

New Series: Exodus
Copyright J. Michael Strawn

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITH NO NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 1: THE TRUE CONTEXT, 1:1-22.

#1. From first to last the Book of Exodus opens the mind to the presence of the structure that governs all of time and space. It has no temporal rival; nor is its reach time bound. The implications of this revealed truth about the structure are startling and can be unsettling to the mind.

#2. The structure is the relation between *THE SUPERNATURAL and THE NATURAL*. The will of God and the power of God are directional, moving, always, from the unseen to the natural. Both are *teleological*. That is to say, they are purposeful.

#3. This structure is made known to us by revelation. Two of its most remarkable characteristics are these: the structure serves as the determinant context for time, life and history, secondly, this context does not admit natural explanations.

#4. "Now these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob; they came each one with his household", 1:1. There is no natural explanation for the universe; being created by God. In like manner there was no natural explanation for Israel's presence in the land of Egypt, Genesis 45:1-15. Israel was protected within this context and unbelievers were held accountable to it.

#5. There was no natural explanation for the development of the Israelites in Egypt. "But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them", 1:7. The people of God had become, in the perception of the pharaoh, an intolerable strategic threat, 1:8-11.

#6. "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel", 1:12.

#7. Here was the struggle between *the true context and the rationalized world of men*. Children bore the effects of state policy against them, 1:15-22. Parents ordered to liquidate their own sons, how shameful. But believers learn to stand in faith between the Supernatural and the natural. Like the midwives, they "feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them...", 1:17.

#8. The true context without natural explanations is the spiritual reality that determines our present and future.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITH NO NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

PART 2: THE BEDROCK OF BIBLICAL FAITH, 2-4.

#1. The absolute *bedrock of belief*, according to the Book of Exodus, is the revealed context composed of the relation of the Supernatural to the natural order of things.

#2. Moses' parents gave birth to him at the point of a state ordered death warrant, 1:22. Their trust in this supernatural context determined their behavior in that temporal circumstance.

#3. Their behavior was completely relative to *the true context with no natural explanations*. His mother "hid him for three months", 2:2. Faced with troubling unknowns she put the baby into the "wicker basket" and then "set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile", 2:3.

#4. These two people consciously set the providence of God above human experience and fear. They had no control over immediate events, no control over outcomes and certainly, no control over the future.

#5. What they did have was a faith, proven to rely on the bedrock of the Supernatural context.

#6. This kind of faith is a way of reasoning and a way of representing historical conditions of whatever category. The starting point for reasoning, in such distressing situations, is the belief that the Supernatural context is real and that it will be determinant in all circumstances.

#7. Those two people took unusual measures because of their extraordinary bedrock belief in the Supernatural context. They did not relinquish their concern; they relinquished any confidence in rationalized solutions.

#8. The bedrock of true belief is not "doctrine", it is rather the *relation of God to time*.

#9. Biblical faith will always be tested by the Lord. The usual focus of the test everywhere In Scripture is *the human preference for natural explanations over trust in the power of the Supernatural context*.

#10. There was no natural explanation for the survival of Moses.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

PART 3: THE BEDROCK OF BIBLICAL FAITH, 2-4.

#1. The life of Moses was firmly overtaken by the Supernatural context without natural explanations.

#2. And, most importantly, *the Supernatural context put the child into the eye of the storm*. Pharaoh's daughter "drew him out of the water", 2:10. It is not irregular in Scripture for the purpose of God to put a believer in just such a state of affairs.

#3. The Supernatural context constructed an ironic circumstance. The palace, the royal family was the eye of the storm and yet under the influence of the Supernatural it harbored and nurtured an enemy of the state.

#4. Still, eventually, the eye of the storm caught up with him. "Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren", 2:11.

#5. In the world, the believer who stands with the Lord, is always in the eye of the storm. While in that condition the greatest asset we possess is *a faith resting upon the bedrock of the Supernatural context*.

#6. "...he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand", 2:12. The Supernatural context had generated a crisis, a flash point in time. Exodus instructs us not to be unduly distracted by such flash points. These sudden and imposing events have already been subsumed by the Supernatural context.

#7. His flight to Midian presented a chance for a quiet new life. Welcomed into the home of "the priest of Midian" (2:16) he found providential shelter and more, 2:21, 22. But the "cry for help...rose up to God", 2:23.

#8. Moses was riding the crest of a wave. The Supernatural context was the driving energy behind events. It was only a matter of time before that wave fell upon Egypt.

#9. Moses was chosen to be the voice of the Supernatural context. He had been preserved and protected by the Almighty.

#10. The eye of the storm, as big as it was, had been overruled by the unseen God. There were no natural explanations. We do not seek nor trust in natural explanations.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITH NO NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 4: THE BEDROCK OF BIBLICAL FAITH, 2-4.

#1. One most unusual day, Moses was confronted by a temporal, physical phenomenon that had no natural explanation.

#2. "The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed", 3:2.

#3. Immediate observation revealed that the fire had a source, but the source was not and could not have been the bush. There was no natural explanation. Moses was required to think beyond naturalism.

#4. The work of God had been superposed upon the material world. *SPECIAL CASE GRAND COINCIDENCE*: The power of God and the natural order were in a state of coincidence. "The angel of the Lord" was the source of this event. He was here, walking around in the material world. And He was about to wade into Egypt!

#5. The point was that whatever faith that Moses had, it had to be enlarged to contain belief in an animating force much beyond materiality and nature. There is no such thing as a closed system. It is wrong to treat time, historical conditions, situations, circumstances and states of being as closed systems. The burning bush episode screams at us from the written word: "Think beyond natural explanations".

#6. Moses, initially, under-dimensions the Supernatural context and over-dimensions human experience.

#7. The burning bush was a manifestation of the Supernatural context. The Lord came to bear upon the natural. *When this happens, everything on the natural side changes and becomes isomorphic (same form) with the eternal will of God*. Nothing is as it has to be.

#8. The burning bush was isomorphic with the Supernatural context. Freedom for the Israelites was to be secured in the same way. Moses' mission in Egypt and thereafter would be a replica of the burning bush; a man in the hands of "the angel of the Lord". Here then, is the life of faith. A life much beyond natural explanations. We are to pursue the mind of God and courageously cross the threshold of natural explanations.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 5: THE BEDROCK OF BIBLICAL FAITH, 2-4.

#1. Moses was charged with the mission of *separating the Israelites from Egypt*.

#2. "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt", 3:10. The great man would not find the Egyptians cooperative. This was more than a political issue. To the contrary, the issue was one, purely and simply, of *the will of God!*

#3. Pharaoh was to be confronted with propositions not rooted in natural explanations. But rooted in "I AM WHO I AM" and He was imposing His will on world magnitudes, 3:14.

#4. Pharaoh, the people of Israel, and we are blessed to know that one of the implications of His name is that He is in direct and immediate relation to all things temporal. That being so, then, *natural explanations have no priority*.

#5. All three parties would have to learn what that meant: (a) Moses, (b) Pharaoh and the Egyptians, (c) plus the enslaved people of Israel.

#6. The *will of God is performance positive*. The will of the king of Egypt was to be overruled. Any insistence on the priority of natural explanations by the three categories of historical actors, then, would be discounted by the fourth and invisible historical actor: the Great "I AM".

#7. Once priority is given to natural explanations, then, the idea of a fourth Supernatural historical actor is ruled out of serious consideration.

