

needs less warmth his color becomes lighter to a more reflecting and less absorbing condition,

Any one of these four designed systems (oil-bird, arctic hare, Egyptian vulture, and chuckwalla) ought to demonstrate the gross inadequacies of the evolution theory. Taken together they form a bastion of evidence favoring creation design and negating evolutionary theories.

### References

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defense systems of the human body, *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, December, pp. 152-154.

<sup>2</sup>Ross, Edward S. 1965. Birds that "see" in the dark with their ears, *The National Geographic Magazine*, February, pp. 282-290.

<sup>3</sup>Page, Lindell H. 1970. Hare for mother's day, *Alaska*, May (back of the front page and page 1).

<sup>4</sup>Baroness Jane Van Laurick Goodall. 1968. Tool-using bird: the Egyptian vulture, *The National Geographic Magazine*, May, pp. 630-641.

<sup>5</sup>Boynton, E. L. 1971. Champion of arid living, the chuckwalla, *Desert Magazine*, June, pp. 12-14.

## IS NATURE CRUEL?

WILLIAM J. TINKLE\*

Much more could be written in the vein of the remarkable harmony in nature, which could have been constructed only by Divine Intelligence. Yet we must admit that it is easier to hold this attitude when skies are fair and the bee is on the clover than when a big, burly wolf pounces upon a rabbit which is exhausted from running in the snow and no longer can dodge.

Alfred Tennyson, the Victorian English poet, was brought up in a Christian home and desired to believe what the Bible states about God. But during his lifetime came the attempt to turn Christian philosophy upside down in the name of biology. Desiring to believe the facts of nature and still keep his Christian faith, the poet was pulled this way and that, as the following lines reveal:

And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,  
Such splendid purpose in his eyes, . . .  
Who trusted God was love indeed,  
And love Creation's final law,—  
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravin, shrieked against his creed,—  
Who loved, who suffered countless ills,  
Who battled for the True, the Just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or sealed within the iron hills?<sup>1</sup>

Many persons have shared this conflict which tore the emotions of the poet for a long time, and we would gain nothing by ignoring this problem. The dinner of one animal results in the end of the trail for another, which seemed as worthy to live as the predator. Then as our thinker pursues his cogitations he comes to the

problem of accident, pain, and loss and he despairs of reconciling them with the love of God.

The food habits of man and animals kill some plants and cause weakening of many plants which are not killed. Much of our food consists of the seeds of plants, and grazing animals devour large portions of the pasture, hopefully without destroying it. When we eat fruits, however, the result is different unless we consume the seeds. (The word *fruit* is used here in the botanical sense, meaning the developed ovary; the vessel which normally contains seeds.)

Fruits are formed with no profit to the plant unless it be as a bait to cause the scattering of the contained seeds. The fruit eater does not harm the plant which sustains him, nor does he steal from its offspring as does the person who consumes milk, butter, and cheese.

### Thoughts on the Original Plan

Every biology student knows that plants are the ultimate source of food for all animals, even the carnivorous animals, for they prey upon the animals which eat plants. Could it be that the original plan was for all animals to eat fruit alone?

Foxes and bears eat some fruit but if they ate no meat we wonder if they would secure enough protein. A lion, along with other carnivores, does not have a large stomach like that of a cow, therefore it would be hard for it to get enough nourishment from low calorie foods such as leaves. Yet a lion's stomach is comparable in size to that of a man, and many a person has lived without meat.

It would be hard to delineate how every kind of animal at present could live without causing the death of anything. Some thoughtful scholars, however, are saying that this was the original plan.<sup>2</sup>

\*William J. Tinkle, Ph.D., is professor emeritus of biology Anderson College in Indiana. He lives in Eaton, Indiana.

Without claiming to have all the answers, I can say that probably the most helpful answer to the problem of evil is that God's original plan was otherwise. Nature originally was not altogether as it is now. That he should be more than a machine or an animal, man was given the power of choice; and using that choice, he fell. While we do not know just how, this fall involved the earth and the other creatures.

Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.<sup>3</sup>

Through changes, the details of which we do not understand, man was brought into contact with plants which did not bear nourishing fruits like those of the trees of the garden of Eden. Some were herbs, containing a little nourishment, while others were troublesome weeds. This condition will be rectified in time:

For the created universe waits with eager expectation for God's sons to be revealed. It was made the victim of frustration, not by its own choice, but because of him who made it so; yet always there was hope, because the universe itself is to be freed from the shackles of mortality and enter upon the liberty and splendour of the children of God. Up to the present, we know, the whole created universe groans in all its parts as if in the pangs of childbirth. Not only so, but even we, . . . are groaning inwardly while we wait for God to make us his sons and set our whole body free.<sup>4</sup>

These two portions of scriptures throw light upon the problem of pain and suffering. Much of it is outside God's original plan and was brought about by man's unfaithfulness. Man, however, is given the promise of restoration of the original condition at some time in the future.

Scientists do not inform us of these matters for their endeavor is based upon occurrences which take place at the present time. For the same reason, scientists cannot deny the record of conditions at the beginning nor prophecies of future conditions. To say that nature is eternally under one set of laws is a matter of faith, without proof. A scientist, like others, should recognize that he needs more than science to get a true and complete view of reality.

### **Pain Is Lessened**

Considering these statements from God's Word, we see that he did not plan that the order of nature should be just as we find it today. Furthermore, pain, even in our fallen world, may not be so great as it seems. The problem of the suffering endured by an innocent victim is not an easy one.

