What Is the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God"?

(a/k/a LONANG vs. Theonomy and Reconstructionism)

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STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The law embodied in the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" is authored by God. It is fixed, uniform, and universally binding over the globe at all times and in all circumstances. The law serves to equally judge our thoughts and action according to a uniform standard as declared in unwritten and written form by the Creator, our Maker. The law affirms the authority of God over all human conduct and thought, as well as the fate of our souls and future rewards and punishments. It denies any authority to mankind, our civil governments, and our human institutions except by specific delegation. The law binds all civil governmental institutions, whether made by a people, or wrongfully forced upon a people, to observe the rule of equality, government by consent, unalienable rights, including the right to institute, organize, alter and abolish civil government.

The law embodied in the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" was invoked in the American Declaration of Independence because it was already binding upon the nations, and also to establish a legal justification for the equality of American nationhood among the family of nations then upon the earth. The Declaration's reference was not an expression of deism, the enlightenment, or propaganda to entice the People to support the American revolution.

The Unwritten and Written law of God: Creation, Nature, Revelation

Specifically, the "Laws of Nature," the first part of the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" refers to the *unwritten* universal laws of God He established at the creation of the world, and which bind and govern His creation, including human beings and the civil governments they establish or are subjected to. The second part of the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God," the laws "of Nature's God," refers to the verbal and *written* laws of God as contained in the Bible, *some* of which restate the unwritten universal laws of God in verbal form. Generally speaking, the laws "of Nature's God" consist of the several divine covenants between God and men and the implementing statutes issued under them.

However, *some* of the laws "of Nature's God" express laws not found in the laws of nature, and these may be either universal and applicable to all people, or peculiar to a specific group of people or a nation and made applicable only to them. The question is decided based on determining to whom the divine covenant was originally delivered, and whether the descendants of those people include all people or only some. The answer will not be the same for all divine covenants. Together the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" consist of the universal laws of God that bind all mankind, male and female, all nations and all civil governments across the globe in all ages, excluding those laws peculiar only to certain people.

For example, the unwritten prohibition against murder was against the "Laws of Nature" from the beginning. Cain who murdered Able was both aware of it and of his own guilt as God judged him by that unwritten law. Yet, murder was also later explicitly prohibited by the laws "of

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Nature's God" in written form in Exodus 20. Thus, in the case of murder, the Mosaic covenant confirmed the underlying wrongness of the act of murder as found in the "Laws of Nature," and also affirmed that it was a part of the Mosaic covenant applicable to the Jews.

Regarding the *penalty* for the crime of murder, however, recall it was first dealt with under the "Laws of Nature" when God forbad any man from punishing murder reserving that authority exclusively to Himself, as in the case of Cain's murder of Able. The authority of mankind to punish murder by death was expanded under the laws "of Nature's God," by the Noahic covenant's declaration that whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. Thus, under the "Laws of Nature's God" via this covenant, God required mankind to punish murder by death. Moreover, the penalty for murder under another covenant - the Mosaic covenant - further describes the punishment for murder applicable to person's governed solely by that covenant, being the Jewish people alone. This analysis very strongly affirms that specific penalties for specific wrongs are not to be found in the original laws of nature but rather in the covenants applicable to specific people as the terms of the covenant dictate. As such, penalties imposed by the Mosaic covenant are not intended by God to be taken as universally applicable beyond the Jewish people bound by that covenant.

The Laws of Nature and of Nature's God should not be confused with "Natural Law." Natural law is based on the existence of inherent laws derived from nature and universal moral principles that are discoverable through reason. These laws can be universally understood, independent of written laws or societal norms. There is no inherent tension between the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God, and "Natural law." The "Laws of Nature" looks to both Creation and nature." "Natural law" looks just to nature. Yet, both are the work of God. Both use reason and deduction to discover that law.

The "Law of Nature" however, also looks to the the law of "Nature's God" to confirm that its deductions and reasoning are correct. "Natural Law" does not look to the Scripture for confirmation. It may look there for example, but not for confirmation that its application of reason to deduce the law from nature was correct. Thus, the laws "of Nature's God" provides an additional proof and confirmation of what the law of God actually consists of. It provides a confirmation on the accuracy of our reason by comparing our reasoned conclusion and deduction, to the actual *written* words of the Creator as restated in the Bible. In short, the "Laws of Nature" when reasoned accurately from Creation and nature, are God's unwritten law. The "Natural Law" when reasoned accurately from nature alone are God's unwritten law. The laws of "Nature's God" are His written law, written in the Scriptures. God has given us his written word to restate his unwritten universal law, as well as to give us some laws not found in nature.

