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### Jurassic Park: a theological précis

Adapted from a 1990 novel by Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park* is a 1993 science-fiction film directed by Steven Spielberg. It was presented by Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment under the production of Kathleen Kennedy, Gerald Molen, Lata Ryan, and Colin Wilson. The initial screenplay was written by Michael Crichton with considerable editing and additions by David Koepp. *Jurassic Park* was mostly cast with somewhat unknown actors such as Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum, and Richard Attenborough, in order to draw the audience deeper into the action (rather than allowing viewers to recognize already-famous actors)<sup>1</sup>. The film also boasts an unforgettable score by John Williams. The film was rated PG-13 for intense science fiction terror, even though this would limit the young audiences that would be drawn to the movie's magnificent spectacle. With an estimated budget of \$63 million, *Jurassic Park* grossed over \$350 million in the United States during its original release alone, plus an additional \$52 million during a 2013 theatrical re-release in 3D. Worldwide, its gross income has now surpassed \$900 million.

#### CINEMATIC AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The instant success of *Jurassic Park* was foremost a result of the film's brilliant director combined with Michael Crichton's astonishing novel. Spielberg had just completed *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and *Hook* (which, unfortunately, was not well received), and he

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<sup>1</sup> John Schultz, dir., *The Making of Jurassic Park*, 1995; Universal City: Universal Studios.

already had a reputation for influential films such as *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial* and the remarkable *Indiana Jones* series. Spielberg's status as a dramatic mastermind led to the evolution of a series of science-fiction, dinosaur-based, dystopian films: a sequel, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, was released in 1997. Universal Pictures continued without Crichton and Spielberg, as the film franchise then produced *Jurassic Park III* (2001), *Jurassic Park 3D* (2013), and *Jurassic World* (2015). *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018) is currently in production, and an untitled sixth film has been recently announced.

*Jurassic Park* marked a significant step in computer-generated imagery (CGI). Although CGI had been used in the 1970s and 1980s, the first time CGI animation was used in live-action film was *Death Becomes Her* (1992). But the film's success was not just because of its director or its technological advances. In the early 1990s, the Cold War had ended, and the American economy slowly began to recover from a recession. The country was ready for another scientific revolution. The term "bioethics" was first used in the early 1970s, and genetic engineering had become a highly controversial topic by 1993. Scientists in support of this field of study cited the medical benefits of such knowledge, such as the ability to prevent the massive spread of a disease or the ability to test for prenatal abnormalities. Opponents argued that manipulating genes meant humanity was "playing God," and felt that the risks outweighed the benefits. This debate was especially heated in regard to genetic control within human embryos. Other areas such as genetically-modified food production and animal cloning were met with the same outright rejection. While at face value the film's principle plot device is the recreation of a dinosaur utopia upon a primeval island in the Pacific Ocean, the controversy around genetic manipulation is the dramatic and ethical foundation for *Jurassic Park*.

## FILM ANALYSIS

*Jurassic Park* begins with a violent scene: a docent at John Hammond's (Richard Attenborough) dinosaur-filled theme park on a fictional Isla Nublar, off the coast of Costa Rica, is violently killed by a *Velociraptor*. As a result, the park's lawyer Donald Gennaro (Martin Ferrero) accompanies a team of scientists and scholars who are invited to inspect and endorse the park before it opens to the public. Paleontologist Dr. Alan Grant (Sam Neill) and paleobotanist Dr. Ellie Sattler (Laura Dern) are joined by Dr. Ian Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum), a chaos theorist, to tour Isla Nublar along with Hammond's grandchildren Alexis "Lex" Murphy (Ariana Richards) and Timothy "Tim" Murphy (Joseph Mazzello). Within minutes of arriving on the island, they encounter a flock of gigantic *Brachiosauri*. It is obvious that this scene is not only for the characters; the audience also stares in wonder at these marvelous creatures.

As the group is overwhelmed with questions, Hammond escorts them to the visitor's center where they (and the audience) are educated about the science behind cloning dinosaurs through an oversimplified animated video experience. The scientists learn from Dr. Henry Wu (B.D. Wong) that all the dinosaurs in the park are female, and that any missing genomes in the dinosaur DNA were replaced with sequences from amphibian DNA. This foreshadows a later predicament: in the wild, amphibians have been known to change their sex in order to reproduce.