#8. Moses was very concerned about what his brethren in Egypt and the Pharaoh would do with natural explanations. Throughout the Bible that problem was persistent. *Is the Lord a true, reliable and causal historical actor or not?*

#9. It is our contemporary issue. It has become axiomatic to give the priority to natural explanations above revelation; the word of the fourth historical actor.

#10. In our strivings with the natural order and its dangers, we can do what Moses did: understand the source of all causation. "When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush...", 3:4.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 6: THE BEDROCK OF BIBLICAL FAITH, 2-4.

#1. The Supernatural context running from the power of God into all things temporal, is the bedrock of biblical faith.

#2. "Then Moses said, 'What if they will not believe me or listen to what I say? For they may say, The Lord has not appeared to you'", 4:1.

#3. Moses was worried about how his own people would react to all the revealed truth regarding redemption from slavery. We take note that Moses was still in Midian; he had not entered Egypt.

#4. Moses was in possession of the words of God but those words would be delivered into a hostile Egypt and unto a skeptical Israel. What would happen?

#5. The problem: Words are abstractions. They are intangible and consequently *incommensurable* with the tangible things of the world, that we call "the concretes".

#6. The oppressors would not initially believe that revealed abstractions would ever be able to connect meaningfully with the concretes of the Egyptian circumstance. Moses was greatly concerned that the Israelites would harbor inflexible doubt.

#7. The relation of revealed abstractions to time is the ever-present issue of faith. The Word of God, the promises of God are meaningless to us unless they come to bear upon historical conditions and material circumstances in a causal way.

#8. Contemporary readers of Scripture face this same precise question. Unbelief is the denial that the words of the Bible have any unfettered link to everyday material existence. Progressivism is one of the present manifestations of this denial. However, at the foundation of this kind of skepticism is the reliance on human reason.

#9. Correspondingly, the Bible is edited and diminished in order to fit with general human experience; and that means natural explanations.

#10. But the Supernatural context espoused in the Book of Exodus, firmly contradicts this application of naturalism to the Word of God.

#11. The bedrock of biblical faith is the Supernatural context and its irresistible impress upon the world concretes that test us. Believers have an immeasurable opportunity, every day to prove faith. Courage required.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 7: DESPONDENCY and THE ABSENCE OF RATIONALIZED SOLUTIONS, 5-7.

#1. "And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness'", 5:1.

#2. The king had already determined to make no such concession to the people of Israel, 5:2. Israel's status was fixed by Egyptian power and was non-negotiable.

#3. Pharaoh became strident, vindictive and enlarged in cruelty, 5:4-23. No straw. No rest. No relief. No mercy. No hope.

#4. Moses was beside himself. He could not grasp the situation. That outcome was fully unexpected. "...O Lord, why have You brought harm to this people? Why did You ever send me?... You have not delivered Your people at all", 5:22, 23. Faith in God, faith in the Word of God, faith in Moses dwindled.

#5. The Almighty spoke again reiterating His will, purpose and promise, 6:1-8. However, the people "did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage", 6:9.

#6. God had not freed the people, oppression increased, they were powerless, hopeless. Circumstance determined the reach of belief.

#7. THE LORD HAD PUT ISRAEL IN A DILEMMA: HE HAD NOT DELIVERED THEM and THERE WAS NO RATIONALIZED SOLUTION, NO RATIONALIZED WAY OUT.

#8. The Lord acted counterintuitively to human reason. To live by biblical faith is to be put into situations, circumstances, events and states of being wherein, only the power of God can bring the resolution.

#9. Exodus teaches us not to bend under the heaviest trials of faith. We will most certainly be hammered on the anvil of God.

#10. The Supernatural context will be proven determinant. The absence of natural explanations and natural resolutions must never be allowed to diminish spiritual vision.

#11. Despondency is a rational response, but it should be dislodged by irreducible belief in the Word of God.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 8: THE TRUE CONTEXT and PARALLEL THOUGHT FORMS, 8-11.

#1. The Almighty deals in objective truth. And objective truth is fully independent of human reasoning. Objective truth is a public phenomenon.

#2. The plagues that fell upon Egypt were quite objective and they were also without natural explanation. Bodies of water in Egypt, of all sorts, turned to blood, 7:14-25. A public and objective event without natural explanation.

#3. That pattern is associated with all the plagues. The distressing effects of each of the plagues were experienced by everyone in Egypt.

#4. The teleology (purpose) of objective truth is to lead to objective and shared ideas. The plague of hail, for example, encouraged the arrival of *objective conclusions*. "The one among the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lord made his servants and his livestock flee into the house", 9:20. They embraced objective truth.

#5. At the very threat of the locust plague, Pharaoh's advisors reached the range of objective language: "Pharaoh's servants said to him, 'How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Do you not realize that Egypt is destroyed'", 10:7. Those objective facts had no natural explanation.

#6. Throughout the Bible the Lord makes efforts to pull the reasoning of men beyond subjective and therefore personal limitations.

#7. Exodus presents *a forensic chain of reasoning*, calculated to result in objective understanding. This chain is regressive.

#8. The whole of Scripture constitutes a regressive chain of objective truth, forwarding believers to objective meaning. That is, meaning independent of human thought. The word is revelation.

#9. The Book of Exodus enlarges the meaning and usage of the term "objective". Each of the plagues produced objective and shared experience. The objective effects regressed back to "the word of the Lord", 9:20. And the word of the Lord regressed back and was relative to the eternal being Himself. Here then is the internal structure of the Bible.

#10. Exodus is the epitome of objective truth. The supreme and unsurpassable objective position is that of God. From the Lord's perspective, we do not have to personally experience those events in order for them to be objective. This is the force of revelation, 10:1-2.

#11. Subjective meanings are foisted upon Scripture. And they are a denial of objective revealed truth.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 9: THE TRUE CONTEXT and PARALLEL THOUGHT FORMS, 8-12.

#1. Something we may call *The Goshen Effect* became noticeable in Egypt during the plagues. For believers in God it is in fact a *a parallel thought form*.

#2. "But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that you may know that I, the Lord, am in the midst of the land. I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur", 8:22, 23.

#3. The Almighty does not deal the same way with everybody. He makes distinctions, sets "*divisions*" between peoples and between individuals.

#4. The frontier between people, in this regard, is faith in the character of God and trust in His word.

#5. Two non-natural material conditions were found to be coincidental: the plague of flies and the exclusion of the flies from Goshen. Neither was supported by any natural explanations.

#6. Readers of the Bible can generalize from Exodus that the distinction between wellbeing and lack of provision, the distinction between survival and death are functions of *the Supernatural context*. Exodus opens the mind to the possibilities of material existence as engulfed within this context running from the invisible to the visible.

#7. The Goshen Effect is nominated as a "sign". It is a symbol, a representation of the relation of God to time. It has no natural explanation. That sign overtakes the historical conditions of those who rely on the Lord.

#8. During the plague of "pestilence", the Lord employed the Goshen Effect, 9:4-7. Pharaoh found the result curious but not compelling. "Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not even one of the livestock of Israel dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go".

#9. Nevertheless, the Goshen Effect overruled natural explanations.

#10. Temporal circumstances do not have to be as they are. In all our trials, hardships, goings and comings we should invoke the sign of the Goshen Effect. Doing so requires a faith not bounded by natural explanations. "Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel were, there was no hail", 9:26. The Goshen Effect is an objective reality in our temporal experience!

#11. In the great "darkness" (10:21-29), natural combustion was suspended; life was shut down, 10:23. "...but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings".

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 10: THE TRUE CONTEXT and PARALLEL THOUGHT FORMS, 1-11.