The Law of God: What Binds the Nations and what Binds only Ancient Israel?

Yet, how do we know what written laws of God, are universal applying to all the nations or are applicable only to the nation of Israel? To determine the substance of the unwritten "laws of Nature's God" poses an additional challenge not posed to "Natural Law" inquiries. The "Laws of Nature's God" is put to the additional challenge of sorting out which of the Bible's written laws are a restatement of the unwritten laws of "Nature's God," and which are not a restatement, but rather are not universal laws. How may we determine which of the written laws were specifically

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given by God, not for the nations of the earth, but only for the nation of Israel to manage its own civil, religious, and national affairs? To the extent that such specific laws are neither fixed, uniform, nor universal, they were given by God to serve Israel's national purpose alone. Such specific laws, therefore, bind no nation or people except ancient Israel.

The Natural law tradition stops short of this analysis, content to seek out the universal inherent laws derived from nature by application of reason alone. Natural law is not to be rejected. The challenge is to test its reasoned conclusions according to the laws "of nature's God" - the written proof that reason has has been clearly applied, as provided by nature's Creator-God.

While the Natural law tradition stops short of seeking to verify its identification of the universal inherent laws derived from nature by necessary recourse to the Bible, Theonomy or Reconstructionism assume the opposite tact. Theonomy verifies the universal laws of God by exclusive recourse to the Bible first and foremost, yet not the Bible's text in a general way, but by articulation of those specific laws God gave to Moses for the Jewish nation. According to Theonomy, it is these particular laws which are of universal application to all the nations.

Thus, "Natural law" seeks to articulate the universal law binding upon the nations deduced from nature but dispenses with the need to verify its conclusions by recourse to the Scripture. "The laws of Nature" go further and seek to verify the laws of Creation and of nature by reference to the Scripture though not including the specific laws God gave to Israel for their particular and unique national purpose. Theonomy goes further and declares that the entire body of the universal law and universal punishments are written in the specific laws of Israel, and that they are one and the same and ought to govern the nations of the earth.

"The Laws of Nature and of Nature's God," however, do not incorporate Israel's laws of the land, It does not incorporate as binding law upon all the nations, those supplemental or particular laws of whatsoever type or nature God gave to Moses, 1) to govern His people, 2) in the land He deeded to the 12 tribes, 3) as their King, legislature and Supreme Court, 4) by a people which chose God by the voice vote of the people by their free consent, 5) to serve His purpose of making the Israeli nation, a Kingdom of priests and a Holy nation, 6) according to "the law of the land." For instance, as a nation, Israel was already bound to observe the "Natural Law" grounded in nature. It was already bound to observe the unwritten "Laws of Nature" just as any other nation. But God through Moses both restated the "Law of Nature" based on Creation and nature in writing, and the "Natural law," based on nature in writing (for example the command against murder). But God through Moses went further. He also added additional supplemental laws which were only applicable to the governance of the Hebrew nation.

These supplemental laws pertain to and serve the six points previously mentioned. These supplemental laws pertain only to biblical Israel (the biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), not the modern Israeli state, as a nation governed directly by God for his particular national purposes, in a specific land. They are not universal or given by God to apply to any other nation at that time or thereafter. They are contained in the fourth divine covenant God and the Jewish people entered into by consent. Exo. 20:2-17; 24:1-8; 34:28. The terms of that covenant apply only to the parties to that covenant, biological descendants of Jacob. They do not apply to any other people or nation. Nor are they made applicable to any other person or group

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by God, Jesus Christ, or the establishment of a sixth covenant by God with Christ regarding the church.

STATEMENT OF UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

To more fully describe and contrast the details of the laws of nature and of nature's God as contrasted with Theonomy, a series of principles or propositions have been developed by the LONANG Institute which identity critical presuppositions supporting the preceding introduction and overview. These concern foundational matters including the perpetual nature of God's covenants, the unique nation, land and purpose of Israel, the limits of human authority, and the distinct purpose of the church in history as established by Jesus Christ during his earthy ministry.