After watching a *Velociraptor* hatch from an ostrich egg, the visitors are ready for a tour of the theme park. The tour starts out uneventful until there are reports of an impending tropical storm, and many of the other (mostly off-screen) employees leave Isla Nublar by boat. We learn that one of the employees, Dennis Nedry (Wayne Knight), plans to steal fertilized embryos for his own financial gain. To bypass security systems, he disables the park's power systems, including the computer-controlled tour jeeps and the electric paddock fences. A *Tyrannosaurus*

*Rex* terrorizes the group, injuring Malcolm and killing Gennaro. Nedry is also killed, thwarting his attempt to extort Hammond.

Grant and the children battle the dinosaurs for their very lives. Ray Arnold (Samuel L. Jackson), Robert Muldoon (Bob Peck), Sattler and Hammond try to restart the park's security systems. Arnold and Muldoon are hunted and killed by *Velociraptors*, leaving Sattler as the only one able to restore the park's power. Once Grant and the children return to the visitor's center, Grant leaves again to find Sattler. The children are stalked by *Velociraptors* in the kitchen while Hammond radios for evacuation. The group faces *Velociraptors* once more, but in a typical Spielberg climactic way, their lives are saved by the *Tyrannosaurus Rex*. They then depart Isla Nublar, leaving the figurative gates wide open for a sequel.

Contrary to this plot synopsis, as mentioned above, the primary basis of *Jurassic Park's* plot is not paleontology but the ethics of genetic engineering. This ethical dilemma was openly presented in the film by Malcolm. While arguing with Hammond, Malcolm interjects, "Your scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they *could* that they didn't stop to think if they *should*" (0:36:09). This question of whether or not it is acceptable to "play God" does not have a clear answer throughout the narrative. Later in the same scene, one of the invited paleontologists contemplates:

GRANT: I don't want to jump to any conclusions, but look.

Dinosaurs and men, two species separated by 65 million years of evolution, have just been suddenly thrown back into the mix together. How can we possibly have the slightest idea what to expect? (0:37:31—0:37:48)

The audience is enticed by the wonder of such scientific possibility, yet watches helplessly as the cast faces unparalleled destruction. This shows how the complex ethics of genetic sequencing can be at once provoking and petrifying.

A less-obvious but necessary aspect of the film's production and plot is the creation of a theme park. Spielberg was a fan of Disney and its parks, and many viewers would remember the disastrous opening of Disneyland in 1955. The idea of a theme park working through kinks before its public opening would even prove true to the production of *Jurassic Park* itself: the last day of filming in Kauai, Hawaii was cancelled due to Hurricane Iniki. The irony of this unpredictability has been noted by Tom Shone: "*Jurassic Park* would be the first movie to warn against the evils of theme parks that would itself be turned into a theme park – one that came complete with its own warnings about the hazards of hastily-completed theme parks."<sup>2</sup> This idea is even presented on-screen:

MALCOLM: You stood on the shoulders of geniuses to accomplish something as fast as you could, and before you even knew what you had, you patented it, and packaged it, and slapped it on a plastic lunch box, and now you're selling it. (0:35:48—0:36:00)

A later comedic line also spoken by Malcolm, after he has been severely wounded by a *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, captures this sentiment: "When the Pirates of the Caribbean ride breaks down, the pirates don't eat the tourists" (1:36:16).

Food also plays an interesting conventional role in *Jurassic Park*, both in dramatic and ironic ways. In an early scene, Hammond is explaining the spectacular lunch which awaits them

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<sup>2</sup> Tom Shone, *Blockbuster: How Hollywood Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Summer* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 220.

at the visitor's center – “Chilean sea bass, I believe!” – while, ironically, a pack of *Velociraptors* are being fed a live ox. Those on the tour are mortified by the sounds of the vicious feeding frenzy, and they are no longer hungry for lunch. Soon after, during a scheduled feeding demonstration outside the *Tyrannosaurus Rex* paddock, Grant points out that dinosaurs want to hunt rather than be fed a goat. In one of the last scenes, Hammond is eating ice cream and mourning the failure of his park. Douglas Brode juxtaposes these uses of food in *Jurassic Park*: “The early bit is more than just a gag; the latter, something other than textural business. Each visualizes a theme running through the film: Despite the superficial differences between man and beast, they are frightfully similar.”<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, food is a device which invites the audience to reflect on the central ethical questions of the subject matter.

