

# The Indispensability of Science and Morality for the Sustainability of Nations

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**ABSTRACT:** The proposition that science and morality are indispensable for the sustainability and prosperity of nations is an idea that finds broad support in academic and theological circles. The centrality of science to the advancement of our societies is self-evident, as the technological innovations that have arisen from scientific inquiry have enabled us to solve some of our most pressing challenges. However, the importance of morality is equally salient, as it provides a moral compass for our actions and decisions. In the absence of such ethical guidance, the fruits of scientific endeavor may result in unethical practices that ultimately cause harm to individuals and society as a whole. Thus, it is imperative that we continue to accord both science and morality the respect and attention they deserve, recognizing that they are fundamental to our pursuit of progress, prosperity, and sustainability.

**KEYWORDS:** Moral science, theological knowledge, divine forbearance, divine judgment, fairness in governance, societal harmony

## Introduction

“Ethics, Moral Science, or Moral Philosophy, is the science which teaches men their duty. It is called Moral Philosophy because it employs similar reasoning to that used in other philosophy departments” (Dagg 1860, 13). It is interesting to approach the study of the Bible from an academic point of view. The Bible is a rich source and undoubtedly a wellspring of theological knowledge and understanding, and it is fascinating to explore the comprehensive revelation of God throughout its pages. The concept of salvation from sin is a crucially important theme in the Bible, and it has resonated with people for thousands of years.

Faith and science can coexist in harmony as long as they do not try to invalidate one another. It is important to have an open mind and use our gift of reason to approach these two concepts in a way that respects and values both (Montgomery 2012, 254). As long as we approach them with respect and a willingness to learn, we can find ways to integrate them in a way that benefits us all. Ultimately, it is about finding a balance and being willing to consider new perspectives.

„In our day we have reached a turning point in the history of thought at which natural science and theological science are confronted each in their own way with the need to adopt a fundamental attitude to the universe as a whole and allying itself with unwarranted cosmological presuppositions and speculations” (Torrance 1981, 62).

Referring to moral fatalism since 1916, Karl Barth states that God is the Creator and I concur with Karl Barth's perspective regarding the order of creation (Moseley 2013, 95). Undeniably, work, marriage, family, and leadership equality are essential orders that remain unalterable despite historical circumstances. On the other hand, nationhood or statehood falls under the category of 'accidental' orders of history and does not belong to the fundamental orders of creation. Acknowledging the distinction and significance of each order is crucial in preserving a well-rounded viewpoint.

It is worth noting that certain viewpoints do not view the state as a pre-fall construct, but rather as a manifestation of divine forbearance and peace-making. This notion highlights the significance of acknowledging the state's role in fostering reconciliation and upholding societal harmony (Moseley 2013, 96). The state, insofar as it is a human construct, is

inevitably susceptible to the sinful tendencies inherent in human nature. As a result, the state's actions and policies are subject to the same imperfections and flaws that afflict human society. However, it is possible to mitigate these shortcomings by implementing measures that promote justice and fairness in governance. In doing so, it becomes possible to minimize the negative impact of human sinfulness within the state's operations, thereby creating a more equitable and effective system of governance.

### **Biblical examples of nations' approach concerning morality and science**

It is interesting to note the first biblical accounts of the destruction of a people due to their moral corruption, as described in Genesis 6:11-17. According to this account, only Noah and his family were spared from the flood of waters that wiped out the rest of the animal and human race, as they were deemed righteous by God. This account showcases the idea of divine intervention in response to human sinfulness and serves as a cautionary tale about the consequences of moral corruption (Genesis 6:17).

David R. posited that the story of Noah's flood serves as a tangible reminder to humanity of its inherent depravity. This narrative further resonates with the constant decay of the world, which is a replica of humanity's moral and spiritual degeneration. This perspective encourages us to reflect on the current state of affairs and consider the moral and spiritual decay of humanity that is reflected in the world around us (Montgomery 2012, 40). According to his calculations, Noah boarded the ark on a Sunday, December 7, 2349 BC, and traveled a little over a year in the ark, disembarking on December 18, 2348 BC, saving his family and all living things in the ark (Montgomery 2012, 97).