#1. There are two possible states of faith in God.

- One: There is a faith subordinate to the revelation and unbounded by natural explanations.
- Two: A faith, in effect, processed by human wisdom, human lived experience and the demand for natural explanations. Hereafter: *processed faith*.

#2. The Book of Exodus counters the development of just such a processed faith. Avoiding that kind of belief structure amounts to a parallel thought form to the Supernatural context. This is not generally accepted. Today, as always, a processed faith is granted unmerited approval as the only "realistic" option. This is the "God gave us a brain argument". Clearly, processed faith is not founded upon Scripture, but rather upon the facility of human reason.

#3. Exodus is an example of how the Word of God makes the reader conscious of processed faith and how it is to be counteracted.

#4. The miraculous destiny of Joseph to Egypt (1:5), the providential arrival of Jacob's household in the Nile Delta (1:1), the salvation of baby Moses (2:1-10), Moses' redemption through the trek to Midian (2:15-25), the non-natural appearance of the burning bush (3:1-9), the bestowed supernatural powers upon Moses (4:1-13), the plagues (7-11) were all given as proof that true biblical faith is rooted in the Bible and nothing more. Human wisdom, human

experience and naturalism are to be displaced by the plenary trust in the Word of God and without compromise.

#5. Exodus confirms that the people of Israel much preferred a processed faith. It equally witnesses to the fact that such a modified form of faith is not a sufficient bulwark against world magnitudes.

#6. At the Red Sea the Israelites immediately projected a processed faith. "...!Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness'", 14:11, 12.

#7. Natural explanations, a staple ingredient of processed faith, displaced the inherent meaning of the Word of God.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 11: THE TRUE CONTEXT and PARALLEL THOUGHT FORMS.

#1. Many portions of the Bible, and Exodus is one of them, reveal that temporal events are *contracting back upon the Word of God*.

#2. The Supernatural context running from the will of God to the natural order documents this phenomenon.

#3. Chapter 1-11 certainly confirms that all the historical events and historical conditions were contracting back upon the determinant Word of God. Israel's transfer of 70 souls into Egypt (1:5) was an event determined by the Lord beforehand. *The event contracted back upon that word of God*.

#4 The birth of Moses and the providential protection of him was *a contraction*, 2:1-25. The burning bush and Moses' mission of deliverance (3:1-) were just such contractions.

#5. The plagues (5-11) all occurred as evidence of their contraction back upon the Word of the Lord.

#6. The language of Exodus contradicts our experiential understanding of the passage of time. People "see" sequence and then infer that events are in a cause to effect relation predicting a particular future.

#7. The Pharaoh "who did not know Joseph" (1:8) made the same sequential mistake. This man, unaware of the biblical truth of time contraction, rationalized a *cause-to-effect dilation of time*,

1:10-22. In that false assumption the Egyptians painted the Israelites as strategic enemies and slavery followed.

#8. Revealed biblical truth corrects experiential comprehensions of time. Our only awareness of time is dependent upon our awareness of events in time.

#9. From the biblical platform, an understanding comes to bear upon the mind. Events in time do not dilate; rather, they contract back upon the will of God, the Word of God and the power of God.

#10. Since events do not dilate then time cannot dilate. When something troubling happens to us, one can find discouragement immediately at hand. Fear can carry us away. The problem, threat or the danger, we think, will *dilate to the incontrollable*. Israel did that at the Red Sea, 14:1-12.

#11. Natural explanations blind us in our reading of Scripture. Our personal circumstances will contract back upon the Word of God. They may be distressing and taxing but contract they will!

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

PART 12: THE TRUE CONTEXT and PARALLEL THOUGHT FORMS, 1-11. SUPPLEMENTAL.

#1. The revealed truth of *time contraction* is confirmed, for example, in 2 Corinthians 1:1-11. Faith in the grammatical construction of revelation leads to the generalization that events, situations, circumstances and states of being always contract back upon the Word of God.

#2. The human intuition that suggests to us that time and events are constantly *dilating* under their own energy is contradicted by Scripture.

#3. The distinction between time contraction and time dilation impinges immediately upon the reach of one's faith.

#4. The Pauline company, while in "Asia", were scared to death. "For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life", v.8.

#5. The faith of the apostle and that of those in the immediate circumstance ran directly into the challenge of time dilation. Like everyman who faces extreme danger we know that time dilation has its own line of reasoning. At its conclusion, all of them, including the apostle, believed that they were going to die. There was no natural path of escape and the historical conditions were beyond their strength. No rationalized solutions were to be found. The situation was terminal.

#6. But then, "indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead", v.9.

#7. That particular event or even set of events was not going to be allowed to dilate to a terminal conclusion. To the contrary, the situation was in the state of contraction, not apparent to those involved.

#8. "...who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will deliver us", v.10.

#9. Trust in the Word of God lifts the mind out of and beyond immediate circumstances. Believers are called to *live beyond rational limits*. The doctrine of the contraction of time and circumstance shows the way. We do not despair even of life. Ever.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 13: EMPIRE OF THE SPIRIT, ch. 11 - 12:32.

#1. How ironic. Pharaoh, with no knowledge of Joseph (1:8), was filled with anxiety about the self-evident strength of the Israelites, 1:7-10.

#2. Up to that time Israel had lived in peace and prosperity in their host land. Then, "...they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor...", 1:11.

#3. Egyptian concerns were fixed on known potentials and possibilities. Pharaoh imagined thousands of Israelites, armed, flowing through the land and with the intent of conquering Egypt from within, 1:10. They were thinking in terms of experience and human intuition. They reckoned that *natural explanations would indicate correct and preventative behavior*.

#4. But, a dimension of reality, about which the Egyptians knew very little, was about to come to bear upon their institutions, geography, sociology, meteorology and politics. There were no natural explanations for what was going to uncoil in the Nile Delta.

#5. The Almighty One and His chosen people constituted *AN EMPIRE OF THE SPIRIT*. Had institutional Egypt learned well from Joseph, then carefully and deliberately preserved the history of that time period, they could have responded differently in relation to the Israelite presence in their land. They could have generalized from it.

#6. The Empire of the Spirit was the actual threat, it was the real field of danger. The Empire of the Spirit does not rely on world magnitudes and dynamics. By its presence and powers over time, the Empire had brought the "seventy" (1:5) into the land, put "Joseph" (1:5) in command there, assured the survival of Moses (2:1-25), commissioned Moses from "a blazing fire from the midst of a bush" (3:3), overwhelmed Egypt with plagues generated by the Supernatural context (7-10).

#7. Under the direct relation of the Empire of the Spirit to Egypt, their world was unraveling. Yet no Israelite had drawn a sword, no military organization had coalesced, no insurrection had been launched against the Egyptian government.

#8. Pharaoh was at a loss; how can one resist such an Empire of the Spirit? An empire that cannot be seen but can be felt.

#9. And then; "Now the Lord said to Moses, 'One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt'...", 11:1.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

PART 14: EMPIRE OF THE SPIRIT, 11-12:32.

#1. The Empire of the Spirit appeared over Egypt and it pronounced distinctions among men. "But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel", 11:7.

#2. That "distinction" was the difference between life and death. An invisible source of power would swallow up the lives of all "...the firstborn in the land of Egypt...", 11:5. It would not touch the Israelites.

#3. A purely spiritual source was forcing determinant outcomes upon the Egyptians. There was no tangible enemy to engage.