*Character development.*

There is a rather large cast of characters in *Jurassic Park*, although many personalities are two-dimensionally static. Passive characters, such as the genetic scientists and the zoological experts, lack any capacity to develop throughout the film. The character who is most fully developed is Dr. Ellie Sattler, a botanical paleontologist who is brought to Isla Nublar for her ecological proficiency. She is consistently maternal throughout, and often puts her own life in danger to protect others. This instinct is most obviously seen in her interactions with Tim and Lex, the grandchildren of the theme park's owner; however, we also see her attempt to rescue lesser characters who are in peril. It is noteworthy that the main protagonist in *Jurassic Park* is a woman. Furthermore, we should recall those other essential female roles: “All the dinosaurs in Spielberg's film [were] female, a key plot point being that they learn to reproduce without the necessity of men. That introduces a quasi-feminist theme, a nod to Spielberg's upbringing in a

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<sup>3</sup> Douglas Brode, *The Films of Steven Spielberg* (New York: Citadel Press, 1995), 220.

house of strong women.”<sup>4</sup> Although Sattler’s character development is somewhat limited, she enters the screen with a strong, educated, and caring personality; her character need not develop.

A momentous character shift is found in Dr. Alan Grant, the film’s male protagonist. In the opening scenes and early in his time on Isla Nublar, he is depicted as intolerable toward children. Yet even in an early scene, when the group approaches an ill *Triceratops* and Lex trips, Grant is right there to help her up. Once survival becomes the objective, he develops a paternal – or perhaps even maternal – instinct in protecting both Tim and Lex. Whether Grant and Sattler will later have children together or otherwise is left unclear; however, we see Grant develop the capacity to care for children over the narrative arc of the movie. This development is common in Spielberg films, as Brode explains: “Previous films have concerned some ordinary person who rises to heroic stature under extreme pressure. Here we encounter a virtual ‘collective’ of candidates and must wait and watch to see which will finally rise to that occasion.”<sup>5</sup> In *Jurassic Park*, this hero is Grant.

John Hammond is presented as a simple humanitarian whose ambitions for authentic entertainment are his demise. Despite the collapsing reality around him, he refuses to acknowledge his creation as a failure. Toward the end of the film, Hammond is having a conversation with Sattler as the other surviving characters are fighting for their lives. While eating ice cream, Hammond reflects on his first attraction: a flea circus. He was disappointed by the lackluster illusions and wanted to offer something more. Admitting his failures, he begins speaking of his future plans:

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

HAMMOND: Creation is an act of sheer will. Next time, it will be flawless.

SATTLER: It's still the flea circus. It's all an illusion.

HAMMOND: When we have control again—

SATTLER: You never had control. That's the illusion. (1:27:23—1:27:38)

In this dramatic exchange, the audience is shown that Hammond's greatest sin is the desire for control over creation. He has an understanding that with money and science, anything is possible. We will explore this claim below.

A favorite character of many viewers is responsible for most of the film's comedic relief: Dr. Ian Malcolm. We have already seen some of the ways in which Malcolm contests the ability to control creation, but Hammond is dismissive of these warnings. In many ways, Malcolm's character queers Hammond's character: where Hammond has made concessions to achieve a specific outcome, Malcolm challenges those assumptions and advises against blind certainty. This is most clearly illustrated through the script's refrains for certain characters. Hammond's recurring line is "We've spared no expense." Conversely, Malcolm's recurring line is "Life finds a way." And poignantly, Ray Arnold's recurring line is "Hold on to your butts." We will further explore Malcolm's representation of chaos and unpredictability, as well as his awkward relationship with Hammond, below.

One final character who has a seemingly small role in *Jurassic Park* is Dennis Nedry. He is a computer programmer who, as we discover in a brief exchange with Hammond, is experiencing financial distress. Unbeknownst to the rest of the cast, Nedry has made arrangements to steal dinosaur embryos and sell them to Hammond's chief competitor. This

somewhat unimportant character introduces the idea of capitalism into the film. Beyond Hammond's support for the park, and a few glimpses of Jurassic Park's gift shop show merchandise with the film's own logos, viewers are not given enough information about the park's financial assets. Eventually, fate gets the best of thieving Dennis Nedry and he is violently attacked by a *Dilophosaurus*, a fictional yet deadly dinosaur.

