

In short, the admission of no cause-effect connection between sin and death renders the whole plan of salvation useless. Other areas of Christian belief besides atonement theology—though certainly not disconnected from it—are also negatively impacted by the concept that death anteceded sin. These include:

The goodness of God and the goodness of creation. Conditions where struggle and death are common due to the scarcity of resources, as posed by evolutionary theory, do not match the biblical picture of a creation originally pronounced “very good” (Gen. 1:31), nor do they speak of a good Creator.

The authority of Scriptures. The claim that innumerable living forms died for long ages preceding Adam undermines confidence in the Genesis record. Thus, by the concept of death before the Fall, the Genesis account is not only reinterpreted, but its historical validity is denied, for both Old and New Testaments point to all kinds of death as brought about into the world by the sin of Adam.

The doctrine of humanity. Bible evidence indicates that brutish forefathers could not have preceded Adam in a line of unbroken continuity. This means that belief in the organic evolution of man, entailing hominids dying for ages long before man reached the state of consciousness, degrades humanity from the high position given them by God himself in creating man and woman in His own image and likeness (Gen. 1:26-27).

The doctrine of eschatology. Theistic evolution presupposes death to be good and, as such, as having been originally placed into the process of nature by God himself. But, if death is something good, or natural, and originally intended by God himself for His creatures, there is little reason to believe that death will ever be eliminated from the world as suggested by biblical texts (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4). For if death was present on earth long before sin, the prospect is that death will remain long after sin is eradicated from the world.

P6. The Origins of Natural Evil

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In a cursory survey of life it is obvious that a vast number of species spanning most kingdoms and phyla have features that are teleologically designed to deal out disease and/or death. Many pathogens, parasites, and predators have sophisticated genetic, morphological, and behavioral arsenals (natural evil) that clearly testify to the God’s eternal power and divine nature (Romans 1:20), i.e. they are not the result of mutation and natural selection. These range from the bacterial type III secretion systems, the cnidarian nematocysts, the toxoglossate radula and apparatus of *Comus*, the parasitic physiology of *Wuchereria bancrofti*, the piercing/sucking mouthparts of predaceous insects, and the solenoglyphous skull, pit organs, and venom apparatus of pit vipers. Scripture states that: 1) every green plant was given for food (Genesis 1:30), 2) death and disease are a consequence of sin (Genesis 2:17), and 3) creation was completed on the sixth day (Genesis 2:1). The following six scenarios attempt to explain the presence of natural evil in the biological world from a young earth creationist framework. I will then assess them in light of these aforementioned biblical truths.

At creation creatures that were to become pathogens, parasites,

and predators:

- 1) had dual gene sets: (such as in holometabola: larva, pupa, and adult) one gene set for benign morphology and behavior (sinless contingency) and one for malignant morphology and behavior (Fall contingency) with only the benign gene sets expressed prior to the Fall.
- 2) had malignant morphological gene sets expressed for an imminent preordained (or fore-known) Fall, with no usage prior to the Fall. Malignant behavioral gene sets expressed after the Fall.
- 3) had the same malignant morphology before and after the Fall, however benign usage was normative before the Fall. After the Fall micro-evolutionary factors altered benign behavior into malignant behavior.
- 4) were morphologically and behaviorally benign and then subsequent to the Fall malignant genes were designed, created, and incorporated into the genome of certain creatures transforming them into pathogens, parasites, and predators.
- 5) were subject to random mutation and natural selection after the Fall transforming their benign gene sets into malignant gene sets. The latter were not designed by God.
- 6) were completely benign in all respects but at the Fall the enemy (Satan, et. al.) engaged in post-Fall genetic modification and/or bestiality that resulted in creatures with malignant behavior and morphology.

I will argue that the two scenarios that are the most harmonious with both scripture and the scientific data are 1) and 2). Any scenario attributing the presence of these highly complex morphological and behavioral arsenals to random mutation and natural selection is granting creative powers to mindless processes (this is no better than atheistic evolution). Any scenario that attributes these complex arsenals to God’s creative power yet shifts their time of origin to a post-Fall creative act, contradicts the finished creation on day six. Finally, any scenario that attributes these complex arsenals to Satan et. al., attributes too much creative power and intelligence to the powers of darkness.

P7. In Search of the Silver Bullet—Or—God’s History Lesson for Systematics

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Following biologists’ acceptance of Darwinian evolution, the history of systematic biology has been marked by a parade of mutually exclusive, contradictory, and competitive phylogenetic classifications and by a myopic search for the Silver Bullet—the one new method of obtaining sets of character data or analyzing character data that would unambiguously resolve the conflicting data into a single unified non-contradictory classification. Technical advances brought chromosome and breeding studies; then came elucidation of secondary metabolites, ultrastructure revealed by transmission and scanning electron microscopy, computer-assisted phenetic analyses, and protein structure; and now the bandwagon is computer-assisted cladistic analyses dovetailed with nucleotide sequences of DNA.