

Theistic Evolution and the Scriptures

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Introduction

Most of the professed Christian world, from ignorance and/or pressure from the secular, evolutionist-dominated scientific establishment, has adopted the essence of modern evolutionary theory. This is especially true of the more liberal, mainline Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church. Scientists of the evolutionary persuasion have found willing accomplices in the secular media and publishing companies in promoting their version of the origins of the universe and life forms. Those who refuse to follow their ideas often face open ridicule. For those whose careers are in academia, it has also often meant academic punishment and/or the ruin of their careers. Not wishing to appear anti-science, many Christian leaders and members have incorrectly assumed that the scientific evidence supports evolution. As we saw in chapter 3, science provides no actual support for evolution. Indeed, it rules out its possibility, thereby producing a compelling argument for the supernatural act of fiat creation.

Nevertheless, Christians who have acquiesced to the arguments for evolution still wish to hang on to their Christian concept of God. Therefore, they have tended to adopt a compromise between atheistic evolution and traditional Christian belief in a Creator-God called theistic evolution. Essentially, theistic evolution is the understanding that God is the eternal First Cause who chose to use evolutionary processes to “create” the universe and everything in it. In this way, theistic evolutionists can have their proverbial cake and eat it too. However, by this compromise, Christians have inadvertently placed themselves in direct opposition to the Christian Scriptures, which testify against any compromise with the idea that the Creator-God created all things in an instantaneous act of fiat creation. We have summarized ten of the most fundamental Biblical facts which make theistic evolution an impossibility from the Biblical perspective below:

24-Hour Days of Creation Week

Theistic evolution, like its atheistic cousin, requires extremely long ages to produce the variety of geological formations and life forms which can be observed today. Yet the Biblical account of creation in Genesis 1 speaks of the creation of this earth in what appears to be seven literal days. In order to attempt to harmonize evolutionary assumptions with the Scriptural record, theistic evolutionists must postulate the theory that each of the days during Creation week represent millions of years. The only problem with this approach is that when the Biblical record is carefully

examined, it becomes obvious that it does not allow for that interpretive approach to the days of Creation week. Because of the following evidence, the only interpretation left to the serious-minded Christian is that each day of Creation week was a literal 24-hour day:

The Hebrew of Genesis 1's creation account employs *yom*, which is the common word for *day* in the Old Testament. In every single instance when the Hebrew word *yom* is accompanied by a specific number in the Old Testament, it always refers to a literal 24-hour day. And a check of Genesis 1 reveals that each day of Creation week is identified by its number as the first day, the second day, and so on.

Each Creation day in Genesis 1 is identified by the expression *the evening and the morning*, which clearly specifies a 24-hour day. Someone may object that since the sun was not created until the fourth day, the first three evenings and mornings would not necessarily be 24-hour days because the earth spinning on its axis would not bring the light of the sun on the Earth. However, Revelation 21:23 and 22:5 suggests the plausibility that God may have used the light of His own glory for the first three days of Creation.

A comparison of the seventh day of Creation week in Genesis 2:1-3 with the language of the Sabbath commandment in Exodus 20:8-11 reveals that the commandment was based upon the former. Obviously, the Sabbath commandment is a reference to 24-hour days; it would make no sense if the days of the Creation week were not. Thus, the connection between the commandment and Creation week means that each day of Creation week also consisted of 24-hour days.

According to the Creation account in Genesis 1, vegetation was created on the third day, fish and birds on the fifth day, and land animals and mankind on the sixth day. It is a scientific fact that vegetation requires carbon dioxide, and gives off oxygen. But if each day of Creation week actually represented millions of years, there would have been no animals or people on the earth to produce the carbon dioxide necessary to sustain plant life. Therefore, all vegetation would have died out millions of years before animals and people appeared on the earth. Furthermore, vegetation needs light for photosynthesis to occur. But if the night portion of the third day were only a million years long, all the vegetation would have died out before the fourth day had dawned.