*Cinematic analysis.*

Throughout the film, a number of cinematographic conventions are used to propel or relieve the script's drama. The first is a practical consideration: redacting a 400-page science fiction novel into a 120-minute action-adventure motion picture. Brode explains the problem: "Crichton continuously ground his narrative to a halt, offering lengthy, unfilmable informational discussions about DNA cloning."<sup>6</sup> He continued, "One somewhat insurmountable problem was finding a way to condense the wealth of scientific information Crichton's book included, explaining the nature of DNA cloning."<sup>7</sup> This stumbling block was managed by using one of Spielberg's trademarks: a movie within a movie. As Grant, Sattler, and the other characters have their questions answered by an animated "Mr. D.N.A." and a prerecorded John Hammond, we are invited along on an educational journey. Along with the cast, the entire audience gets a brief course in the genetic manipulation of deoxyribonucleic acid.

One of the most important concepts in the film, which is creatively and dramatically presented throughout, is control over creation. We will discuss the theological implications of this later, but for now let us consider this issue narratively. At the beginning of the film, we are coaxed to feel wonder at the ability of humans to create. Our first glances of Isla Nublar present a lush, pristine island. One might suggest we are flying a helicopter back in time to prehistoric

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 212.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 217.

times, or perhaps even to the Garden of Eden. The seemingly limitless possibilities of humanity give the viewer a spirit of freedom. Yet, in contrast, we begin to see signs of colossal control: the tour vehicles are driven autonomously; doors and perimeter fences are secured with electric locks and currents; as the voiceover announces, “Welcome to Jurassic Park,” we see a massive gate automatically open before the jeeps (and in a throwback to earlier films, Malcolm exclaims, “What have they got in there, King Kong?”).

This juxtaposition of creation and control is intensified by the dualistic branding throughout: the film itself and the fictitious theme park within both share the same logo. This branding is visible in the theme park’s gift shop, on every park vehicle, and on the gigantic gate which closes the dinosaurs off from the rest of the island. The double-use of logos constantly reminds us that this lush, pristine island is ultimately a commercially-focused product which is entirely controlled by a scheming Hammond.

Just as we become aware of these control methods, and in typical human fashion, we immediately reject the restrictions. The first dinosaur the park’s visitors encounter is sick. Beginning with Grant, each of the visitors exits the moving vehicles to reach the *Triceratops*. In the midst of a controlled environment, humans refuse to be controlled, and instead implicate commercialism in the beast’s illness. Sattler is concerned that a toxic plant, an attractive West Indian lilac, was ingested by the dinosaur. This piece of dramatic irony was foretold by a comment she made in an earlier scene:

SATTLER: Well the question is, how can you know anything about an extinct ecosystem? And therefore, how could you ever assume that you can control it? I mean, you have plants in this building that are poisonous. You pick them because they look

good, but these are aggressive living things that have no idea what century they're in, and they'll defend themselves. Violently, if necessary. (0:36:57—0:37:15)

Creation, as we see here, is simply beyond our control. Hammond's vision of a prehistoric microcosm breaks all laws of nature and evolution.

Another device used in *Jurassic Park* is the imagery of birds. From the sleek helicopter which brings them to Isla Nublar, to the flocking *Gallimimus* herd, to the flock of pelicans that is flying alongside that same helicopter which rescues them the island, birds are constantly referenced. Metaphorically, birds are considered a free creature that cannot be contained like many other creatures. Scientifically, however, birds are also considered to be the closest living relative to the now-extinct dinosaurs. In the beginning of the film, Grant presents this theory to a team of archaeologists; which explains Grant's excitement at observing the *Gallimimi* travel like a flock of birds. This evolutionary theory was gaining traction around the time of Crichton's writing Jurassic Park, so it is unclear whether this recurring imagery was used for its allegorical ability or its educational content. Nonetheless, as Brode notes, "Though it took untold millions of years, nature or God or whatever you choose to call it did prove itself a benign force by turning dangerous, deadly beasts into dignified, delicate birds."<sup>8</sup>