#4. The Empire of the Spirit changes all rationalized conclusions regarding causation. Total and original causation belongs to the spiritual dimension of reality. All temporal cause to effect is derived from the spiritual. The Egyptians and the Israelites were faced with that conclusion.

#5. The power and the purposes of the eternal reality were *unreserved*. This unseen empire is beyond the reach of the central nervous system and yet world magnitudes comply with its demands.

#6. The plague of the death of first born persons and beasts was not comprehended by natural attempts at explanation. There were none. And that last plague as well as all the previous, proved that the unseen God is stronger than death!

#7. A remarkable truth is proclaimed in this part of Scripture: All governance is spiritual. This irreducible revealed truth was to be memorialized by and among all succeeding generations in Israel, 12:1-13. It is supposed to be remembered and celebrated by the churches as well.

#8. The power of ritual does not reside in its sequence, but in its meaning, 12:14-22. Redemption is never inherent in the situation. Redemption comes upon us, in any situation, from outside the system. "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians...when He sees

the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord...will not allow the destroyer to come into in to your houses..." , 12:23.

#9 We live in the lee of the Empire of the Spirit. "And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever", 12:24. The Empire of the Spirit is a fact, and its presence and power becomes an "ordinance" over human reasoning.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 15: THE RELATION OF GOD TO OBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE, 12-17.

#1. "Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, 'The people might change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt'", 13:17.

#2. The Almighty knew that *objective experience* was, in those days and is now, an axial issue for believers and unbelievers alike.

#3. In consequence, "Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt", 13:18.

#4. His intention was to train the Israelites for the difficult encounters, that surely awaited them. *Human objective experience can diminish faith when it appears*. Believers can "change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt".

#5. Objective experience is one of the great challenges to belief in God and in revelation. Many bone rattling personal and shared experiences outright contradict the promises of God.

#6. So the Lord determined to present proof that there was a *causal relation* running from God Himself ---> to objective experience; our experience. The Lord would speak and objective experience would conform. The Israelites were to develop a faith capable of trust in and dependence upon this causal relation.

#7. This revealed truth was taught to all the patriarchs. Abraham, Joseph, Moses learned to rely upon the invisible God to generate objective experience. In Exodus, Pharaoh and his Egyptian subjects got a significant dose of the causal relation running from God to objective experience. They did not much like it!

#8. Objective experience is *THE PERMANENT PROBLEM*. The fear of it, the inflexible human will to author its own preferred objective experience and the distrust in the biblical corrective must be defeated by a resolute trust in the power arrangement between God and objective experience.

#9. All of Scripture supports that generalization. Much contemporary reading of the Bible seeks little or no guidance regarding how the Almighty relates to time.

#10. The revealed Word of God warns us that that relation between God and objective experience cannot be broken by human will and efforts in time. It has no natural explanation and it is the determining context for human existence; then and now.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 16: THE RELATION OF GOD TO OBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE, 12-17.

#1. One of the persistent themes in this book is the relation of the power of God to objective human experience. It is an understatement to say that objective experience is of great importance to everyone in everyplace and in every when.

#2. Objective experience is considered to be *the bottom line*. However, the most repetitive and most profound controversies eddy around the generation of human objective experience. Either the Lord generates it or we will.

#3. Throughout the Bible it is established that true faith involves the commitment of one's human experience to the will and purpose of God. That truth runs into what we all think is the primary problem of faith. It is just too risky.

#4. The Almighty does not guarantee that He will generate objective experience that we will appreciate. The Israelites "...journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children", 12:17. Freedom was becoming a fact. "And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt", 12:41.

#5. Then came the objective experience of the Red Sea. Pharaoh pursued Israel with a singular intent, 14:5-10. Israel, surrounded by an impassable body of water on one side and the Egyptian charioteers on the other, found that that objective experience was overpowering to their faith.

#6. "...!s it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness...", 14:11.

#7. The Bible insists that there is a causal relation between the Lord and objective experience. Believers must learn to trust the Almighty with that which is closest to their hearts: personal objective experience.

#8. The Israelites did what men in tight spots often do. They allowed personal objective experience to determine the validity of the Word of God and its reach. Experience became the

starting point. The promises of God became subject to experience instead of the other way around; the standard human response to dangerous circumstances.

#9. Exodus lights the path to its most compelling effect: "The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent", 14:14. This is the foundation for plenary trust in God. If we do not risk our experience, then, we risk nothing!

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 17: THE RELATION OF GOD TO OBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE, 12-17.

#1. There are two perspectives on objective experience.

- One: The Almighty applies His will and power to objective experience and creates it out of spiritual force.
- Or, Two: People start with objective experience as the determining factor over biblical revealed meaning, 15:22-16:21.

#2. The latter is always the human preference. Objective experience is no better illustrated than in the concern for the necessities of basic human existence.

#3. "Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea...and found no water", 15:22. And "So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?'", 15:24.

#4. When personal survival is in the mix, that objective experience almost always is permitted to change one's trust in the revealed perspective. "The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness", 16:2.

#5. There was no natural resolution to the problem. The Israelites knew that very well. And on that foundation "The sons of Israel said to them, 'Would that we had died by the Lord's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger'", 16:3.

#6. The entire realm of the *true context* meant nothing to those people in the struggle for life. In their experience based reasoning, it made perfect sense that *if there were no natural explanations then there were no explanations at all*,

#7. The Book of Exodus stipulates that our survival depends upon trust in God, regardless of the nature of the circumstance. Faith is relative to *THE OMER MEASUREMENT*.

#8. "This is what the Lord has commanded, 'Gather of it every man as much as he should eat, you shall take an omer apiece...'", 16:16.

#9. The omer was sufficient food to maintain health. With the omer measurement there was no "excess" and no "lack", 16:18.

#10. The order was "...Let no man leave any of it until morning", 16:19. The omer measurement was sufficient for the day. Have faith in the Lord and forget the rest. "But they did not listen to Moses and some left part of it until morning...", 16:20. Survival was a daily measurement of the grace of God, the will of God, the power of God. That is the omer measurement.

#11. It takes a certain kind of daily faith to displace natural explanations by full faith in God; the omer measurement.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 18: THE ETHOS OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP, ch. 18.

#1. Spiritual leadership is *a structure*. It is a derived structure, running from God-->to a man-->to those who are to be led.

#2. Leadership is *the distribution* of the will of God across that structure.

#3. Spiritual leadership is *an instrumentation*. Its importance is without question, but it is not the most critical element. Nor, in the fullest sense, is it causal.

#4. Jethro was concerned for Moses' exercise of spiritual leadership, v.13-16. "...The thing that you are doing is not good", v17.

#5. Spiritual leadership has a non-natural purpose. *It is to prepare the people to be governed by eternal absolutes*, v.20. "then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do".

#6. *The substance of spiritual leadership is revealed truth*. And not material things. Material things are always relative to the starting point of the Word of God.

#7. Spiritual leadership is *a deputized position*. Jethro knew that Moses had been deputized by the Almighty and the under judges would equally have to be deputized by the Lord, v.23.

#8. Spiritual leadership *flows from the absolute --> to the conditional, to the relative*, Such leaders *connect* the absolute-->to those things in time relative to it. Therefore, there is a distinction between spiritual leadership and rationalized leadership.

#9. The structure of spiritual leadership is *a channel, a conveyance of revealed meaning*. It does not deal in mere rational opinion.

#10. There is no such thing as spiritual leadership that is not founded upon the fear of God. "...select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest

gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens", v.21. Spiritual leadership is not about power nor recognition.

