

## THE WORD OF REVELATION – LAW & LOVE

1. The Word of the Law (Expression of God) Jn 6:67-68; Heb 1:1-3
  - a. The Law is not merely a bunch of rules and regulations by which God governs the universe. The Law is a transcript of God's heart. It is a description of God's character.
  - b. The Word ordered the cosmos into existence in a super intelligent manner. The environments of the heavens and earth are governed by consistent laws of physics (physical universe) and morality (spiritual beings).
  - c. The physical laws correspond to the physical environments e.g. time, matter, space involve gravity, electricity, waves, elements and so forth (see **Appendix 1**). Such physiological laws are observed and acknowledged. They are extremely hard to ignore or break e.g. gravity.
  - d. Created beings i.e. angels and humans are also governed by moral laws. These moral laws are 'written' on our hearts/minds and are identified in our consciences. In fact, the eternal living Word has given us multiple books of which we can and must read in order to live and know Him! We previously considered the Word of Creation which is the 'book' of nature which is seen primarily in the physical creation. Here, I'm speaking of the book of conscience which is metaphysical and acknowledges the laws of morality. The book of creation identifies physical laws e.g. gravity, inertia, photosynthesis, etc. and the book of conscience identifies moral laws e.g. The Decalogue to which we will subsequently turn. But first I want to share with you Paul's confirmation of my claims here.
  - e. Romans begins with Paul's argument that humans have no excuse to ignore that God exists and that He is righteous (cf. Ps. 97:6). It has been said that God has given us two books to read – the book of nature and the book of Scripture. They are respectfully classified as general revelation (i.e. nature declares that God is) and specific (or special) revelation (Scripture declares who God is and what He wills).
  - f. The Word of the Law is revealed in Scripture but if one refuses to consider it, he is w/o excuse – as Paul acknowledged (Ro. 1:20). Although Paul doesn't neatly classify these categories they are described in his epistles and in the OT. I've conveniently classified God's revelatory means this way:
    - i. Creation (Ps. 19:1-6 = the **Word of Creation**)
    - ii. Conscience (Ps. 19:7-14 = the **Word of Revelation**)
    - iii. Christ (Heb. 1:3 & Col. 1:15-20) = The **Word of Incarnation** – the Word become flesh. Jesus is the imprint of God's nature. He is the perfect demonstration of God's perfect Law see vv. 1-2 also.)
    - iv. Canon (Gen. 1:1-Rev. 22:21 = God's gracious, astonishing, unspeakable, loving **Word of Salvation**)
  - g. The Word of the Law was given immediately after creation (Gen. 2:16-17) and soon thereafter violated (Gen. 3:6).
  - h. In the event of the original sin, aka The Fall, we see that the cause of all curses, trials, and loss is due to a lack of trust in God's Word.<sup>1</sup> Eve chose to listen to the serpent rather than

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<sup>1</sup> It has been argued (very wisely) that some of the 'effects' of original sin are retroactive e.g. God made sharks and lions with predatory features and there was likely animal death before the Fall. Furthermore, mankind being made vulnerable to death (physical termination) was due to God's omniscience. In other words, God made the environments and our bodies mortal and kept Adam from the tree of life so that we wouldn't be destined to an everlasting death/separation from Him. The environments are actually designed with the understanding of a necessary fall in order to have a gracious salvation – and thus the Word became flesh to naturally and supernaturally conquer where the first Adam failed. In short, everything was created in a manner for mankind to volitionally acknowledge God, repent, and receive the gracious salvation via the Cross of Christ. William Dembski and Hugh Ross have made great contributions with regard to these inseparable subjects of theodicy and

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God. She foolishly believed a creature over its Creator! All of history and all of salvation pivots on this viz. the living Word of God! Before creation was the Word, the cause of creation was the Word, the gracious instruction and provision for mankind was the Word – and yet the Word was violated. The serpent enticed Eve, and thus Adam; to question, doubt, or disbelieve the Word of God! \*read footnote and appendix.