William Rayan's research on Noah's Flood cites the work of two notable geophysicists who have identified a catastrophic event that altered history. This event, a massive flood, occurred no more than seven thousand years ago. The implications of this discovery are significant and may provide insight into the biblical story of Noah's flood (William 1998, 323). In addition to identifying the catastrophic flood event, William Rayan's research also suggests that the flood is evidence of the annihilation and repopulation of the Earth. He points to the drift deposits of boulder-strewn clay found throughout Scotland and Northern Europe as a clear indication of a massive torrent, supporting the biblical story of Noah's flood (William 1998, 56). The discovery of evidence in areas affected by flooding is a fascinating subject worthy of investigation. The Middle East region has been the focus of extensive research efforts since 1991, which have yielded remarkable results. It is reassuring to learn that a thorough and comprehensive approach has been taken in this area (William 1998, 261). The discovery of a flood in the Black Sea has been a subject of scholarly interest for decades. In fact, evidence of such an event was first uncovered in 1967. The significance of this discovery is not lost on the geologists and chemists of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, who were responsible for extracting sediment samples saturated with plant and animal remnants. Their achievement is a testament to the power of scientific inquiry and the value of interdisciplinary collaboration (William 1998, 103). The organic carbon content of extracted sediments has yielded an impressive concentration of 50 per cent. In contrast, the percentage of extracted carbon from oceans is notably lower, with a drastic drop to only one per cent. This disparity highlights the remarkable evidence (William 1998, 103-105). According to the approximations of the researchers, these sediments were dated to be no more than a few thousand years old. William also says that observations suggest that researchers from Moscow State University have conducted research with analogous outcomes. These researchers investigated sediments extracted from drillings situated on the bed of the Black Sea, located in the Kerch Strait, in the countries of Crimea, Ukraine, Romania, and Bulgaria (William 1998, 106). Rob Clark, an enthusiastic scientist suggests that it was the biblical flood that deposited the mud-rich organic sediments that lie on the bottom of the Black Sea (Montgomery 2012, 220).

The assertion that the only plausible explanation for the presence of fossil resources on Earth is a global and catastrophic flood, as described in the story of Noah, and that such a flood caused the extinction of all species on Earth, is a view held by many individuals. However, it is important to note that there are numerous scientific and geological theories that explain the existence of fossils on Earth. While the story of Noah's flood holds significant cultural and religious significance, it may not necessarily be the explanation accepted by all for the presence of fossils on Earth (Montgomery 2012, 79). It has been posited that this flood acted as a reset button for all of creation, providing a fresh start for life on Earth. David, for instance, has the power to hold the view that this event was a peaceful reset button for all of creation (Montgomery 2012, 45). It is a topic that continues to inspire debate and research in both academic and business settings.

The context of the discussion between God and Abraham is noteworthy as it underscores the notion that God is the arbiter of the destruction of peoples who exceed a certain threshold of sinful behavior. This theme is recurrent throughout the scriptures and emphasizes the importance of leading a virtuous and righteous life. The concept of divine punishment for sinful behavior has implications for both business and academic settings, as it underscores the importance of ethical conduct and moral responsibility. As such, it is crucial to cultivate a culture of integrity and accountability in all spheres of human activity (Genesis 15). The leniency displayed by God towards certain peoples, such as the Amorites, is a topic of interest within theological circles. Despite the revelation of their future to Abraham, God refrained from pronouncing judgment upon the Amorites and allowed them to continue for another 400 years. This decision has been the subject of much discussion and interpretation among scholars and religious leaders. The significance of this delay and its implications for divine justice and mercy have been explored in depth in both academic and religious contexts (Genesis 15:16). The mercifulness of God is a concept that is to be revered and appreciated. As per historical accounts, during a particular period, the Amorites maintained a level of immorality that was within "acceptable limits", thereby avoiding divine retribution. Significantly, God refrained from intervening in the affairs of the neighbouring peoples, despite sharing similar immoral practices. However, upon completion of a 400-year period, God destroyed all the nations that engaged in such lifestyles, namely, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaimites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites (Genesis 15:19-21). This serves as a poignant reminder of the inextricable connection between our actions and their consequences. As such, it is imperative that we strive to lead lives that are in accord with God's teachings.