When I was a graduate student, the head of the zoology department, Dr. Raymond Osburn, said that if one tries to find out how much pain an animal suffers he runs into a psychological blind alley. This is true because pain cannot be measured directly but only by the reactions of the animal.

A sensitive person experiences mental agony when he imagines the sharp teeth of a lion piercing the back of an antelope. Yet there is evidence that when an animal is overpowered by another it becomes numb and is conscious of nothing at all.

Bird banding gives evidence at this point. To learn the age and migrations of birds they are trapped, and numbered bands are placed on their legs.

I have noticed that when a bird is taken in the hand it struggles and shows fear, just as one should expect; but when it is held firmly it ceases to struggle and seems numb. While the band is being placed on the leg the captive seems entirely oblivious of what is going on. When the grasp of the hand is released the spell continues for a few seconds until the bird regains consciousness and flies away.

I have had the same experience with frogs and fish. There is good reason to believe that the victim of a predator is unconscious.

We suffer from a small wound and reason that death from a predator would be unbearable. But it is not valid to extrapolate so. A mashed finger has given me excruciating pain but when my arm was broken I had no need for the handful of pain pills which the surgeon gave me.

When animals die of starvation or fish are impounded in a brook which dries up, it may be that they also become numb and unconscious of their plight.

### **Animals Seem Happy**

If we may judge by the actions of wild animals in nature we decide that they are happy.

We have learned much that animals do not know and developed many capacities that they do not have. But they know at least one thing which we seem progressively to be forgetting and they have one capacity which we seem to be allowing to atrophy. To them, joy seems to be more important and more accessible than it is to us.<sup>5</sup>

Birds chirping and flitting about and squirrels exploring to satisfy their curiosity<sup>6</sup> lead us to think that they are happy. At the first unusual sound a bird gives a warning note and all freeze to silence and immobility. But shortly after the suspicious sound ceases the normal scamper and song are resumed. Wild things seem to have no foreboding of future ill.

When I was a boy I found many dead grasshoppers clinging to stalks of grass. I was emotionally moved, saying to myself, "They have clung to these perches to die." Later I could see how naive I had been to think grasshoppers have a foreboding of death, or of anything else.

There has been much discussion as to the motive of birds in singing. Some say the male bird gives notice from the center of his nest area that no other birds should build homes there. Yet sometimes a song sparrow sings in mid-winter when nest building is not the order of the day.

Birds sing more often in spring, just as people feel more joyous in good weather. I agree with Henri Fabre, whom Charles Darwin called "the inimitable observer." Fabre said birds sing to express the joy of living.

In textbooks, animals are described as self-centered beings, doing just the acts which will help them in the struggle for existence. It is true that they must work for themselves but they also do many things out of curiosity. Open a gate in front of a cow and she will go through to see what is on the other side, unless her suspicion has been awakened.

### Conclusions

The questions raised in this paper are not all answered with finality but they are all good topics for observation and discussion. Man has fallen from his original state and in some way has involved nature also. In the struggle among creatures in our present world order there is tragedy, but suffering seems to be mitigated and happiness is evident. The Bible says, "God is love,"<sup>7</sup> and this has not been disproved.

Henry W. Longfellow regarded the natural world as a picture book presented to a naturalist. We quote from his poem on the Birthday of Louis Asassiz:

It was fifty years ago  
In the pleasant month of May,  
In the beautiful Pays de Vaud  
A child in its cradle lay.

And Nature, the old nurse, took  
The child upon her knee,  
Saying; "Here is a story-book  
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,  
"Into regions yet untrod;  
And read what is still unread  
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away and away  
With Nature, the dear old nurse,  
Who sang to him night and day  
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,  
Or his heart began to fail,  
She would sing a more wonderful song,  
Or tell a more marvelous tale.

So she keeps him still a child  
And will not let him go  
Though at times his heart beats wild  
For the beautiful Pays de Vaud.

Though at times he hears in his dreams  
The Ranz des Vaches of old,  
And the rush of mountain streams  
From glaciers clear and cold.

### References

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- <sup>3</sup>Genesis 3:17-18.
- <sup>4</sup>Romans 8:18-23.
- <sup>5</sup>Krutch, Joseph W. 1957. The great chain of life. Houghton-Mifflin, p. 227.
- <sup>6</sup>Clarke, T. A., et al. 1967. *Science*, 157:1381-1389.
- <sup>7</sup>I John 4:8.

## NEW BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

*Creation, Evolution, and God's Word*. Edited by Paul A. Zimmerman. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. \$2.50. 176 pp. p.b.

This excellent book, published previously on a limited scale, has now been rightly fostered by Concordia Publishing House in a handsome paperback edition. Chapter authors include Dr. John Klotz; Prof. Wilbert Rusch, Sr.; Dr. Paul Zimmerman; Prof. Richard Korthals; and Dr. Walter Lammerts.

Creation Research Society readers will recall that this book was originally titled, "Essays from The Creationist Viewpoint," and an extensive

review of the volume appeared in *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, 7(2):128-129. Two passages from that previous review are quoted herewith: "Each article is in keeping with a conservative understanding of Scripture, and each is written by a thoroughly qualified scientist . . . these articles in published form merit wide circulation. The inexpensive presentation coupled with the broad spectrum of article coverage (from philosophy and theology to genetics and geology) make this work a valuable supplemental text for high school and college science courses."