- i. A disbelief in the Word brought on sin and thus pain, strife, loss, and death (Ro. 5:12, 6:23). However, just as the sin of disbelief in God’s Word is the pivotal point in our curse – faith in the living Word of God is the pivotal point in our salvation!
- j. What is significant about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is that it only became such when they partook of it (cf. Gen 3:22). They immediately saw their sin and hid. Their eyes were opened to shame whereas if they hadn’t eaten, they’d have no shame or guilt. They had *gained* knowledge but knowledge doesn’t equate to righteousness.
- k. What is also interesting is that Adam was charged with being a guardian and steward of Eden and yet God ironically sent cherubim to guard Eden from Adam (Gen 3:24). This act is not seen as a punishment because the curses served as somewhat natural effects of not trusting God’s Word. The expulsion from the tree of life is seen as a gracious provision i.e. Adam was prevented from partaking and thus solidifying himself in a permanent condition of sinfulness. Nevertheless, eternal life – which was represented in the tree – was forfeited. But there would be another garden (Gethsemane) where the last Adam would obey with complete faith in God, which took him to the “tree” (Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; 1 Pet. 2:24) where He’d drink the cup of wrath which Adam’s and our sins have filled; and thus restoring creation in the new heavens and earth where the tree of life reemerges for the healing of the nations and where instead of being guarded from the garden, those in the last Adam take up the original commission to not just maintain the garden but have dominion in it forevermore (Rev. 22:2-5). Such is God’s end game!
- l. Till that day (between the two perfect gardens and trees of life), those in Christ are no longer under the curse of the Law but redeemed sinners by grace unto the Law. We become who we are via the Spirit of the Law which is revealed in the Word of the Law. BTW, this three part history marked by three trees, three gardens, and two Adams is also marked by three resurrections and the two Adams in 1 Cor. 15 viz.
  - i. Past Reality of Jesus’ Resurrection vv. 1-11
  - ii. Present Relevance of Our Spiritual Resurrection vv. 12-34
  - iii. Promised Renewal of Our Physical Resurrection vv. 35-58

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soteriology. See, in particular, Ross *Why the Universe Is the Way It Is* and Dembski *The End of Christianity*. Also, see **Appendix 2**.

## Appendix 2 (Why God Made Creation The Way It Is)

Following are three references from Hugh Ross’s mentioned book. These are in reference to this series outline in point 2. a. viii.

The universe’s physical laws and dimensions not only limited the ability of humans to relate to one another, to other creatures (both terrestrial and angelic), and to God, but they also guaranteed that all physical life would decay and die. Adam and Eve were the only exceptions, *if* they would eat from the Tree of Life (Gen. 2:9, 3:22). These laws and dimensions did not change when Adam and Eve chose instead to eat from a different tree, disregarding both the Creator’s gift and the Creator’s authority (Gen. 2:16–17; 3:2–7). Their choice, freely made, came as no surprise to God despite the pain it brought. From the moment spiritual death (autonomy from God) invaded creation, physical death became a blessing, an avenue through which God could temper the outbreak of evil and suffering.

More importantly, through death—his own and that of human beings—the Creator could enact his plan of redemption. That’s why God, after humanity’s rebellion, barred access to the Tree of Life (see Gen. 3:22). The fruit of this tree would have kept the now sin-marred humans from experiencing physical decay and the consequences of injury and disease—tools God would use to restrain sin’s expression (see chapters 11 and 12). But God’s love did not allow this tragedy.<sup>2</sup>

God did not curse the world directly. There’s no evidence to suggest alterations occurred in the physics of the universe or Earth. Few cosmic features could be more important for revealing their Maker than the constancy of the physical laws. If the force of gravity or the velocity of light changed occasionally, the result would be chaos and confusion (not to mention extermination). The universe would be indecipherable, at best, if each star and planet formed by different principles and processes.

The biblical prophet Jeremiah declared that the laws that govern the heavens and Earth are as “fixed,” or secure, as God’s promises to Israel (see Jer. 33:25–26). The apostle Paul said the entire universe (which would include all its space-time realm) is subject to the law of decay (see Rom. 8:18–23). Genesis stipulates that the sun and stars shone and creatures metabolized food both before and after Adam sinned (see Gen. 1:14–30; 2:8–17). Even the slightest change in the laws of physics would have drastically disrupted these (and other) vital processes.

Rather than the laws being changed, the ground became cursed as Adam and his descendants altered the manner of their work. Instead of wisely administering resources for the benefit of the plants, animals, and all life as God commanded (see Gen. 1:28–30), Adam and Eve and their descendants allowed greed, laziness, and selfishness to ruin their environment.

God’s pronouncements on Adam and Eve and the ground were not only a judgment but also a warning. When humans practice evil, they experience additional pain and work. Extra work that serves no purpose but to partially reverse the effects of sin becomes “painful toil.” This waste of valuable time and energy frustrates a person’s ability to engage in more meaningful or pleasurable activities.

