



## The Book of Nature-Part Two -- What Nature Doesn't Tell Us by Warren Krug (March-April, 2007)

### II. Why the Book of Nature Isn't Enough

If the Book of Nature were our only revelation, we would be left with some important unanswered questions. Who is the Creator Who has displayed such power, beauty, and wisdom in His act of creating the universe? With all the marvels so evident in the created world, why are there defects in nature and in mankind? What can be done about the sins that trouble our consciences? For answers to these questions we must turn to the Book of Books.

#### A. Only the Book of Books Reveals the Identity of the Creator?

If all we had was the natural revelation, we would be in the same boat as the men of ancient Athens who put up an altar to the "Unknown God" (Acts 17:23). But the Bible reveals the Creator. "I am the Lord; that is my name!" God proclaims in Isaiah 42:8. We learn from the Bible that the Lord is a Spirit (John 4:24) and that He is infinite (1 Kings 8:27), eternal (Psalm 90:2), omniscient (1 John 3:20), holy (Isaiah 6:3), righteous (Psalm 92:15), almighty (Luke 1:37), good (Psalm 145:9), and loving (1 John 4:8). We know His true nature is beyond our understanding in that He is a triune God, three Persons within one Godhead (Matthew 3:16). We know God is not distant but is involved in our lives and knows and fulfills our every need (Matthew 6:25-34).

With such a wonderful Creator, how is it that our natural world has so many imperfections? We see dangerous storms, feel earthquakes and droughts, get sick and have to put up with the evil deeds of our fellow human beings. For each of these conditions, scientists and other experts can explain, or at least theorize why the condition exists. However, there is no answer in the Book of Nature why such imperfections should have arisen in such a well-planned and beautiful universe in the first place.

#### B. Problems in Nature

*1. Hurricanes.* Hurricanes grow from complexes of thunderstorms over the ocean. For these storms to become hurricanes, the ocean water must be warmer than 81° F, and there must be high relative humidities in the lower and middle troposphere. The heat and moisture from the warm water is the source of energy for hurricanes. When a group of thunderstorms comes together for a long enough time, it may develop into a tropical depression with winds from 23-39 mph in the center, then a tropical storm with winds from 39-73 mph (now blowing in a more circular direction), and finally a hurricane, with wind speeds above 74 mph. **1**

*2. Earthquakes.* When two blocks of earth suddenly slip past each other, an earthquake occurs. The surface where they slip is called a fault. Scientists believe a thin skin separates the earth's crust from the layer called the mantle below it. This skin is made up of many pieces called tectonic plates. The edges of these plates are called tectonic boundaries. Most earthquakes happen when two of the tectonic boundaries slip past each other after being stuck together for a time while the rest of the plates keep moving.

Energy is stored up during the period when the edges are stuck and then is released when they become unstuck. The released energy radiates through the earth from the fault causing seismic waves that shake the earth. **2**

*3. Droughts.* A drought is defined as an extended period of deficient rainfall compared to a multi-year average for the region. What causes a drought? Scientists say a drought is related to changes in atmospheric circulation patterns and the location of high-pressure systems. Sometimes whirling masses of air separate from the westerly airflow and interfere with the usual west-to-east direction of weather systems. Droughts can occur when these "blocking systems" last for extended periods of time. Climatologists also believe that droughts are associated with global patterns of abnormal sea surface temperatures such as El Nino. During an El Nino, the warm equatorial Pacific Ocean waters warm the atmosphere above it which can lead to the above-mentioned changes. **3**

### **C. Problems With People**

*A. Diseases.* How many are there? Wikipedia says there are over 6,000 diseases or other medical conditions. Diseases and other harmful medical conditions can affect every part of the body. They can be caused by viruses, injuries or genetic defects. They are responsible for early death, a poor quality of life, and lost time at work or school. While medical science has had success in almost eliminating some diseases such as polio and measles, others such as AIDS have risen to take their place while still others such as cancer and the common cold have resisted elimination.

*B. Crime.* The U. S. Bureau of Justice reports 1,823,400 cases of violent crime in the country in 2005. Fortunately, that is down from 4,190,000 in 1993, but that's still a lot of rapes, armed robberies, aggravated assaults, and homicides. Over 7,000,000 people are in jail, prison, on parole, or on probation for crimes committed. Is there anyone who has not been a victim of crime? At the very least, we have to pay higher taxes because so many people cannot obey the law. **4**

*C. Wars.* Wikipedia lists 20 wars including the Iraqi conflict currently going on in the world. In addition to ongoing wars, the website **5** has 8 other pages consisting of nothing more than long lists of wars since B.C. times. According to Wikipedia, almost a million Americans were killed in the Civil War and about 62 million died worldwide because of World War II. Historians, of course, can give reasons why each of these conflicts has arisen, but they can't give a reason for the basic question of why humans feel the need to kill other human beings in warfare.

### **D. Only the Bible Provides the Underlying Reason for these Imperfections.**

The Book of Nature has no answer for why the imperfections we find in nature and in human beings should exist in such a beautiful and well-designed universe. We must turn to the Book of Books for a clear and definitive answer to this question.

We call the imperfections in human nature sin, the breaking of God's laws. Sin is extremely serious; it always leads to death (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23). God holds us individually responsible for our sins and He demands perfection (Matthew 5:48).

Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. After Adam's sin, God told him, "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you." (Gen. 3:17b-18a) All

sorts of bad things began happening to God's perfect creation because of the intrusion of sin into the world.

And it would get worse for Adam's ears. "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." (Gen. 3:19) Now work would not be pleasant and death would be his earthly destiny.

The sin of Adam and Eve left the entire universe reeling ever since. St. Paul tells us, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time." (Romans 8:22), but previously he also said, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed." (Romans 8:18-19)

The glory that will be revealed in us will happen on the day of judgment when we will inherit a perfect, sinless body and be allowed to live in a sinless, defect-free world called heaven. How can it be that our sins condemn us to death; yet we can look forward to paradise?

#### **E. We Can't Discover God's Plan of Salvation from Nature.**

Only the Holy Bible, the Word of God, the Inspired Scriptures, and not the natural revelation can tell us how this salvation is possible.

The Bible clearly reveals God's plan of salvation. First He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect, sinless life and to fulfill the demands of the Law (1 Peter 2:21-22; Galatians 4:4-5). Then he directed Jesus to suffer and die for all of our sins, thereby meeting the need for justice, bringing us total forgiveness for all our sins, and lifting the penalty for sin from off our backs (Isaiah 53:5; John 1:29; Romans 3:23).

The Lord offers us this forgiveness and salvation as a complete gift (Romans 6:23). Through our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior (John 3:16) this gift of salvation and eternal life in heaven becomes ours. Our consciences need be troubled no longer. This salvation is a gift that can't be earned, but it is one that can be rejected with disastrous results. (Mark 16:16)

The Bible is clear and emphatic regarding this plan of salvation. Nature by itself can tell us nothing about salvation. But we rejoice that both revelations give us reason to praise and honor our Creator God. *LSI*

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