The LONANG Institute is please to present theses propositions with the hope of identifying matters where agreement may be had as well as clarifying differences in approaching application of the laws of God to modern civil governments and nations. The LONANG Institute is a Michigan-based, nonprofit and nonpartisan research and educational institute. Application of the "Laws of Nature and Nature's God" to contemporary legal disputes is its specialty. The Declaration of Independence affirms that civil governments, both state and federal, are bound in their governance and operation by the "Laws of Nature and Nature's God." It was this law which entitled each American colony to become a free and independent state as a matter of law. Having adopted this legal foundation, the civil governments subsequently established state by state and in 1787 of the United States, became legally bound thereby.

Principles Supporting LONANG.

1. The laws of God given at Creation, expressed by Him in nature, written by Him in Scripture, and also specifically given by Him for the governance of Israel as a nation through Moses, and the consequential Mosaic covenant do not exist in a vacuum. The Mosaic covenant is one of several divine covenants between God and men. We acknowledge that there are currently six divine covenants between God and men: Adam (Gen. 1:28-30); Noah (Gen. 9:1-17); Abraham (15:1-21; 17:1-14. See also, Gen. 12:2,3,7); Moses (Exo. 20:2-17; 24:1-8; 34:28); David (2 Sam. 7:12-16); Christ (Lk. 22:20; Heb. 9:11-15). We deny there are currently any other divine covenants between God and men.

2. Neither do these divine covenants exist in a legal vacuum, but each of them presume the existence of a legal foundation, *i.e.*, God's universal law, which was not first written in words, but is built into the creation and nature itself. We acknowledge that Scripture recognizes the existence of this legal framework which is antecedent to all of the divine covenants. (*See, e.g.*, Ps. 19:1-11; Rom. 1:18-21). We deny that scripture is the exclusive expression of God's laws.

3. As to the divine covenants, only the last one - the new covenant in Christ, or what is commonly called the church covenant - actually provides for the redemption or salvation of people. Which means that all of the Old Testament covenants (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David) are non-redemptive in nature, and have nothing to do with the Church.

4. Further, of all the divine covenants, only the Church covenant is based on faith or belief. Which means that all of the O.T. covenants are not faith-based, and are in fact based on

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biological ancestry, that is, bloodlines. Thus, Adam's covenant applies to descendants of Adam, Noah's covenant applies to his descendants, Abraham's covenant applies solely to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (*i.e.*, the Jews), the Mosaic covenant applies to the descendants of Jacob/Israel (*i.e.*, the Jews), and David's covenant applies only to his descendants.

5. Our participation in any specific O.T. covenant is not a matter of choice or consent. Participation is based on ancestry determined by God at birth, which cannot be altered or modified by the actions, belief or consent of any person or their parents. We deny that any O.T. covenant applies primarily or exclusively to Christians, or that its applicability is enlarged, reduced or modified in any way depending on one's status as a Christian. We deny that any O.T. covenant consists of commands or marching orders to be implemented by the Church.

6. We acknowledge that all people alive today are descendants of both Adam and Noah, thus their respective covenants apply to all people today. This means that the full terms of each covenant apply to all people today in a binding legal sense, without exception. So before we can discuss the Mosaic covenant, we must first treat Adam and Noah's covenants as legally enforceable. We deny that anyone not born of Adam and Eve helped to populate the earth or were unaffected by the Fall, and we deny that anyone other than the immediate family of Noah (eight persons) survived the great flood.

7. We acknowledge that the covenants of Abraham and Moses (Israel) apply exclusively to biological Jews, that is, physical descendants of Jacob/Israel. While it is possible to become a spiritual Jew (Rom. 2:28-29), this refers to a physical Jew who has been redeemed by Christ. It is impossible that faith in Christ should, would or could work to make a Gentile believer a participant in either the Abrahamic or Mosaic covenants. As to those two divine covenants, Gentiles cannot opt-in, and Jews cannot opt-out.

8. We acknowledge that the covenant with David applies exclusively to his physical descendants, and that for purposes of covenant fulfillment, the line of his descendants terminates with Christ. Thus, no one other than Jesus can sit on the throne of Israel, which will not occur until after the Second Coming. We deny that anyone can sit on the throne of ethnic Israel at present, and we deny that the promised restoration of biblical Israel has already occurred.