#11. Because they deal with absolutes, spiritual leaders are part of a *closed category*. This is so because revealed absolutes are not open to human rationalization, manipulation nor mitigation.

#12. Spiritual leadership has the brief of stabilizing the faith of those needing leadership.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART:19: GOVERNANCE BY ABSOLUTES, 19-23.

#1. "Values" are private, subjective and purely personal. The term has picked up currency in the contemporary. It enjoys a wide and unfortunate popular usage.

#2. However, the Book of Exodus insists that the universe and particularly the people of God are *governed by absolutes*.

#3. Values and absolutes are not on the same scale. The church in the present is not permitted to live by *personal values*. Believers, in every age are always and only governed by absolutes.

#4. Revealed absolutes are not shaped by human lived experience, rationalism, personal preference nor by cultural/societal standards. Values are. Such ideas are revealed to us by God alone and they are binding.

#5. ABSOLUTES REPRESENT AN ETERNAL and UNSEEN REALITY. "You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself", 19:4. Absolutes are enforced by the power of God. The Egyptians bore witness to this revealed truth. By comparison, "values" are nothing.

#6. ABSOLUTES ALLOW FOR and UNDERWRITE THE RELATION BETWEEN THE ALMIGHTY and BELIEVERS. Nonnegotiable is the word. "Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My people, for all the earth is Mine", 19:5. "Obey" and "keep" are stipulated ways of dealing with absolutes. This is the logical consequence of God's ownership of the earth.

#7. REVEALED ABSOLUTES ARE NOT TO BE REDUCED, DIMINISHED NOR DOWNGRADED TO THE LEVEL OF VALUES. "All the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do'...", 19:8. A generalization cannot be avoided: Biblical revealed absolutes exert a *an equally absolute grammatical authority over language use*. Some things can be thought and said; some things cannot.

#8. REVEALED ABSOLUTES PRECEDE THE STATE OF CONSECRATION. The Almighty Himself and the very essence of revealed absolutes requires a permanent and conscious state of dedication. "The Lord also said to Moses, 'Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments", 19:10.

#9. A turn to biblical absolutes constitutes a sea change, a new life, a fresh start for any person who is sin-sick and world weary.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 20: THE PECULIAR COMPRESSION, 18-23.

#1. The *ethos of spiritual leadership* (18) and *the presence of revealed absolutes* (19-23), represents a peculiar, non-worldly compression.

#2. The compression of the two into one piece necessarily means that spiritual leadership is devoted (consecrated) to the service of absolute truth and that, therefore the leaders, at all levels, represent, in thought, speech and behavior, the absolute dimension.

#3. Moses understood the principle function of spiritual leadership: "...Because the people come to me to inquire of God", 18:15. This is the peculiar compression. Spiritual leaders lay out the distinction between the ideas of mankind ("values") and the revealed absolutes.

#4. Leaders who do not fit within the peculiar compression are derelict of duty. That truth is voiced in 18:16; "When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws".

#5. In the contemporary, there is an apparent failure of leadership. The reason for this failure is the *disregard of the peculiar compression*. The leaders chosen from among the Israelites had to be taught "the statutes and the laws, and (Moses) was to make known the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do", 18:20.

#6. Fathers are established as the spiritual leaders over their families, Psalm 78:1-8. With that position comes the peculiar compression.

#7. Elders, preachers and other levels of leadership are biblically required to function within the peculiar compression. A profound and inexcusable ignorance of Scripture assures a kind of leadership shorn of revealed absolutes.

#8. Examples of breaking the peculiar compression are to be found everywhere in the Bible, Exodus, 13, 14.

#9. When believers and churches find acceptable those leaders who stand outside of the peculiar compression between leadership and revealed absolutes, then apostasy has taken hold. And that is a breakdown of biblical faith.

#10. Scripture and its absolutes are slipping away from us. Each believer is to be, in fact, the sum total of the peculiar compression. That is what the church brings into every human circumstance and predicament. That is the goal of leadership.

#11. Revealed absolutes are inexhaustible, but "values" will die with this world.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 21: GOVERNANCE BY ABSOLUTES, 19-23.

#1. Israel was never to be a pagan nation. They were to be governed by revealed absolutes.

#2. There is a *remarkable power* associated with biblical absolutes. We may refer to this as *the power of punctuation*. Revealed absolutes punctuate time; there is one's past, whatever it may be, and then there are the absolutes. Absolute punctuation creates changes in thought, speech and behavior. This punctuation is the great divide between Christians and the world, between ideas, between motives and between ways of reasoning.

#3. Without punctuation by biblical absolutes the authority of revelation evaporates. It is a contemporary failure of some believers to read Scripture as if it were nothing more than an ancient contribution to the panoply of world literature, or mere historical sequence.

#4. But Exodus is conveying something more than time bound language. This book teaches that the biblical language manifold is not bound by the mores, philosophies nor the scientific limitations of the times in which it was written. *This is the Word of God*.

#5. "The the Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the Lord called to Moses to the top of the mountain and Moses went up", 19:20.

#6. The Almighty is powerful and beyond time and historical conditions. He intended to drive a wedge between people, to create a permanent divide between faith and human reasoning.

#7. If believers have no understanding of the power of punctuation implicit in the revealed language, then, they are adrift in the deluge of human rationalism. And there is no possible way to keep the church separate from the world.

#8. Many of us are not always inclined to have our lives so intentionally punctuated by the Bible as to dangerously widen the gulf between society and faith.

#9. Yet we are called to follow *the logic of punctuation*. "Then God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery", 20:1, 2.

#10. The Bible punctuates language use, by the logic of punctuation.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 22: THE PUNCTUATING POWER OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, 20:1-21.

COMMAND #1: "You shall have no other gods before Me", v.3. By this a *reciprocal relation is established between God and the believer*. This relation runs from the Almighty who ordines -> to the believer and from the believer who subordinates self, back --> to the Lord. Just such a reciprocal arrangement creates an exclusory perspective. This perspective has room only for the God behind this revelation. Biblical absolutes, inherently, stipulate just such closed perspectives. We are not open to anything outside of this reciprocal. Membership in this exclusive reciprocal requires the highest range of personal devotion. It is within this arrangement that we find the locus of unfailing causation.

COMMAND #2: "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth...", v.4-6. *Here is an obvious prohibition on rationalized religion*. Idolatry is defined here as anything or personage who tries to occupy the place of the God of the Bible. Mankind is strictly forbidden to generate a religion founded upon human rational capacity. However, through the ages, many people have rationalized a religion that perfectly corresponds to temporal realities. "...likeness of what is in heaven above (the sky) ...earth...water under the earth". The Lord contends that such creative violations amount to human hatred of Himself, v5. The invisible God cannot be known on the basis of human rational powers; such knowledge demands a revelation. It logically follows that any revelation from God is not subject to human rationalization. But, of course, it has been treated just so. Formal rules of interpretation are predicated on human intelligence coming to bear upon the Word of God, instead of the other way around. The result of that is a rationalized reading of Scripture. And that can affect succeeding generations, to the "fourth" generation, v.5. The acceptable meaning of the "love" of God requires something else. We are required to "keep My commandments", not rationalize them, v.6.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 23: THE PUNCTUATING POWER OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, 20:1-21.