Other Bible Writers Accept the Literal Historicity of Genesis

The essential acceptance of evolution by most Christians in the late nineteenth century resulted in a highly critical approach to the book of Genesis, especially its first eleven chapters. For if evolution were correct, then the early part of that book could not be descriptive of literal history. By accepting theistic evolution, a Christian sides with those forces which ridicule the historicity of Genesis. But more importantly, they place themselves squarely in opposition to other inspired

writers of Scripture and to Jesus Himself, who accepted the literal historicity of Genesis, as the following evidence discloses:

- The apostle Paul shows his faith in the historicity of Genesis through a variety of statements which appear in his New Testament letters. For example, when he declared that *it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness* (II Corinthians 4:6), he was referring to Genesis 1:2-3. And concerning Adam, he referred to Genesis 2:7 when he wrote that *The first man Adam became a living being*. And of both Adam and Eve, he declared that *Adam was formed first, then Eve* (I Timothy 2:13).
- In Luke's gospel, he traces the genealogy of Jesus through his father Joseph all the way back to Adam (Luke 3:23-38). Such a specific, detailed connection of Jesus back to Adam certainly testifies of Luke's confidence in the historicity of Genesis.
- James made an obvious reference back to Genesis 1:26-27 when he wrote that *men...have been made in the similitude of God* (James 3:9).
- The apostle Peter endorsed the historicity of the global Flood account in the book of Genesis in several passages in his letters (I Peter 3:20; II Peter 2:5; 3:5-6).
- Jesus Himself gave evidence of His belief in the historicity of the creation of mankind and the global Flood accounts, both recorded in the book of Genesis (Matthew 19:4-6; 24:37-39; Mark 10:6-8; Luke 17:26-27).

Creation was Finished in the Past

In agreement with other evolutionists, those who subscribe to the theistic version believe that natural evolutionary processes are ongoing; naturally, this would include the present. But God's Word speaks of a finished creation in the past tense, as the following data indicates:

- *Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done*. The language of the Sabbath Commandment echoes the thought from the end of Creation week itself (Genesis 2:1-2).
- The Psalmist declared, *By the word of the Lord the heavens were made...For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast* (Psalms 33:6, 9).
- The apostle Paul says that *by Him all things were created* (Colossians 1:16).

- The writer of Hebrews stated *that the works [of creation] were finished from the foundation of the world* (Hebrews 4:3).

God's Love and Mercy is Inconsistent with Evolution

If theistic evolution were really true, then God would be responsible for all those millions of years of suffering, misery, and death that different life forms experienced on the upward path toward improvement. However, the Scriptures tell of a very different God, one who is love and mercy personified. Specifically, it describes God as one who cares about all His creatures, so much so that He values even the little sparrows, and notices when they fall to the ground in death. Surely, such a God would not have chosen evolutionary processes which result in such misery to “create” the world.

God's Omniscience and Orderliness are Inconsistent with Evolution

If theistic evolution were true, then several millions of years have been involved to date in an almost endless series of trial and error attempts via random mutations to get the life forms where they are today. What a colossal waste of time that has been for God, who knows all things past, present, and future!

Not only has this been a colossal waste of time, it implies that God has chosen a terribly inefficient method for “creating” the universe. But the Bible describes God as *not the author of confusion* but of order—as one who believes *that all things [should] be done decently and in order* (I Corinthians 14:33, 40). Thus, He would never have selected such an inefficient system for creating the universe.

Scripture Says Death Came as the Result of Sin

Theistic evolution teaches that life has evolved over millions of years through a naturalistic process of innumerable rounds of life-and-death cycles. But the Christian Scriptures teach that death came as a result of sin, and specifically the sin of Adam, the first man created (Genesis 3:1-3, 19; Romans 5:12-17; Romans 6:23; I Corinthians 15:21). Therefore, theistic evolution asks us to believe that suffering and death existed for long ages in a sinless world made by a wise and holy God. That is a preposterous idea which is as foreign to the Christian Scriptures as anything can be.

Existence of Sin and Salvation are Inconsistent with Evolution

The primary assumption underlying all theories of evolution is that living organisms evolve upward from the simple to the more complex. Mankind is allegedly getting better and better with age because he is a creature who is continually developing toward perfection. On the other hand,

the Bible teaches that mankind fell out of harmony with his Creator-God soon after his creation. Thus, he needs a Savior to redeem and restore him into a right relationship with God. Theistic evolution undermines the entire heart of the Christian Scriptures because when the Creation account in Genesis is interpreted as myth or allegory, then it actually removes sin, and the need for salvation, from the divine message. And under that scenario, Jesus died for nothing. We need to see that any radical reinterpretation of the early chapters of Genesis automatically places the interpreter at diametric odds with the heart of the rest of Christian Scriptures and teaching.