9. We acknowledge that at the time the Ten Commandments and all of the ordinances underneath them were first delivered to the Jewish people, they were clearly understood by the Jews to apply to them in their law with God as their King, and to no one else or any other nation. We deny that the laws issued under the Mosaic covenant have ever applied to anyone else.

10. We acknowledge that the Ten Commandments actually said nothing new, for each of them merely stated in written form that which had always been true from the foundation of the world, *i.e.*, the laws of nature. Thus, the Ten Commandments did not invent, or enact for the first time, the prohibitions against stealing, adultery and murder, nor inaugurate any of the other commandments. Those principles were made binding by the law of nature, not because they were included in Israel's covenant.

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11. We acknowledge that the modern nation-state of Israel is completely unrelated, separate and distinct from the ethnic nation of the descendants of Jacob as described in Scripture, Further, that the ethnic people still exists, though without any governmental structure or civil authority, and even though the identification of ethnic Jews may be difficult or impossible for men, it is not impossible for God.

12. No part of the Mosaic covenant or any law issued under it has ever been abrogated, terminated, rescinded, altered or modified, including without limitation the so-called ceremonial law, as by its terms and as confirmed numerous times in scripture, the Mosaic covenant is one indivisible whole, not capable of division into parts, and is perpetual. Further, the Church covenant (based exclusively on faith) does not supersede, replace, alter, abolish, modify, or in any way affect the Mosaic covenant based exclusively on bloodlines. Nor does the Church covenant cause the Mosaic covenant, in whole in any part, to apply to any person based on faith or belief.

13. We acknowledge that the divine covenants - each of them - have never expired, terminated, or been modified, but are eternal. None of the divine covenants have been abrogated, modified, or superseded any other divine covenant, either in whole or in any part.

14. Each of the O.T covenants were inaugurated by the use of express language spoken by God in the hearing of all the people participating in the covenant. Thus, Adam's covenant was spoken in the presence of Adam before he had any descendants. Noah's covenant was spoken to Noah and all of his descendants. Abraham's covenant was spoken to Abraham before the birth of Isaac. David's covenant was spoken before the birth of Solomon.

15. The Mosaic (or Israel's) covenant was a special case, in that Jacob had already died when it was spoken. Thus, it was necessary that the express words of covenant inauguration should be delivered to, and assented by, all Jews living at the time, which it was. (Exo. 24:1-8).

16. Similarly, in order to revoke, modify or terminate any divine covenant, it would require words of revocation, modification or termination to be expressly spoken - by God - in the presence of all people affected thereby. Thus, in the specific case of the Mosaic covenant, it would require God to speak express words of revocation in the hearing of all Jews alive on the earth at the time. Not only has this never happened, but it is impossible that it could ever be done. Nor could the Mosaic covenant ever be revoked, modified or terminated by the mere words of men.

17. In fact, the O.T. is full of express language describing how the Mosaic covenant and the Levitical priesthood are eternal and not subject to change. *See, e.g.*, Exo. 29:9; 31:14-17; 32:13; Num. 18:8,19; 25:10-13; Dt. 7:6,9; Ps. 105:8-10; plus many, many others. We acknowledge that the Levitical priesthood was not modified or abrogated by Christ even though the Levitical duties were not observed by the Levites themselves, excluding Zadok. (Ezekiel 44). Of course, this is with the understanding that the Levitical priesthood is only for the Jews who are the sons of Levite, not for the Church, any Gentile, or any Christian pastor, priest or minister.

18. We acknowledge that there is no express language anywhere in Scripture which purports

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to abrogate, modify or terminate the Mosaic covenant. Including, without limitation, Heb. 8:5-13 and Jer. 31:31-34. In fact, this entire concept is contradicted by Jer. 31:35-37. In other words, the Mosaic covenant will remain unabated until the sun stops being a light by day, and the moon and stars stop being a light by night.

19. We acknowledge it is impossible that "the house of Israel and house of Judah" can rightly be interpreted as making reference to the Church. Those who claim the Church has replaced Israel in the future plans of God are guilty of rejecting the people God has chosen, and have despised God's chosen people, that they should be no more a nation before them. (Jer. 33:24).

20. We acknowledge it is impossible that any divine covenant can be abrogated, modified or terminated merely by circumstances or the passage of time, such as the resurrection of Christ, the inauguration of the Church, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, or the subsequent dispersion of the Jews.

