

## A GOD OF MORAL LAW IS NECESSARILY VINDICTIVE

The Bible states that sin is going against the law of God (Romans 3:23, 1 John 3:4).

Sinner means the same thing as lawbreaker - the law concerned is the law of God. Also, a law implies the right to force or compel people either by assertion or the threat of punishment. Punishment is an exception to the law that we must not harm others. A law is based on the notion that intolerance is sometimes right and that prohibiting, intending to limit and stop freedom, is okay.

Law is needed to regulate human affairs - we can't have chaos. So why does God need law? He doesn't need it for he is powerful enough to stop say some president destroying the world in nuclear war. He doesn't need to set up laws forbidding this. Enacting needless laws is mere vindictiveness. Justice for the sake of giving justice is vindictive.

God is the cause of our choices and actions in the sense that we do things not in spite of him but because of him. In that way, he is responsible for what we do and thus he should not be setting up a law. If he is good and in control to that degree he does not need to. It is spiteful to make law that is not needed for law implies compulsion and the rightness of punishment.

Suppose God is a law giver. Human law because of our limited resources for controlling people is bad at forcing. But God does not have this limitation. Not only does God make law which means he is necessarily vindictive but he also refuses to enforce it. For example, murderers can and do get away with it. So that means he approves when somebody kills which is at least on paper against his law.

Then what if he does punish breaking of the law? What he is against then is not so much the killing but the breaking of the law.

Is child molestation wrong because the law of God says so or wrong in itself or is it both?

If it is wrong in itself we don't really need God's law to tell us that. We only need it to punish.

If it is wrong because it is against the law and wrong in itself then that implies that the law is able to help something become bad or immoral. If both the law and the wrongness of molestation matter then is it both equally? If so, then the law half-makes child molestation wrong! It helps it become wrong. But if it is wrong in itself the law cannot help it become wrong!  $2+2=5$  is either right or wrong intrinsically. It is not right or wrong because mathematicians say so.

Is the molestation worse than the breaking of the law? Then we don't need the law.

Is the breaking of the law worse than the child molestation? That would turn us into hard hearted hypocrites who don't care enough about the child. If the law allowed it, it would it be okay to molest or a bit okay.

If there was a choice between caring about the molestation or the law forbidding it it would have to be the former.

The law matters for its own sake as distinct from any concern for a child. The concern for a child is balanced with concern for the law - a really humane person does not give any of his concern to the law when it could all go to the child.

The concept of sin is necessarily vindictive. Sin is going against what God expects of us. He is unhappy when we sin. He hurts himself because we sin. If you feel hurt at the actions of others it is because you let yourself feel that way. God is all-powerful and does not need to suffer over our sins. If he does then he is punishing himself because we sin. He is mentally disturbed. He is angry at us for what he does to himself. He would take it out on us. He is vengeful. He cannot expect us to perceive his law as loving - it is vindictive.

Some Christians argue that the punishment for sin is not administered directly by God. Instead, they would have us believe, he ensures say that frequent drunkenness will lead to ill-health.

The first awful thing about such a teaching is that if God directly punishes he can make sure a person is punished in the best way for them and not to excess. If God sets it up so that evil will follow evil without him directly getting involved then he is necessarily giving up control. If a person needs to go to jail for their own sake - the punishment in that sense can be seen as mercy. To directly put the person in jail is maximising the control you have over how the person is treated. Indirectly putting them there is not. Thus a God who does not directly punish is just worse than one that does.

The next awful thing is that he suggests that direct punishment is somehow evil and so like a hypocrite he does it the sneaky way. He sets the stage. Only a hypocrite would say that it is evil to punish but okay make it happen indirectly. You would have to directly ensure it happens indirectly. No real difference is made to the result but only to the method. If God makes laws, these laws are nothing unless there is a threat of punishment. They are not laws. If God has a problem punishing then he has no laws. If laws are wrong he is vindictive one way even if he doesn't like to be vindictive another way.

The next awful thing is that it makes us assume that the suffering that follows sin is caused by the sin. For example, suppose a person willingly becomes an alcoholic. He dies of cirrhosis of the liver. But what if the person was hiding some dreadful secret that led them into alcoholism? Really it was the trauma that was mostly to blame. And if the person had early treatment the disease could have been controlled so why does nobody blame that instead of the alcoholism? And what about the fact that many alcoholics do not get the disease for their genes protect them? Clearly blaming the alcoholics bad health on his sin of drinking to much shows a lack of concern for the person. You would think long and hard and carefully before you would say that sin has bad consequences that are its punishment. People like you may be to blame for many people becoming alcoholics.

Suppose we should assume that sickness is a consequence of some forms of sin. Then to what degree is the sickness a result of the sin? 10%? 45%? 100%? The problem is that there are other factors and not just the alleged sin. It would be more charitable to assume that the sickness is not a result of the sin at all.

It is judgement to say that the sinner possibly is paying for sin. It is a bigger judgement to say that he probably is. It is even bigger to say that he actually is.

Saying a person is being punished for sin is worse than saying he was guilty of some sin. Sin by itself does not do any harm to the person but the aftermath or punishment does. Punishment demands that you agree with the suffering imposed for the person deserves it.

The teaching that God loves sinners and hate sins is bizarre. At the end of the day, persons with sin are kept out of Heaven not the sins. Love the sinner and hate the sin is really about trying to appear as if one is taking moral stances while one really wants to see sinners getting away with it and wants to pretend that the sins can somehow be punished as if they have nothing to do with the sinner.

God's law forbids selfishness as bad in itself even if it harms nobody. Sometimes it doesn't harm anybody. Belief in God's law and that he is anti-selfishness implies that a world full of selfish people where there was no disease or murder or dying is worse than our world. This is absurd. It is a sin to wish for such a world. Believers in God who are not cruel must be acting in spite of their faith.

Moralising is never intended to help the person or others. It only about being superior and judging. Even mercy is based on judging the person as deserving terrible things to be done to them. Telling a person that it is morally wrong to rob a bank is not about stopping them but preaching at them. If you want to stop them, help them to refrain from robbing and help them find reasons not to. The reasons do not matter as long as they no longer want to do it. If they refuse to do it because you have helped them fall in love with the married bank manager then who cares?

Nobody can punish you. Neither can God though he says he can. As long as you refuse to see attempts to punish you as successful your attitude will make the difference. Nobody can punish you unless you respond and take what they do to you as punishment. Take their efforts as an opportunity for you to grow.

Do not honour this inherently vindictive God of punishment. Those who approve God's law are saying they would do the same nasty hypocritical things as him if they were in his shoes. When you believe in a God of Law, you cannot believe in loving the sinner.

Belief in a bad God is not acceptable.

Belief in such a God says something about his servants.