COMMAND #3: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain", v.7. *We may conclude, at least, that the trivialization of the name of God is not tolerated by the Almighty*. How one uses the name of God manufactures no change in the Lord, but it does say a great deal about the perpetrator. To trivialize the name of God is to equally trivialize His relation to men in temporal existence. Reference to the Lord by His name involves the linguistic use of a *proper noun* (His name). The

importance of the divine name is in what it represents: which is *His actuality*. The Lord does not permit human trivialization of His actuality. Those who first received the Ten Commandments were the first to take His name in vain and then trivialize His actuality, ch. 32. The Almighty's name is not to be commonized and the reason is obvious. His actuality does not merit commonization. "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery", v.2. The Lord teaches us about *how to think about God and how to talk about God*. His actuality is the source of all causation, all power. He is the source of all things. The Lord's name is an abstraction (a word), but His actuality is far beyond the abstract. He is to be feared, respected and obeyed. Correspondingly, His name, among believers, is to be *absolutized*. In our daily behavior and exercise of free will our aim is lofty. We desire to honor the name of God and to always elevate it above that which is common. To honor His name is to pay homage to His actuality. We are being held accountable for our use of and treatment of His holy name, while we endure the struggles and stresses of daily life. Those among whom we live will surely acknowledge our unparalleled protection of and reverence even of His name, let alone His actuality.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 24: THE PUNCTUATING POWER OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, 20:1-21.

COMMAND #4: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...", v.8-11. Time is habitually measured and comprehended by the human experience of it. "We have been married for 5 years". "It has been 2 weeks since the event".

#2. Time is undetectable apart from the circumstances that occur within it. Intuition provides the awareness of time.

#3. This commandment overturns the *intuitive interpretation and meaning* of time and it is revolutionary. For those of Israel *TIME IS TO BE ORDERED OR COLLATED BY THE CREATION SEQUENCE*.

#4. Time is no longer figured according to human experience. Obedience to this absolute carries an imperative. The phenomenon of time is built around the Creator of it. "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy", v.11.

#5. My time, your time belongs to the Lord. It is the Almighty's arena and He alone is its territorial Master. In accordance, one must live in time on the Lord's revealed terms. The days conceded to each of us is the provision of the Lord but they are not our possession. We use time but we do not own it.

COMMAND #5:"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you", v.12. Absolute revealed duties are overlaid on time. Man is not the axis of time. The axial position is occupied by the will of God. Commitment to

absolute duty garners material blessings. Honoring one's parents is an example of sacred duty that holds the key to the redemptive energy of God; "days prolonged in the land".

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 25: THE PUNCTUATING POWER OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, 20:1-21. THE WILLFUL ISOLATION FROM THE SPIRIT OF GOD, THE WILL OF GOD, THE POWER OF GOD, v.13-17.

COMMANDS #6-10: These sins represent a cluster of behaviors that are shrouded in a purposeful state of personal isolation from the Spirit of God. Necessary to these sins is a conscience turned off. In every exemplar of these sins the mind takes the path of the flesh. It takes the integrity between the soul and the Spirit of God to overrule the body. Commission of these sins is the fault of *the wanton will*.

COMMAND #6: "You shall not murder", v.13. To take the life of another is forbidden. Any taking of life must be referenced by God. Such practices as euthanasia, abortion, suicide are equally controverted by this commandment.

COMMAND #7: "You shall not commit adultery", v.14. Marriage is intended by God to be indissoluble. Human dissolution of that union is without legitimacy before the Lord. Whatever facilitates such dissolution is to be resisted.

COMMAND #8: "You shall not steal", v.15. Private property, personal property is to be respected. It is God who acknowledges its assignment to an owner. Dispossession of another's property by greed, deception, avarice or by measures of leverage are not permitted.

COMMAND #9: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor", v.16. False denunciations of one's neighbor, regardless of motive, is forbidden. There surely would be a provision for being skeptical about false denunciations made against others. This sin involves the organization of language to put into question the integrity of another.

COMMAND #10: "You shall not covet your neighbor's"...anything, v.17. Covetousness is the driving impulse in this sin. This is a condition of the abstract, a condition of mind and soul. Inner turmoil is a constant in one's life while coveting another's state of affairs. Covetousness is a vain and destructive form of comparison.

Summary: The universe is governed by revealed absolutes and by some that are not fully understood. This is particularly true of human behavior.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 26: A REVIEW OF CONSEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS 1-21.

#1. People who determine to live by biblical faith are not governed by *social contract theory*. They are, in fact governed, in their thought, speech and behavior, by *revealed absolutes*.

#2. From Genesis 3 forward, the Bible depicts the response of people to the idea of exclusive trust in the Word of God and in the power of God. Generally speaking, they did not like it.

#3. The Book of Exodus is repetitive in its instruction concerning *generalization from the power of God to the material circumstances of the Israelites*.

#4. However, instead of that, the Israelites much preferred generalization from human lived experience; a staple of human reaction to the future, 1:10; 5:20-23; 14:11-12.

#5. Exodus teaches believers to generalize from the promises of God and the power of God to historical conditions 7:1-7.

#6. There are two approaches.

- First: One can generalize from experience to the understanding of the Word of God. Rendering a highly parsed comprehension of the Bible; which does not incline to exclusive trust in God.
- Or, Second: One can permit the *grammatical construction of the revelation to come to bear upon human reasoning*. We can do one or the other, but not both.

#7. Generalization from the grammatical structure of the revelation to temporal experience leads to highly counter-intuitive outcomes. "But Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent', 14:13, 14.

#8. The Almighty took the Israelites in hand to transform their entire *grasp of reality*. The revealed truth regarding our reality is woven into the language manifold of the Bible. Greatly disputed, but true. "...I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; the horse and the rider He has hurled into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation; This is my God and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him", 15:1-2.

#9. Sing those words unto your fears, pain, losses and trials!

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 27: A REVIEW OF CONSEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS 1-21.

#1. Generalization from the Bible (Exodus) results in *a parallel language manifold*. This is so, because the words in that collection (manifold) owe their collation (their order) to the grammatical structure of the revealed text.

#2. This means that the resulting generalization, to be legitimate, cannot diverge from the inherent control of the revealed Word of God. The human mind (reader) is not allowed to free-wheel in these matters.

#3. *RULE INVERSION* is one of those generalizations. Every miracle and every example of direct involvement of God in historical conditions, in Exodus, is a demonstration of *rule inversion*.

#4. The natural order of things behaves according to rules put down by the Lord before its existence. Water (and its fluid dynamics) is a ready exemplification.

#5. Water does not routinely behave as it did at the Red Sea, 14:13-31. The Israelites understood the behavior of water, generally. Being found between elements of the Egyptian Army and the Red Sea they panicked. "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward'", 14:15.

#6. Go where? "The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.", 14:22.

#7. For that to happen, *the Lord had to invert the rules of hydrology and hydrostatics that He Himself laid down*. That is rule inversion!

#8. "The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them", 14:19.

#9. In every dangerous situation the Israelites faced the Lord put an *inversion point*. Things were redeemed and put right. The open tomb was empty on the third day, Luke 24!

#10. Why were these things written? Here is the answer: Believers are called to generalize, not from human experience, but from *THE POWER OF GOD!*

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 28: A REVIEW OF CONSEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS 1-21.

#1. The Israelites had to learn how to use and depend upon the Word of God. There is, apparently, a human reticence about trusting in something beyond human experience. At first it seems unusually odd, peculiar and in some cases unnecessarily risky.

#2. Faith in revelation and dependence upon unaided human reason (rationalism) exist in a state of contradiction.

#3. Faced with the undeniable and applied power of God in Egypt, the Israelites could not make sense of it. Proof of this is the fact that they continually generalized from human lived experience.