21. We acknowledge that when Jesus stated He did not come to abolish the Law, and that "not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished" (Mt. 5:17-18), He precluded any possibility that His life, death, or resurrection could or would accomplish an abrogation, modification or termination of any part of the Mosaic law, much less the whole Mosaic law. Further, He precluded the possibility that any part of the Law could, should or would be split off from the rest of the Law for separate treatment, applicability or disposition, including without limitation, the so-called ceremonial law(s) of the Mosaic covenant.

22. We acknowledge that when Jesus said "whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:19), He precluded the possibility that the Mosaic covenant could be understood as anything other than a single unitary whole applicable to the Jewish people in the land God gave them to be governed directly by Him in residence for His national purpose. In other words, He affirmed that the Mosaic law as a whole was intended to serve a unifying national governmental purpose, and as such it should not be subsequently divided into parts, whether moral, judicial and ceremonial. There is no basis to assume that any such divisions were intended to serve any other that a unifying national civil purpose. In any case, division of the laws of Moses into moral, judicial, and ceremonial classifications, does not change its sole applicability to the Jewish people (sons of Jacob) as determined by ancestry.

23. Nor does division of the laws of Moses into moral, judicial, and ceremonial classifications alter their unifying purpose to institute and direct the civil government of Israel: 1) to govern His people, 2) in the land He deeded to the 12 tribes, 3) as their King, legislature and Supreme Court, 4) chosen by a people by their voice vote and by their free consent, 5) to serve His purpose of making the Israeli nation, a Kingdom of priests and a Holy nation, 6) all as part and parcel of "the law of the land" in geographical Israel.

24. We acknowledge that all so-called divisions of the Mosaic law are completely artificial, being entirely man-made, not proceeding from the mouth of God, and are mere human traditions set up for the purpose of nullifying the commandments of God. The Mosaic law is always, without exception, either applicable in its entirety, or is not applicable at all. There is no such

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thing as the Mosaic law being applicable to someone in part.

25. We acknowledge that scripture clearly articulates the general rule with respect to the divine covenants between God and men that "no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified." (Gal. 3:15). Therefore, it is not possible that the Mosaic covenant could ever have been annulled or modified by either God or men.

26. We acknowledge there is no logical or textual reason why the Church covenant applicable to individuals based on their faith and the Mosaic covenant applicable to Jews based on their ancestry cannot both be fully operational at the same time (subject to separate and distinct covenants), and that there is no logical or textual interference between them.

27. We acknowledge that God has numerous times promised to keep faith with Israel forever, no matter how they behave in the meantime. Such Scriptures must be interpreted as understood by the people who first received them, and not by interpretations placing the Church in the position of Israel centuries later without any authority to do so. God has not rejected his people simply because he established a church covenant. (Rom. 11:1).

28. We acknowledge that this principle even extends to the future prophecy concerning the 144,000 virgin Jewish men, taking 12,000 from each tribe of Israel as the firstfruits of the nation. (Rev. 7:4-8; 14:4). This prophecy is to be taken literally, and is in no part applicable to the Church. Indeed, the Scripture speaks of an as yet unfulfilled prophecy concerning a new covenant with the house of Israel (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12) which has nothing whatsoever to do with the Church but is in fact directed exclusively to the Jews as physical descendants of Israel.

29. We acknowledge that in speaking of the Mosaic covenant as obsolete, the scripture is in the future tense ("becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away"), not the past tense (has become obsolete, grown old and vanished away), thus indicating that this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. (Heb. 8:13).

30. We acknowledge that what is spoken of in Heb. 8 is the salvation of the Jews (real, physical Jews), not the Church. "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." (Rom. 11:29. Insofar as God's future plans for Israel are concerned, the Church is irrelevant. All of God's promises to literal Israel in scripture are valid without any changes today.

31. Finally, we acknowledge, that in the founding documents of the United States, the founders recognized both the existence of God universal law built into the creation and nature (the "Laws of Nature)", and the written laws of God as found in the Scripture of universal effect ("Natures God"). This law, whether written or unwritten form the basis of the legal framework of the nations including the United States but do not incorporate the terms of the fourth covenant God made with Israel for His particular governance of and application to that nation for its national purposes.

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