On a technical level, one of the most significant cinematographic advancements of *Jurassic Park* was its astounding computer animation. This was primarily the work of Industrial Light and Magic under the leadership of Dennis Muren, who had worked on such films as *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Terminator II: Judgement Day* (1991). The visual creation of these dinosaurs was paramount to Spielberg's vision of the film. In a documentary

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 224.

interview, the director has said, “When you’re putting dinosaurs back on the earth in 1993 ... the audience has to believe to take the journey.”<sup>9</sup> Out of the entire film, “there are fifty-four computer-graphics sequences, totaling six and a half minutes of running time.”<sup>10</sup> The remaining dinosaur encounters were life-sized animatronics created by Stan Winston, who had made a name for himself after designing the creature effects for *Aliens* (1986). Altogether, “the dinosaurs dominate *Jurassic Park* in every way. Amazingly graceful and convincing, they set a sky-high new standard for computer-generated special effects.”<sup>11</sup>

#### THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The primary theological issue present in *Jurassic Park* is Augustine’s most basic definition of sin: “any transgression in deed, or word, or desire, of the eternal law.”<sup>12</sup> That is, humanity has an innate desire to act in ways that are beyond God’s intention for humanity. Our earlier exploration of control considers how this aspiration to break natural laws can only lead to humanity’s annihilation. Throughout the film, we are faced with the opportunities, and the sheer destructive forces, which result from this imitation of the divine. This theme is explicitly, albeit amusingly, discussed by Malcolm and Sattler:

MALCOLM: God creates dinosaurs, God destroys dinosaurs, God creates man, man destroys God, man creates dinosaurs.

SATTLER: Dinosaurs eat man, woman inherits the earth.

(0:45:04—0:45:21)

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<sup>9</sup> Schultz.

<sup>10</sup> Brode, 216.

<sup>11</sup> Janet Maslin, “Screen Stars with Teeth to Spare,” last modified June 11, 1993.

<http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9F0CE1D71E3DF932A25755C0A965958260>

<sup>12</sup> Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, Book XXII.

This dialogue further speaks to the feminist tone of Sattler's character, but it also illustrates the control issue presented earlier. We are not privy to the characters' motivations for this sin.

However, as Barbara Brown Taylor writes, "Whether people are missing a mark, acting wrongly, or engaging in outright rebellion, they are out of sync with God."<sup>13</sup> In *Jurassic Park*, we find that, in order for humanity to re-create extinct beings, we must first disconnect from God and become creators ourselves. Without attempting to make an explicit theological claim, this film demonstrates the classical definition of sin.

It is not surprising that Malcolm is the character who makes this observation most clearly. "The chaos-theory expert, following the possibility through to its logical conclusion, sees the potential for tragedy when men play at being gods."<sup>14</sup> This claim is intensified by a deliberate decision of the film's costumer: Hammond, the god-player, wears a light, translucent white outfit, while Malcolm, the chaos theorist, wears a shiny black leather coat. This introduces a paradox: light and dark imagery can either be viewed as good-versus-evil or creation-versus-chaos, but Hammond and Malcolm should not themselves be viewed within this dichotomy. The characters simply represent the complex paradigm of order and chaos.

Hammond is not the only sinful character we encounter. Greed motivates Nedry and Gennaro. Lust can be seen in some of Malcolm's inappropriate interactions with Sattler. Sattler and Grant frequently disregard authority, which many theologians would link to the fifth commandment. Still, more important than any character's individual actions, we are able to recognize communal or corporate sin. The individual acts may hurt people, and indeed many die because of the brazen acts of a few, but the community's being broken is far more problematic.

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<sup>13</sup> Barbara Brown Taylor, *Speaking of Sin: The Lost Language of Salvation* (Lanham: Cowley Publications, 2000), Kindle edition, location 380.

<sup>14</sup> Brode, 225.

On an isolated Isla Nublar, there is no opportunity for redemption from this corporate sin. In the likeness of the Great Flood in Genesis, the only option is to abandon Jurassic Park and attempt to start over.