For millennia, the stories and parables of the Bible have captivated individuals across the globe. One such narrative recounts the tale of a group of individuals who resided in a region spanning multiple cities, infamous for their depravity and unscrupulous conduct. Despite their lack of morality and scientific understanding, they were exceptionally sinful (Genesis 13:13). It is about Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities (Genesis 13:10), due to the homosexual immorality practiced on a large scale (Genesis 19:4-5), which endangered the behavior and health of the people in that region, God decides to intervene to restore the natural order of human behavior, cohabitation, and morality by annihilating them (Genesis 19:25-25).

The ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, among others, were reportedly destroyed due to their wickedness in a divine judgment. These cities were located in the fertile Jordan River depression. Notably, scientific evidence supporting the existence of these cities has been discovered in the ancient city of Ebla (Joseph 2013, 33), which thrived in the third millennium and is situated in modern-day Syria. This evidence adds weight to the historical accounts of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, lending credibility to the idea that such cities once existed in the region. The discovery of this evidence underscores the value of archaeological research in illuminating the past and informing our understanding of the

present (Kakoulides n.d.). Archaeological excavations in Ebla have yielded cuneiform inscriptions that mention a location called "Sudum" and a district named "Gimarra". These inscriptions have led most scholars to conclude that Sudum and Gimarra are the same cities referred to in the Bible. It is noteworthy that the term "sodomy", which is used to describe sexually immoral behaviors, has ancient roots and may be traced back to these inscriptions (Davies 2011, 36).

A sodomite-like case of gross immorality, a case of extreme sexual abuse is found in the tribe of Benjamin (Judges 19:22). The impact of Israel's canaanization is evident in all facets of his life, including his spiritual and moral beliefs, as well as his interactions and relationships with women. It is crucial to examine the effects of cultural (Rotaru 2020, 154-160) and societal influences on individuals and their conduct. The process of canaanization, which involves the assimilation of local cultures and customs, can lead to significant changes in an individual's worldview and behavior, as evidenced in Israel's case (Block 1998, 47). The application of judgment by God is not subject to exceptions, as evident in the intervention of Israel's army. This army consisted of eleven tribes, comprising four hundred thousand warriors, who confronted a tribe represented by twenty-six thousand warriors. This historical reference from the Bible speaks to the divine authority that governs military action, and the responsibility of nations to enforce divine justice (Rotaru 2014, 23-31). It serves as an example of the often complex and nuanced relationship between religious and political authority in matters of war and God's justice (Judges 20:15-17). The outcome of the armed confrontation between the army of eleven tribes of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin was devastating. Sadly, twenty-five thousand one hundred men from the tribe of Benjamin were killed, leading to the near-total elimination of its male members (Judges 20:35).

The reign of King Solomon in Israel is regarded as the most prosperous period in the country's history from its inception until the 20th century. This era was marked by the king's exceptional wisdom and knowledge, which had been imparted to him by God. The king's leadership and administration were regarded as exemplary, and his reign was characterized by a period of peace, stability, and economic growth. King Solomon's contributions to the development of Israel during this period are widely recognized (1 Kings 4). The king was held in high regard not only within the country but also beyond its borders. This was due to his exceptional qualities such as his wisdom, diplomacy, wealth, and leadership skills. It is clear that his reputation preceded him, and his influence extended far beyond the confines of his kingdom (Knoppers 1994, 4). Israel enjoyed a significant period of peace, rest, and happiness, which was enjoyed by the entire population. During this time, the country developed strong economic and diplomatic relationships with neighboring countries and regions, bringing prosperity and a sense of identity to its people (1 Kings 10).

The prosperity of this monarchy after only a few decades of stability goes downhill due to ignorance of the moral teachings of the Bible, the teachings of the kings who gave it the highest distinction of its existence as a nation, and the science they enjoyed at the time. The decline of this nation originates in the moral decay experienced by King Solomon himself near the end of his life, the king through whose wisdom Israel rose to the heights of prosperity and peace. The aforementioned actions are a result of King Solomon's submission to the desires of the numerous women he cohabited with, as well as his acceptance of the prohibited worship of their foreign gods. In doing so, he neglected the divine commandments and edicts delivered by Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament.

