physician into giving her the name of an attorney that dealt in adoptive/foster cases. This lawyer listened to Norma and then introduced her to two people that would change her life forever. McCovey lamented:

To make a long story short, I met with Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee, and they—how do I say this, they upset me. They said, “Oh, Norma, don’t you realize that women drive cars? Oh, Norma, don’t you realize that women get to vote?” I finally told them, “Hey, look, I just came for the pizza and beer, because I was hungry.” I met with them three or four times. I signed the affidavit that brought *Roe vs. Wade* into being on March 17, 1970, and I found out about *Roe vs. Wade* jut like everyone else did. I read it in the newspaper.

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

BEHOLD THE COMFORTER

Text: _____

I. The _____

A. The _____ to _____

B. The _____ to _____

II. The _____

A. Same in _____

B. Same in _____

C. Same in _____

III. The _____

A. He Came to _____

B. He Came to _____

PROVIDENCE SEEN THROUGH A PERSIAN QUEEN

Text: _____

I. Esther's _____

A. Ahasuerus' _____

B. Vashti's _____

C. Esther's _____

II. Haman's _____

A. _____ by Hatred

B. _____ to all Jews

C. _____ by Love

III. Judah's _____

A. _____ with _____

B. _____ with _____

Unsure I heard he correctly, I questioned, "Excuse me, are you telling me you were not aware that it was going on—that it had been sent to the Supreme Court?" She replied: "I was a paint contractor. I worked for HUD properties, so I was busy making a living. I didn't care about women voting. I didn't care about them smoking in their cars and driving, or climbing the glass ceiling." So I asked Norma, "Did you ever attend courtroom sessions?" Her response stunned me. She quickly replied, "No, never." Norma was the pawn. Having indulged in the free pizza, she signed her name to an affidavit, and forever changed the course of American history. The effects the case had on her life were obvious as we talked. She told me on more than one occasion that her life revolved around the topic of abortion—and that the early decision to sign that piece of paper lead to a life of drug and alcohol abuse. While many still tout "pro-choice" and "women's rights" as the crusading call to keep abortion legal, the woman who started it all is appealing to all those who will listen that we must stop killing "a beating heart."

-Brad Harrub

THE GROUND THAT WASN'T THERE

As a teenage smart aleck, I often thought I was above the laws of God, man, and physics. One night, two friends and I took the 1940 Cadillac of a friend's father for a joy ride (aka: we stole a car).

Both of my buddies had driven before, even though they, like me, were only 14. But I had not—and this car needed coordination between the clutch, brake, and accelerator pedals, as well as a "reach-out-and-search for" shift lever. I guess I did pretty well when it was my turn to drive—at least I drove this mobile weapon three blocks, even if it was entirely in first gear. Fortunately, the front room of a lovely couple's home stopped me before I hurt anyone. I didn't stay for introductions.

Running for my life, I headed for the woods. Leaping over a railing on a municipal stairway, I glimpsed a large bush in front of me and leaped for its sanctuary. Unfortunately, the bush was rowing out on a ledge of an embankment—the ground I assumed was there wasn't. After a few seconds of aerobatic and forty feet of empty air, I hit the ground in a heap. As you can see, I lived. But that's another story.

What I thought was a firm foundation and a sanctuary was actually an illusion. So it is with so many in the world today. They believe all they have to do is take shelter in their things, their careers, their families, their diversion, their hobbies, their clubs, their portfolios, or in themselves. There they can hide from the laws of man and God. Fools they are! These foundations are gossamer fabric.

THE BOOK OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The book of Esther is unlike any other book of the Bible. Yes, it is just as inspired as the others; yes, it is just as true as the others; and yes, it is just as important as the others. However, in its ten chapters comprised of 167 verses, never once is the name of God mentioned. Now one might think that for a book of the Bible to not mention God would be contrary to the divine purpose. After all, does not the Bible, as claiming the existence of God, have as its responsibility to prove its claim? But it was not said that God is not read of in Esther, only that His name does not appear. The fact is that God's presence is seen on every page that this book inhabits because of His working through providence.

The providence of God is a much detailed study after which the full extent is still not entirely known. However, in a nutshell providence has been defined as the process by which God works through natural law in order to accomplish a predetermined purpose. Providence, though, should not be mistaken for some miraculous occurrence. To make the two distinct Wayne Jackson said, "A miracle is God's working on a plain that is above that of natural law; providence is his utilization of natural law. In a miracle, the Lord works directly; in providence, He operates indirectly, employing means to accomplish the end." This is how God is revealed through this divinely inspired book, the events of which will now be discussed.

The scene set for this book is Persia, in the royal palace of one king Ahasuerus. This man is, in fact, one and the same as king Xerxes, grandson of Cyrus the Median king who combined forces with Persia, overtook Babylon, and eventually sent the captives from Judah home. Xerxes reigned in Persia from 486-465 B.C., but it is Esther 1:3 that states that the events to follow began to occur in the third year of his reign, or around 484 B.C. This would place these events in history some fifty-three years after Zerubbabel led the first wave of captives home, but some twenty-seven years before Ezra took the second. The temple has long since been rebuilt, but the wall is still four decades from yet being begun.

It is at this time that God's providence worked to see a young Jewish girl exalted to the queenly throne of Persia. It was then through Esther's power and closeness to the king that she was able to preserve her national brethren as well as the messianic seed-line from the ruthless hands of a vengeful, underhanded conniver named Haman who had dishonestly convinced the king that the entire lot of Jewish captives should be extinguished. But what Haman did not know was that Esther had "come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). Haman's plan fails and in irony he is hung on the same gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, Esther's cousin (Esther 2:15).

The author of this book is unknown, thou most assume it to have been either Mordecai or Ezra. It likely would have been written post-465 B.C., after the reign of Ahasuerus, but in what year is not known. What is known, though, is the portrayal of Christ in Esther. Like Christ, Esther was willing to sacrifice her life for the safety of her brethren; and though she did not die, her courage allowed them to live. But also, Christ is pictured through the preserved nation, whom if extinguished, would not have brought forth the promised Messiah.

One of the greatest lessons in all of the Old Testament is found in the Book of Esther. While she was rightfully somewhat nervous about her encounter with the king she besought Mordecai for advice and comfort. Mordecai's words were, "*Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*" (Esther 4:13-14). There are many situations in which Christians today are put, allowing them to possibly be the only thing that would stand between an acquaintance and eternal torment. Who is to know if each has come into the kingdom of Christ for such a time as this in which we can be aids to all the lost of the world. May Esther continue to provide the courageous example of a true servant of God and lover of her brethren so that we might, in some way, have but a small impact similar to that of Esther's.

Truly Esther the book and Esther the woman are topics worthy of much investigation. God's providence, as portrayed through book and life, is something for which to be thankful.

-Andy Brewer