In addition to sin, we might consider the ethical question of genetic engineering as a related but separate topic. Before we reach the “playing God” problem, however, a discussion of wisdom and knowledge is helpful. A Christian approach to epistemology starts at the belief that God created all things; what we know about ourselves, each other, and the world around us is only based upon that which God has revealed to us. We are free to encounter and digest wisdom, insofar as we recognize the Holy One as its source. Gilbert Meilaender, a contemporary Christian ethicist, has presented the problem in this way:

That zealous desire to know, to probe the secrets of nature, to combat disease – all that is an expression of our created freedom from the limits of the ‘given,’ the freedom by which we step forth as God’s representatives in the world.<sup>15</sup>

Being a representative of God is an invitation to participate in her creative activity in the world. However, as Meilaender counters, “The only freedom worth having, a freedom that does not finally trivialize our choices, is a freedom that acknowledges its limits and does not seek to be godlike.”<sup>16</sup> Freely using those creative gifts God has given us, such as wisdom, reason, and skill, is ultimately what it means to be made in the image of God.

Although the film presents the human desire to play God, there is little evidence of a Christian cosmology. Surprisingly, other than the above referenced dialogue between Malcolm and Sattler, *Jurassic Park* neglects to fully address the relationship between God and humans. In

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<sup>15</sup> Gilbert Meilaender, *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Genesis, humanity is created to be co-creators. God creates, and humanity names; God creates, and humanity tends; God creates, and humanity thrives. An agrarian (land-based) approach to cosmology rests upon the idea that we are created from the humus of the ground. Furthermore, we are drawn up out of that ground with one purpose: “In order to live, we must ‘work’ the land, manage it, take from it.”<sup>17</sup> In other words, we are inextricably tied to the rest of creation, and cannot survive without respecting that fact.

Unfortunately, *Jurassic Park* does not make that connection. The first glimpses of the park’s visitors upon these dinosaurs are rich with awe and wonder. Toward the end of the film we see Muldoon, a zoological expert at the park, become visibly troubled by the possible need to kill one of these magnificent creatures. Otherwise, the re-instituted beings are viewed as little more than a source of economic revenue or, in the end, a source of tremendous pain and suffering. In fact, the indigenous God-created animals in the film, such as the ox and the goat, are seen as mere playthings for these human-created dinosaurs. Like in the Garden of Eden, *Jurassic Park* was a perfect idea until human sinfulness leads us to reject God and her creation. We have misappropriated God’s desire for the created order, and placed an extinct species above those creatures which God indisputably called “good.”

In spite of *Jurassic Park*’s violent and death-ridden story, the film does present a positive and hopeful view of humanity and creation. Throughout the narrative we are encouraged to imagine the impossible. The audience is allowed freedom to enter an alternative world where, with the gifts of science, we can truly be co-creators with God. Hammond, the god-player, exhibits immeasurable love toward his creation, despite all of the problems presented on-screen.

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<sup>17</sup> Ellen Davis, “And the Land I Will Remember: Reading the Bible through Agrarian Eyes,” in *Wendell Berry and Religion: Heaven’s Earthly Life*, ed. Joel James Shuman and L. Roger Owens (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 123.

His refrain, “We’ve spared no expense,” peculiarly echoes “For this is the way God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”<sup>18</sup> Both creators provide abundantly and love unconditionally.

As much as the film presents a view of human sinfulness, it also shows the providence and redemption of a creator. This is dramatically shown in the concluding moments when the characters (and audience) are metaphorically redeemed: a *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, doing precisely what a *Tyrannosaurus Rex* was created to do, saves them all from certain death. This is yet one more example of the constant reminder of God’s providence. In spite of our attempts to alter creation, “Life” – the way God intended it to be – “finds a way.”

#### CONCLUSION

*Jurassic Park* did not set out to be a piece of theological discourse. It was primarily a science-fiction, action-adventure film in the likes of *Jaws* and *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*. A film of firsts, “*Jurassic Park* heralded a revolution in movies as profound as the coming of sound in 1927.”<sup>19</sup> However, we have seen many ways in which the story beckons us to confront serious, religious questions. We have faced the ethical questions of genetic manipulation, the importance of strong women in roles of leadership, the simplest definition of sin, and humanity’s peculiar disrespect for creation. We also discovered many cinematographic conventions, some of which were the first of their kind, which set this motion picture apart from other films of its time. It is no wonder that *Jurassic Park*, a story of humanity’s cosmic battle with the rest of creation, became an instant classic.

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<sup>18</sup> John 3:16, NET.

<sup>19</sup> Shone, 213.

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