Different historical accounts have highlighted that during Jeroboam's reign, his disobedience and sins led to the fulfilment of prophecies against him, and the nation of Israel was divided, indicating its fall. Furthermore, as history progressed, the northern area fell under the annexation of the Assyrians in 722 BCE, which worsened the immorality issues that were already prevalent at the time (Knoppers 1994, 4-7).

## **Western nations' approach concerning morality and science**

The history of the Roman Empire is a testament to the fact that nations can rise to great heights, only to fall into decline and obscurity. This story is not unique to Europe, but it is certainly a prominent example of the triumphs and tragedies that are part of human history. As we ponder the rise and fall of Rome, we are forced to confront questions about the nature of power, the limits of human achievement, and the role of chance and fate in shaping the course of events. Many people in the past believed that the fall of Rome was a divine judgment, a reminder that even the mightiest empires can be brought low by the hand of fate (Morley 2010, 129). It is interesting how the luxurious way of coexistence among people and the moral decay that followed had a strong impact on shaping the narrative of society. This has become a basis for debates about the economic and social consequences of this particular human organization. It is important to consider how our actions and decisions can have long-lasting effects on the world around us and to strive towards creating a society that is sustainable and morally responsible (Morley 2010, 130).

During the classical period of 500 B.C. to 400 A.D., great intellectuals such as Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates held objectivist, rationalist, and naturalist views regarding the theory of moral standards. They believed that these standards were part of the natural world and that the human mind could comprehend them through the process of reason (Kurtines 1990, 288). It is fascinating to look back at how philosophical ideas have evolved over time and how they have shaped our understanding of the world around us.

The emergence of universities in Europe in the 12th century marked a significant turning point in the history of education (Haskins 1957, 4). Prior to this period, various subjects were taught, but the concept of universities had not yet taken shape. The universities were able to benefit from the influx of knowledge from Arab, Egyptian, and Roman sources, which had developed around cathedrals and monasteries. The first universities, which emerged in Bologna and Paris, provided a clear definition of the university as the society of masters and scholars. This definition has remained an enduring concept that has shaped our understanding of higher education for centuries (Haskins 1957, 5). The historical evolution of philosophical ideas and their influence on our comprehension of the world is a fascinating subject of study. It is noteworthy that the esteemed University of Salerno, popularly referred to as the School of Medicine, traces its origins back to the 11th century or earlier, as some sources suggest (Haskins 1957, 6). The University of Bologna boasts a rich history of teaching law, which is a noteworthy aspect to consider. In the early days, universities were mainly dedicated to the study of arts, medicine, and law.

It is noteworthy that during the onset of the Renaissance, scientists typically worked in small, secluded groups, congregating mostly in university towns or royal courts to share novel discoveries and theories. This intimate collaboration fostered greater efficiency in communication, and Italian scientists and scholars were at the forefront of advancing the dissemination of scientific knowledge throughout Europe (Bernal 1946, 21).

It is fascinating to observe how the proliferation of universities across Europe had a positive impact on both the quality of life and ethical standards. The papacy, alongside the princes and kings of Europe, was instrumental in facilitating the establishment and financial support of these institutions. As a result, esteemed professionals such as clerics, preachers, and jurists were able to receive top-notch education and training (Ruegg 1992, 50-54).

Historically, universities were regarded as a remarkable embodiment of human intellect and ambition, with the goal of advancing society. Over time, their focus has shifted to pursuing even greater knowledge in order to reshape the world around them. The prestige and inherent political and economic benefits that universities offer have attracted exceptional students and faculty from around the world, thus enabling countries such as Italy, France, England, Austria, the Netherlands, and Germany to greatly benefit from the abundance of scientific knowledge and intellectual enrichment that they provide. As a result, universities have played a pivotal role in lending stability to society and have become essential institutions

for the advancement of human knowledge and progress (Ruegg 1992, 12-14). It is undeniable that universities in Europe have played a crucial role in advancing knowledge, progress, and economic development, while also nurturing a sense of national identity. The establishment of new universities has undoubtedly provided individuals and communities with the tools to pursue their dreams and ambitions, while also fuelling innovation and growth across multiple industries. It is truly remarkable to witness the evolution of universities from their humble beginnings to their current status as indispensable pillars of society (Ruegg 1992, 55-57).