#4. Moses was *chosen by God* as the leader of Israel. "The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush...", 3:2. And then the Lord spoke to him, 3:4.

#5. Moses was charged with confronting the government of Egypt, announcing God's mercy to his fellow Hebrews and leading them out of slavery, 3:10, 13-22. The Almighty endowed Moses with supernatural powers, 4:1-13.

#6. The point was that Moses, as leader, was to learn to generalize from the power of God to material circumstances and not from experience. Moses immediately felt the difference between trusting in the power of God and relying upon his experience. "...Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh...?", 3:11. "...Now they may say...", 3:13. "...What if they will not believe me or listen...", 4:1. "...Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent...", 4:10. "...Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever (else) You will", 4:13.

#7. That is the contemporary anxiety. The ever-forceful preference for natural explanations and rationalized outcomes overrules the revealed representations.

#8. Human wisdom has determined that the Bible is nothing more than a pre-modern historical document; with little relevance for the present.

#9. Accordingly, believers in the present are persuaded that it is the height of irrationality to generalize from the power of God to personal circumstances.

#10. But one does not come to such conclusions founded upon the language delivered to us by the hand of God. It is man's interpretation.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 29: A REVIEW OF CONSEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS 1-21.

#1. Generalization from the power of God to one's historical conditions, to one's material circumstances introduces reformulations of thought, speech and behavior.

#2. Such a basis for reasoning and such a form of reasoning serves *as a corrective to personal behavior*.

#3. Dismay, fear, unbelief and desperation often surfaced among the majority of Israelites when circumstances were unfavorable. When the straw was withheld, 5:20-23; at the Red Sea, 14:10-12; in the "wilderness of Shur", 15:22-24; when a food shortage developed, 16:1-3; when meat ran out, 16:8-12; at the point of desperation by thirst, 17:1-7; at the point of uncertainty about God, 20:18-19; and there would be other trying moments, the people of Israel *surrendered to circumstance*.

#4. What is it that explains this kind of behavior? Israel had seen the miracles of the Lord, yet the experience of danger, hardship and apparent vulnerability provided the grist for generalization. Needless and premature conclusions were reached about failure and death.

#5. The same dependence upon natural explanations overtook the apostle, sometime later in Asia; "indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead", 2 Corinthians 1:9.

#6. The modern turn to academic and professional psychology, appears to be easier than generalization from the biblical examples of the power of God.

#7. We have ample proof of how difficult it can be to surrender our intelligence, our minds to the written Word of God.

#8. The measurement of faith, as given in Scripture, is directly tied to our *learned reliance* upon the power of God. A leprous Jew and a Roman centurion prove the point. "...Lord, if you are willing, You can make me clean", Matthew 8:2. "...Lord, I am not worthy for you to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed", Matthew 8:8. Jesus measured both men's faith, as He does ours. "...Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel", Matthew 8:10.

#9. Exodus was written, at least in part, to instruct believers about the personal practice of generalizing from the power of God to our personal states of being.

#10. After a dangerous and victorious encounter between Israel and a formidable enemy, "Moses built an altar and named it The Lord is My Banner", Exodus 17:15. We are altars of living flesh! Under the Lord's banner we can be led into very difficult, distressing and dangerous situations. The only way to deal with those is through confidence in the power of God. We will go where we would not otherwise go. We do what we would not otherwise do. We will resist that which otherwise we would surrender to.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

PART 30: THE FAITH RELATION TO THE SUPERNATURAL COUNTERMEASURE, CHAPTERS, 1-21.

#1. Living by biblical faith is precisely how we please God. But in order to live by faith, we must have the supernatural advantage of God, the eternal countermeasure.

#2. *It is not possible to survive this world for long, living by faith, without the direct help of the Almighty.*

#3. The immediate human question is this: *Although the Lord may be able, can He be trusted to put in place the supernatural countermeasures at the right place and at the right time?* This persistent issue troubled the Israelites of the Exodus generation. And it explains their behavior.

#4. The "Hebrew midwives", vulnerable to state power, were dependent upon supernatural countermeasures protect them. These women were under state compulsion to murder Israelite children, 1:15-16. "But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live", 1:17.

#5. Moses could not have survived as an infant; saved by the royal household, no less, apart from supernatural countermeasures, 2:1-25.

#6. It was impossible for Moses to have liberated Israel from Egyptian slavery had it not been for such countermeasures to the powers of empire, 4-12:32.

#7. The Egyptian charioteers ran head long into those countermeasures at the Red Sea and they were no more, 14:1-31.

#8. Survival in Sinai fully depended upon the Lord's enablement, 16, 17.

#9. Here is the perennial dilemma: The Scriptures teach that it has never been possible to live by faith in this kind of world without the attendance of the power of God; holding true for the then and the now. Many, if not most believers readily grasp that living by the revealed terms of faith is not "realistic", not plausible, not workable in the present.

#10. So it became the practice to simply redefine biblical faith down and away from any overarching dependence upon the power of God and its supernatural countermeasures. This may be referred to as *rationalized faith*. It is a faith so subject to human control and rationalization that it bears little resemblance to the biblical record. Many are willing to settle for that *under-dimensioned faith*. Just such a construct forfeits a strong relation to the Word of God. And thereby sacrifices a firm relation to the supernatural countermeasure; the Lord Himself, James 1:1-8.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 31: TIME BOUND REASONING.

#1. In Exodus there are 5 landmarks, at least, that signal the outline of *transcendent reasoning*.

- FIRST: The demonstrated power of God over Egypt in the plagues and the physical exodus from the land, 7-17.
- SECOND: The pillar of cloud and fire; signaling the immediate leadership of God, 13:17-22.
- THIRD: The tent of meeting, from which came absolute determinant answers to particular circumstances, 33:7-11.

- FOURTH: The Tabernacle: By which the Living God made known His intention to dwell personally among His people, 25-31; 36-40.
- FIFTH: The appearance of the written Word of God, 20.

#2. All 5 of those factors held in common a peculiar feature. Each one of these phenomena was laid athwart the dividing line between eternity and time.

#3. Such powerful factors were designed to have a transcending effect upon personal reasoning among the Israelites.

#4. *This means that the representational universe of the believer was to absorb the inherent meaning of revelation.*

#5. It was the Lord's intention to challenge, correct and limit *time-bound reasoning* among His people.

#6. The Almighty had irreducibly inserted Himself into the thought world of men, into the the universe of representations. The 5 landmarks tell believers, in every temporal age, that the burden of correctly representing both sides of the divide between seen and unseen cannot be fulfilled by the central nervous system. *Strict fulfillment* is only possible through the linguistic revelation of God.

#7. This being the case, then, it follows that biblical faith is nothing less than a transcending form of reasoning. It transcends time. Faith is the practice of representing material and historical conditions founded upon revealed truth. Biblical faith cannot be reduced to the observance of "right doctrine".

#8. Using the 5 landmarks, the Lord was imposing a revealed way of representing the entire range of reality; seen and unseen upon Israel. They were to nurture it to the point of countermanding time-bound thinking.

#9. Jesus was insisting upon the same priority of reasoning beyond time when He delivered the Parable of the Sower, Matthew 13:1-23.

#9. Moving from time-bound reasoning to transcendent thought, speech and behavior has distinguished biblical believers through the ages.

#10. However, what more frequently happens is that the Word of God is brought subject to time-bound thinking and most commonly, is itself categorized as time-bound.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.

PART 32: THE UNIVERSE OF REVEALED MEANING.