These verdicts apply to everyone. Male and female alike work harder and experience more pain, even in having children. The greatest torment is not in a baby’s brief passage through the birth canal but rather in the emotional and spiritual anguish of a father and mother who anticipate and then watch their growing child making foolish choices and experiencing the painful consequences. Likewise, both

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<sup>2</sup> Ross, H. (2008). [\*Why the Universe Is the Way It Is\*](#) (pp. 150–151). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

husbands and wives struggle to sustain harmony with each other. The balance of authority and responsibility seems extremely difficult for any couple to maintain.<sup>3</sup>

### “Divine Rescue

The Bible teaches that God is all-powerful, all-loving, and all-knowing. It also says that God is in complete control of everything that happens. Yet God often seems to be standing idly by while hundreds and even thousands of innocent people suffer or die from the ravages of a natural disaster. Why would a loving God who is also sovereign allow the forces of nature to shatter so many lives?

First, natural disasters really are, in one sense, “acts of God.” In the context of the laws of physics and space-time dimensions, the forces behind such disasters are all designed to deliver significant benefit for humanity.

For example, God could easily eradicate hurricanes. Such elimination, however, would drastically reduce the input of sea-salt aerosols<sup>1</sup> and bacterial and viral particles<sup>2</sup> into the atmosphere. That reduction would lead to a decrease in rainfall. Hurricanes also regulate tropical ocean temperatures.<sup>3</sup> Given the laws of physics and space-time dimensions chosen for the universe, both the frequency and the average intensity of hurricanes are set to maximally benefit humanity and human civilization. Likewise, tornadoes, earthquakes, volcanoes, wildfires, ice ages, floods, droughts, and disease are all set at levels that deliver the maximum benefit and minimum damage to humans and their civilization.<sup>4</sup> But humans don’t always make wise choices about where and how to build their dwellings. [As per Hugh’s point, God incorporated both environmental conflicts and our knowledge and volition to counter such for opportunities to trust Him and practice wisdom (Matt. 7:24-27; 1 Peter 4:12-19).]

Second, no human being can claim true innocence before God. All have sinned (see Rom. 3:9–12). All have defied God’s authority in one way or another. All have fallen short of God’s standard of moral perfection (see Rom. 3:10–20). So while people may be “innocent” of any specific offense related to the disaster they face, they are not innocent in any absolute sense that justifies accusing God of injustice.<sup>5</sup>

Third, God does not stand idly by. Often we’re stunned at how many people survive nature’s outbursts. We have no way to determine how catastrophic an event “might have been” apart from God’s restraint. On some occasions it appears he miraculously intervenes to rescue people from disaster. However, if God intervened in natural calamities in an overriding way, he would abrogate their benefits, including the disciplinary benefits of physical laws and space-time dimensions.

What could explain God’s “failure” to rescue all “innocent” people from criminal acts? If “good” people were never harmed by criminal acts or abusive treatment, human authorities might never take action to restrain evil or even to take evil seriously.”<sup>4</sup> In short, God made this world and life not as a resort but as a gymnasium.

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<sup>3</sup> Ross, H. (2008). *Why the Universe Is the Way It Is* (pp. 168–169). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

<sup>1</sup> D. M. Murphy et al., “Influence of Sea-Salt on Aerosol Radiative Properties in the Southern Ocean Marine Boundary Layer,” *Nature* 392 (March 5, 1998): 62–65.

<sup>2</sup> Ruprecht Jaenicke, “Abundance of Cellular Material and Proteins in the Atmosphere,” *Science* 308 (April 1, 2005): 73.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas R. Bates, Anthony H. Knap, and Anthony F. Michaels, “Contribution of Hurricanes to Local and Global Estimates of Air-Sea Exchange of CO<sub>2</sub>,” *Nature* 395 (September 3, 1998): 58–61.

<sup>4</sup> For documentation see my earlier book *Creation as Science*, 165–74.

<sup>5</sup> The Old Testament documents occasions when God used natural disasters as tools of judgment or as calls to repentance, but that occurred only when the expression of evil became egregious and concentrated. For example, see the account of Deborah and Barak in Judges 4–5.

<sup>4</sup> Ross, H. (2008). *Why the Universe Is the Way It Is* (p. 171). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

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PC: Everything except God must have context. All creation is in the context of the eternal Word. For example; galaxies, our solar system, and earth are governed in and by the environment of the cosmos while spiritual beings such as angels and humans are governed by the laws of morality. It is the Word of Creation who created the physical environments in which we live and whose character governs the morality of spiritual beings such as us. Just as we must learn to function in a physical universe, we must also learn to live in a moral universe. Therefore, the Word of Creation has given us multiple forms of revelation to reveal *that* He is (see Part 1) and *who* He is and what He requires (see Micah 6:8). The Word of Law is perceived by the metaphysical eye which recognizes morality and love. It is in and for love that He made us and the Law verifies such as it helps us to see God's loving and righteous character.