It is interesting to note that the situation in northern Europe, particularly in countries such as the Netherlands, England, and the royal countries, was quite different. These countries were situated at the beginning of a period of prosperity, which saw significant improvements in areas such as merchant and manufacturing industries, navigation, and warfare. As such, they made a conscious decision to support and assist the development of new sciences by scholars. This approach played a crucial role in driving progress and innovation, which has ultimately led to the remarkable advancements we see today (Bernal 1946, 21).

In the early modern era in the 17th-19th century, British philosophers expressed scepticism about the classical period philosophers' approach to moral knowledge and argued for a more relativistic and ideological moral orientation that defined the good in terms of the consequences of actions by reporting the welfare of the greatest number of people and the thinking of naturalism and relativism continued to have a significant influence on modern moral philosophy leading to the rise of modern science (Kurtines 1990, 288).

The well-being of individuals is significantly influenced by the events occurring on Earth as well as their mental capacity (Harris 2011, 1-2). In order to conduct a comprehensive study of these elements, it is imperative to identify scientific truths and gain a thorough understanding of societal norms. The study of these factors is essential in promoting an individual's well-being, and it is imperative to recognize the significance of these elements in a professional or academic setting.

„The underlying claim is that while science is the best authority on the workings of the physical universe, religion is the best authority on meaning values morality, and the good life. Meaning, values, morality, and good life must related to facts about the well-being of conscious creatures and in our case must lawfully depend upon events in the world and upon states of the human brain” (Harris 2011, 6).

According to Harris (2011), it is imperative that science be directed towards the physiological needs of humans, with a sense of urgency to address diseases arising from the lack of primary needs, substandard working conditions, and inadequate supply of such necessities. The need to improve living standards and extend life expectancy underscores the importance of fulfilling these needs in a timely and effective manner. The provision of basic necessities is essential in averting diseases that are directly or indirectly associated with the deprivation of primary needs. It is equally important to improve working conditions for the prevention of illnesses and injuries, thereby promoting a safe and healthy environment for people to improve living standards and extend life expectancy (Harris 2011, 6-7).

Adam Smith championed the principles of morality and science as drivers of welfare and prosperity for nations. In particular, he highlighted the responsibility of individuals to promote order, stability, and the prosperity of society in order to benefit themselves and others. His belief was that the success of any society was determined by the actions of its citizens, saying that (Campbell 2010, 70-71):

”The Moral Sentiments might, therefore, be expected to provide a general outline of virtue and vice designed to encourage the one and condemn the other; we should then proceed to the 'science of the statesman' for consideration of the moral content of the law, under the heading of 'justice', followed by further recommendations designed to increase the prosperity and security of the nation. This would provide a coherent and logical system of moral and prudential recommendations, a normative and practical

study which aims to tell us what is virtuous, just, and desirable, and how to achieve those ends in practice” (Campbell 2010, 49).

Smith also argued that justice plays a major role in promoting the prosperity of a nation, being an essential need for the commercial development of society and laws should be revised to facilitate this and not make it difficult, doing everything in the power to promote the prosperity of the nation (Campbell 2010 212-214). He does not neglect the government's concern with the defence of the country but interprets it as a necessary condition of justice and prosperity that every country should be secure from invasion and defeat in war (Campbell 2010, 215).