#1. The Book of Exodus introduced to Israel, to Egypt and to the world a *revealed universe of meaning*. Living by faith in the God of the Bible cannot be reduced to the procedural. Emotion, ever persistent and inevitable human lived experience are indelible features of life. But it is revealed meaning that outranks everything else.

#2. The Ten Commandments, the various other absolutes made known to Israel and even tangible symbols like the tabernacle and the ordained feast days were measures designed to create and sustain an unbreakable link between the people of God and the Almighty.

#3. This revealed universe of meaning is not rooted in human wisdom, nor is it dependent upon human experience. *Its source is the mind of God and it is known by the Word of God*. The revelation is the mind of God.

#4. "Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgressions, since My name is in him. But if you truly obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy and an adversary to your adversaries. For My angel will go before you and bring you in to the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will completely destroy them", 23:20-23.

#5. The revealed universe of meaning, once given, *compelled* the Israelites to obey. Obedience to it signifies exclusivity. It cannot be diluted, adulterated nor approached with indifference.

#6. The revealed universe of meaning recognizes realities that are considered to be irrelevant to those people who reject it or are ignorant of it. The reality of the God of the Bible, the power of God, obedience, faithfulness to the revelation, transgressions and the forgiveness of them are of no importance to the unbelieving world. They trust in force, false gods and human wisdom.

#7. But the Israelites were expected to comprehend that trust in the revealed universe of meaning was the precondition for their purpose in the world and for their wellbeing.

#8. *The Book of Exodus and the entire Bible, represent to our minds all that is the revealed universe of meaning*. The projection of it into the world has always caused conflict. Jesus Christ came into the world as executor of this universe of meaning. The promise of God is that we will flourish in blessings if we obey or we will crumble beneath its determinant force. The pagan nations were scheduled to run into the revealed universe of meaning, v.23. By it they would be displaced and discomfited.

#9. How blessed are we to face this taxing, distressing world from within the sacred frontiers of the revealed universe of meaning?

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 33: THE UNIVERSE OF REVEALED MEANING.

#1. The revealed universe of meaning is purposely set at variance from all formulations based upon human wisdom and experience.

#2. *A universe of meaning is the foundation for how all things temporal are represented* (understood). The Almighty requires of those, who desire to live by a textual standard of faith, to represent the material universe of things and circumstance according to revealed truth. The same requisite is necessary to understand the eternal reality.

#3. This necessarily means that the physical universe and its unseen causal source are on the same plane of revealed meaning! Human intuition concludes that the Bible, at least, gives "religious information", but applied human reason is the cornerstone of grasping the temporal dimension. This is false. Exodus reports that there is only one standard of representation (comprehension) and that is revealed.

#4. About the pagan nations: "You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their sacred pillars in pieces", 23:24. Those peoples did not know God, nor His ways. "...but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened", Romans 1:21.

#5. Everything about Israel was inextricably linked to *the universe of revealed meaning*. Without it there was no difference between the people of God and the world. The wellspring of Israel depended upon how they chose to represent the Lord and temporal experience. The universe of revealed meaning allows no compromise. "You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. They shall not live in your land, because they will make you sin against Me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you", 23:32, 33.

#6. Every word we speak, every thought we have, every act of behavior is rooted in revealed truth or it is indebted to some other universe of meaning. Biblical faith stands within the universe of revealed truth and is in direct, immediate conflict with human unaided perception.

#7. The contemporary church has lost its way. Effectively it has no solitary standard of representation. Rationalism polices the possible meanings from scripture and then brings them to the tribunal of public opinion. That is enough to explain abortion, homosexuality, same sex marriage legal provision, euthanasia, systemic corruption and many other things. Our thought, speech and behavior must contract back upon the revealed universe of meaning. And that, regardless of personal consequences!

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 34: SIN: THE TRANSFERENCE OF CAUSATION FROM THE GOD OF THE BIBLE TO
SOMETHING ELSE, TO ANYTHING ELSE, TO ANYBODY ELSE, chapter 32.

#1. "Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, 'Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him'", 32:1.

#2. Exodus reveals that the Israelites, in general, never felt comfortable with supernatural causation. They could not control it. Yet they were absolutely dependent upon it. The power of God had capitalized them in the desert. It was their staff and mainstay.

#3. Moses' extended absence was the pretext to liquidate their reliance on supernatural causation. So those people in that circumstance rationalized a scheme to displace full dependence upon the Lord in favor of control by human causation.

#4. The goal of the scheme was the transference of power from God and to men. The Israelites were quite conscious of just what they were doing. "...Come, make us a god who will go before us...".

#5. All "gods" are of human conception and then they must be endowed with equally imagined powers. "...This is your God, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt", 32:4.

#6. Idolatry is the worship of man! It is the pursuit of a human monopoly of power over life, history, time, events.

#7. The Israelites came to think that exclusive trust in the God of the Bible for well being was not a rational, realistic, practical approach to the human situation.

#8. The Book of Exodus was written to forestall this sin of transference. The effrontery of this toward God was complete; they referred to the idol as "the Lord", 32:5. "So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play", 32:6. The corruption was complete.

#9. Many contemporary believers are equally inclined toward the same reticence for and distrust of exclusive reliance upon supernatural causation. We do not like that full investment. Too risky.

#10. So this is what we do: We rationalize the particular situation, settle on a "solution" compatible with our distrust of God and the revealed universe of meaning, plug it in and then pronounce it "the will of God".

#11. Like the Israelites, we will trust supernatural causation only so far. No proof of exclusive trust in the God of the Bible is necessary. Exodus teaches that one's faith is not fully tested until our necks are on the line! One can use "religion" to mask reliance upon natural explanations.

From the Book of Exodus. THE TRUE CONTEXT WITHOUT NATURAL EXPLANATIONS.
PART 35: GOD ECLIPSES THE NATURAL ORDER IN EVERY WAY, 40:34-38.

#1. The Israelites had been in Egypt for long years, 12:40-41. The circumstances in which they found themselves would wax and wane over those years, yet the promises of God remained.

#2. The day of redemption came at last and the people left the slavery of Egypt for the promised land, 12.

#3. One of the constants that attended their journey was the testing of their faith by the Lord, 14, 15, 16, 17, 32, 33. Israel routinely failed that testing. A second constant that accompanied the people was the power of God. By it they survived and even prospered.

#4. An exchange between the Almighty and Moses: "And He said, 'My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest'. Moses replied, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here", 33:14, 15. Moses understood that "*the presence*" of the Lord changed all the rules of temporal experience. It superseded the physics and physiology of the journey.

#5. The Lord had ensconced and situated Israel, with all their failings, within the frontiers of a revealed universe of meaning. At the center of the revealed truth was the presence of God Himself; the Master of every human circumstance, the Comptroller of every aspect of Israel's best interest, the Dominant Force of their future.

#6. The tabernacle was erected. But without the presence its magnificence represented no advantage. "Then", on the appointed day..."the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" v.34. All of those present were mere on-lookers to this remarkable moment.

#7. "Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle", v.35. The tabernacle was turned on, it may be said.

#8. All the manifestations of divine power registered in Exodus, including the Lord's presence, were given to sustain belief in an absolute, universal truth. *The basis of the physical world is not natural, empiric nor scientific; it is spiritual.*

#9. God is the true context without natural explanations. Rationalism and naturalism are alien perspectives within that supernatural context.

#10. The Israelites were then and contemporary believers are now to learn the meaning of this revealed truth. If the God of the Bible eclipses the natural order in every way, then, He eclipses our personal circumstances in every way!