

Lecture 7: Theistic Evolution

January 29, 2020

Definition – ironically, a genus and species

Genus: Evolution – “descent with modification” (Darwin)

Species: Theistic – God uses evolution to create (alt. Deistic evolution – if inactive after setting up the law)

How? Mainly by natural selection (cf. sexual selection)

Evidence as Witnesses to the Historical Process

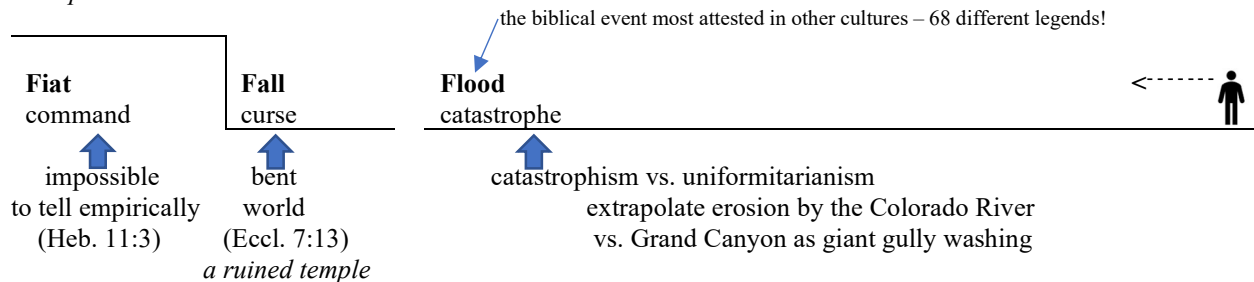
<i>Past Records</i>	<i>Present Processes</i>
Geological Column	Genetics / DNA
Fossil Record	Homology – Anatomical & Molecular
Geographic Distribution	Adaptation

Questions

- Is intraspecies adaptation the same thing as interspecies adaptation?*
Microevolution vs. Macroevolution – unfair distinction? just evolution?
How much correlation is there between anatomical homology and molecular homology?
While there may be 90% agreement between all creatures, what are the differences?
- Are there limits on the possibilities of genetic mutation?*
Only degeneration? New information? Less fit as the species moves from “muttness” to specialization?
- Where are the transitional forms (“missing links”) and the “many” extinct failures?*
While there may be transitional forms within larger groups of horses or dogs, are there bigger jumps?
- How do you explain the Cambrian Explosion?*
Gould & Eldredge: Saltation – all the major phyla are suddenly represented
Stasis – all the major phyla lack directional change → a *saltus* looks like creation
Therefore, *punctuation equilibrium* (the Clark Kent model – isolated and “brief”)...
- Larger Questions of a Greater from a Lesser ~ so counterintuitive!
Eternal Matter? Second Law of Thermodynamics? Something from nothing? Order from disorder?
Origin of Life (abiogenesis)? Origin of Mind? Life from non-life? Personality from impersonality?
cf. Art Hobson; Thomas Nagel, *Mind and Cosmos*; and Schaeffer, *Escape from Reason*, p. 112

Biblical Assessment

Extrapolation ~ Use with caution!



How compatible is theistic evolution with the Bible?

Providence – God uses secondary causation (e.g. Job 1-2) ← very compatible!

Job – God affirms scientific discovery, but uses our science to humble us (fallibilism)

cf. Thomas Kuhn – paradigm shifts ← why wouldn't this 19th-century theory also shift someday?

Ecclesiastes – nature appears cyclical, while the progress of technology in cyclical activity is due to intelligence

Romans

Chapter 8 – creation is cursed (death is not limited to mankind)

Chapter 5 – the moral cause of death

“Just as through one man sin entered into the world, and *death through sin...*” (Romans 5:12).

Death is “normal,” but not natural.

Death is an enemy, not a friend.

If death entered the world due to man, how can man be the result of a long process of evolutionary deaths?