Golden Rule is Inconsistent with Evolution

All theories of evolution teach that life evolves out of a life-and-death struggle in which only the fittest survive. Thus, evolution actually teaches that “might makes right” because whatever survives guarantees the future upward progress of life forms. But this doctrine of “survival of the fittest,” in which “might makes right,” is completely incompatible with the teaching of Scripture known as the Golden Rule: *Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them* (Matthew 7:12; cf. Luke 6:31).

Biblical Idea of Basic Kinds is Inconsistent with Evolution

If evolution is true, then all life forms evolved from a common ancestor. In other words, evolution teaches that change of life forms into different basic kinds of life forms is unlimited, and that this accounts for the “fact” of evolution. Of course, thus far no evidence in either the living world or in the fossil records supports this view. And the Bible record of creation is quite clear and emphatic that God created both plants and animals *after their [its] kind* (Genesis 1:12, 21, 24-25). The point is that if evolution occurred by changes stemming from a common ancestor, there should at least be evidence of that in the fossil record. This record, then, is fully consistent with the Biblical testimony that plants and animals were created *after their kind*, meaning at the very least that there is no indiscriminate crossover between different kinds of animals. As for human beings, Genesis 1:26-27 says that God created them in His own image and that He took personal attention and care in their creation (Genesis 2:7, 21-23).

God’s Sustaining of Creation is Inconsistent with Theistic Evolution

Theistic evolution is closely related to Deism, which is the “watchmaker” concept in which God created the universe and then went off like an absentee landlord to attend to other matters while the watch winds down. Under theistic evolution, God is pictured as not caring very much about His “creation” because He allows it to evolve over millions of years. He may come back every once in a while to make a correction in the evolutionary course, but He is not intimately involved with the world in a personal way or on an ongoing basis.

The Christian Scriptures, on the other hand, portray God as very much involved with His creation in an intimate way. Notice the following brief but powerful descriptions of God sustaining His creation in its every breath of existence:

- *You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth and all things on it, the seas and all that is in them, and you preserve them all (Nehemiah 9:6).*
- *He gives to all life, breath, and all things (Acts 17:25).*
- *He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:27-28).*
- *For by Him all things were created...And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (Colossians 1:16-17).*
- *God...has in these last days spoken to us by His Son,...who [is] upholding all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:1-3).*

Conclusion Regarding Theistic Evolution

In attempting to harmonize evolution with the Judeo-Christian God, theistic evolutionists wind up with even more evidence against them than do atheistic evolutionists. Both groups of evolutionists must maintain their theory in the face of overwhelming scientific evidence against it. However, theistic evolutionists additionally have to face the evidence of Scripture which is contrary to their view. The really sad part of it all is that acceptance of evolution for Christians is so unnecessary. A careful analysis of scientific laws and data, and a closer reexamination of the Scriptures, should reveal to any objective, reasonable searcher for truth that evolution has no support from either source. A Being which is eternal Ultimate Reality is sufficiently powerful to have created the universe through an instantaneous act of fiat creation *ex hilio (out of nothing)*. And the best evidence from nature and Scripture says that He did just that.

Progressive Creation

Progressive creationism is a concept closely related to theistic evolution, and some have apparently adopted it because the name is less offensive to traditional Christian creationists. The idea assumes the general validity of evolutionary theory's long ages of time for the existence of life as we know it today. However, to account for the missing gaps in the fossil record, progressive creation teaches that God sporadically acted in the past to instantaneously create new species and other kinds of plants and animals. In other words, whereas many modern evolutionists have adopted the view

known as punctuated equilibrium, which postulates sudden bursts of great evolutionary change, progressive creationists attribute these significant sudden changes to fiat creation by God.

A reasonable Christian might ask a progressive creationist that if he believes God is capable of fiat creation, then why does he not believe that God made all things in *one* episode of fiat creation in the beginning, as Genesis records. In reality, this notion has most of the problems with Scripture that theistic evolution has. Moreover, it also suggests that God was incapable of planning effectively and creating all things at once, so that He periodically was required to make changes to improve His earlier work. Therefore, despite the more acceptable term, progressive creationism is actually more objectionable from the Biblical point of view than theistic evolution, and it too should be rejected by the Christian.