

WHERE DOES OUR SENSE OF RIGHT AND WRONG COME FROM?

Some people believe that if we had never received the laws in the bible, we'd behave like wild animals, like absolute brutes, killing, stealing, and doing everything the ten commandments and the other laws prohibit. I disagree with this opinion.

Many others hold the idea that the biblical laws are just common sense and humanity would do just fine without them. I disagree with this line of thinking also.

Let me elaborate on these thoughts.

Empathy is the foundation of ethical behavior for human beings. We are created with the Golden Rule. It is embedded in our psychology. It is deeply biological survival logic.

We are able to imagine what another person is experiencing, whether it's joy or pain. This mental hard-wiring of humans varies to some extent within the population. Also, while it cannot be undone it can be consciously suppressed to some extent. By imagining another person's feelings, we can't help sharing those feelings. This we call empathy and it gives rise to: do or don't to others what you would want or not want for yourself. So in the absence of other rules, the Golden Rule is the default mental state. It is perfectly capable of supporting an orderly society.

Now to my second point above. Are the laws of the bible just common sense? Many of them are common sense. Their purpose is often obvious when promoting societal harmony, health, and sensitivity to animals and the rest of nature. Often though the rationale is somewhat hidden or subtle in its goal of improving human lives. These suggestions cannot be considered common sense because many people would not think of them, do them, or sense their benefits. Maybe they are encouraging a deeper level of harmony, health, or sensitivity. So the biblical laws complement our limited sense. Individuals need various amounts of guidance. It is definitely not the case that all the bible teaches is universally reached by human reasoning.

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