It is unfortunate that science can be used to harm people, as demonstrated by the anti-religious campaign undertaken by Soviet Russia. Instead of using scientific methods for the betterment of society, they chose to spread propaganda and enforce atheism, which ultimately contributed to the collapse of the Soviet system in the nineties. It is important to use science ethically and responsibly, with the goal of improving the lives of people and society as a whole (Chulos 2018, 55). The loss of popular awareness and engagement with scientific advancements presents a significant challenge for the general populace in the context of a highly modern and technological world. The gradual diminishment of such awareness could lead to a lack of understanding of the mechanisms that govern and impact the lives of individuals. To effectively navigate this complex landscape, it is imperative to remain up-to-date and informed of the latest scientific developments. This ensures that individuals can make informed decisions, remain competitive, and stay ahead of the curve (Bernal 1946, 104). It is regrettable that scientific advancements have been focused on enhancing the techniques of warfare, resulting in a gradual and concerning escalation. The pursuit of making war increasingly brutal and devastating is concerning, as it can lead to the downfall of nations and states, making peace unattainable. It is crucial to acknowledge that science holds the potential for both positive and negative outcomes, and our efforts should aim to utilize it for the betterment of humanity instead of its demise (Bernal 1946, 187).

## Conclusions

Ethics, moral science, or moral philosophy is indeed the science that teaches individuals about their duty. Moral philosophy uses reasoning techniques similar to those of other philosophy departments, which is why it is often referred to as such. Taking an academic approach to studying the Bible can provide a deeper understanding of its theological significance. It is amazing how much knowledge and wisdom can be gleaned from its pages, and exploring the revelation of God throughout its various narratives is truly fascinating.

The biblical accounts of the obliteration of a people due to their moral decay are apparent in various instances. The first book of Genesis comprises examples of Noah's Flood and the overpowering devastation of Sodom and Gomorrah. Additionally, there is the account of Israel's tribe of Benjamin, where other tribes passed judgment due to their depravity and maltreatment of women. Lastly, the division and collapse of the regal state of Israel began with Solomon's disregard for mosaic law and his scientific discoveries. These accounts serve as a reminder of the consequences of moral corruption and the importance of adherence to ethical and moral principles. They highlight the need for individuals and societies to strive for uprightness and to avoid actions that could lead to moral decay. By doing so, individuals and societies can cultivate healthy and sustainable environments that foster growth and development.

The concept of the nation, being a human construct, is inevitably exposed to the inherent sinful tendencies of human nature. Consequently, the actions and policies of the state are subject to the same flaws and imperfections that afflict human society. The implication of this is that the state's policies and actions can have negative consequences for society as a whole. As a result, it is crucial to recognize the limitations of the state (Rotaru 2022, 585-595)

and to design policies that take into account these inherent imperfections. Failure to do so can result in unintended consequences that could have far-reaching implications for the nation and its people. Therefore, it is essential to approach policymaking with a degree of humility and an understanding of the complexities of human nature.

The insight on the rise and fall of nations is well-founded and accurate (Rotaru 2023, 62-79). The Roman Empire serves as a powerful example of how even the strongest empires can eventually decline and lose their power. I wholeheartedly agree that Western society has made mistakes in the past, but it has also achieved remarkable scientific advancements, particularly during the Renaissance period. The collaboration and exchange of ideas among scholars during this time led to incredible breakthroughs in knowledge. Furthermore, the establishment of universities throughout Europe has had a positive impact on the continent's quality of life and ethical standards. It is crucial to provide the basic necessities required to prevent diseases and promote prosperity, and justice plays a pivotal role in achieving that objective. It is truly disheartening to see how scientific advancements are being used by many nations today to further their military capabilities. It is worrying to see how the focus seems to be on making war more lethal and destructive, rather than on finding ways to promote peace and harmony (Rotaru 2016, 29-43). This trend is concerning, as it can lead to the downfall of nations and states, making it almost impossible to achieve lasting peace in the world.

It is vital to contemplate the history of Western societies to derive valuable insights and avoid repeating past errors. The wisdom of our ancestors serves as a cautionary tale for contemporary society, emphasizing the significance of prioritizing ethical and scientific principles as the bedrock of a flourishing civilization. With the looming threat of terrorism in the present-day world, it is imperative to take proactive measures to safeguard Western civilization and prevent the erosion of human values. By being watchful and drawing upon the lessons of history, we can strive towards creating a brighter future for ourselves and posterity.

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