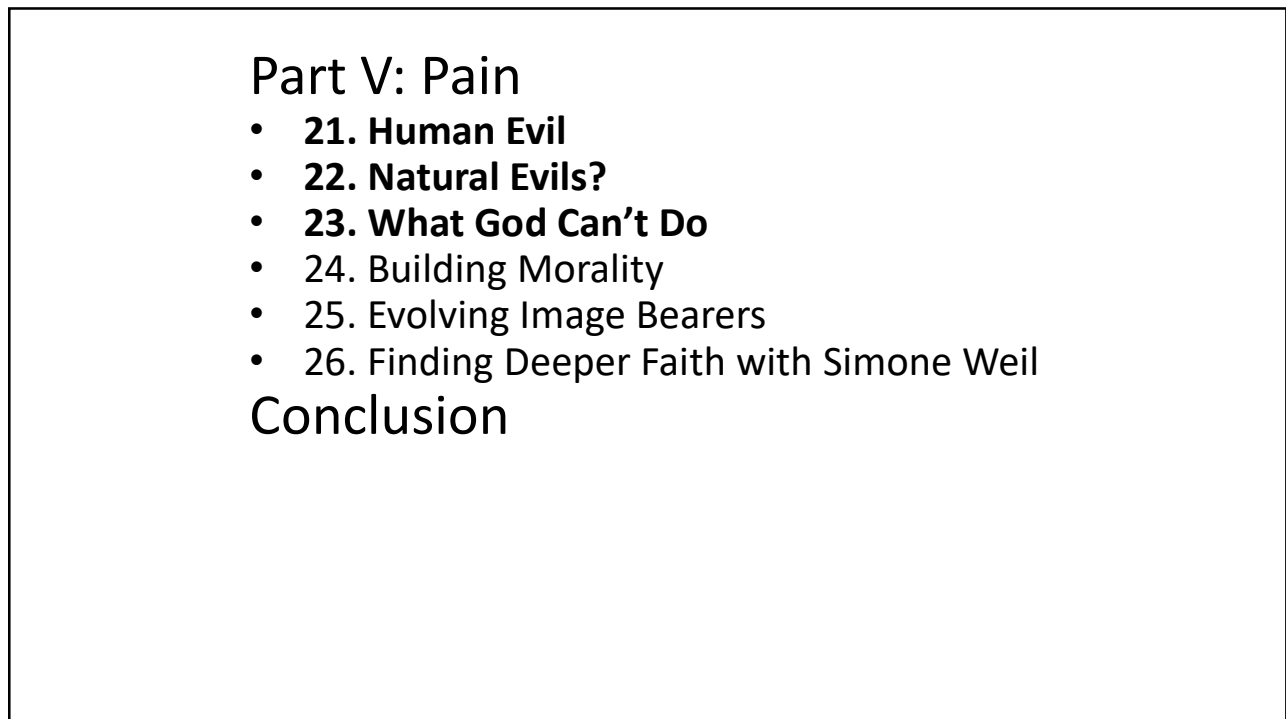


1



2

## Chapter 21: Human Evil

- Discovery of Otzi the Iceman, from Otzal Mtn Range, 1991, 10500 ft elevation, died 5300 years ago at age 46
- coat of goat hide, shoes woven tree fibers, stuffed with hay, hat of bear fur, birch-bark containers, flint dagger, arrows, copper ax
- Recent meals of red deer, ibex, legumes, leafy greens, and berries.
- Clogged arteries, Lyme disease, peptic ulcers, and gingivitis.
- After 10 years and an X-ray, found the arrow head that killed him
- Natural development of humanity through evolution would only ever produce creatures ... interested only in survival and reproduction, no matter the cost to others.

3

- This is a problem for Stump who believes that a loving God created the world and called it good. Does the ancient world that science has uncovered look like the kind of place that was intended by a good God? Or does it look more like the outcome of blind chance and survival of the fittest?
- After Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, his theory was applied to the social world too, resulting in all manner of evils.
- Herbert Spencer coined the phrase "survival of the fittest"
- He thought progress was allowing the fittest to dominate.
- He advocated laissez-faire policies that let powerful people use any means necessary to advance their priorities. Those unfit for that kind of competition should have to suffer the consequences.

4

- Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, claimed nature should inspire the opposite tendencies in a government looking to improve society. Galton is sometimes called the Father of Eugenics, the movement to “improve” the species by regulating which people are allowed to have offspring—which is not Darwin’s natural selection at all, but artificial selection.
- He believed the government should limit the number of offspring undesirables could have to keep them from passing on their inferior qualities—which must be due to genetics rather than to social structures. This was deemed to be a scientific way of improving the human race.

5

- The American Breeders Association was founded in 1903 to “emphasize the value of superior blood and the menace to society of inferior blood.” In 1914 the organization changed its name to the American Genetic Association and published *The Journal of Heredity*.
- These were more than theoretical exercises; they resulted in public policies through which as many as 100,000 people in America were sterilized against their will.
- Charles Darwin himself had complicated views about race.
- Here’s an example from Henry Morris (one of the authors of *The Genesis Flood*): *As the 19th century scientists were converted to evolution, they were thus also convinced of racism.*

6

- *They were certain that the white race was superior to other races, and the reason for this superiority was to be found in Darwinian theory.*
- Note that the science of evolution did not produce racism or eugenics.
- A series of empirical studies was carried out in 2022 to look at the connection between these kinds of attitudes and the acceptance of evolution, and just the opposite was found. The leaders of the study found that “low belief in human evolution was associated with higher levels of prejudice, racist attitudes, and support for discriminatory behaviors against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ), Blacks, and immigrants.”

7

## Chapter 22: Natural Evils?

- Stump thinks it is easier to reconcile the sort of evil caused by morally responsible human agents than it is to reconcile the pain and suffering (whether or not we call it evil) that comes about through natural means.
- “Greater good” theodicy: the world is a better place for having genuinely free and morally responsible people—even if they sometimes cause pain and suffering—than it would be with just a bunch of robots.
- If a house fire was caused by a lightning strike, it is still a tragedy that the family died. It is an example of pain and suffering in the world. But is it evil in the moral sense?

8

- Richard Dawkins describes what he considers are a normal part of the world's operation in *River Out of Eden*: *During the minute it takes me to compose this sentence, thousands of animals are being eaten alive; others are running for their lives, whimpering with fear; others are being slowly devoured from within by rasping parasites; thousands of all kinds are dying of starvation, thirst and disease. It must be so. If there is ever a time of plenty, this very fact will automatically lead to an increase in population until the natural state of starvation and misery is restored.*

9

- Can we reconcile this kind of pain, suffering, and death with a good and loving God by saying a morally responsible agent caused it?
- Some Christian theology says yes: The original sin of Adam and Eve is ultimately responsible for all of the pain, suffering, and death that we find in the world today.
- Before Adam and Eve's sin, these Christians believe, there was nothing bad in the world at all.
- Is the creation really good if it is made to massively deteriorate when two innocent and naive humans disobey.
- Stump proposes a parable (p 204)

10

## Chapter 23: What God Can't Do

- Saint Anselm was a theologian at the end of the eleventh century who developed the Ontological Argument for God's existence.
- (1) God was defined as the best possible being; and
- (2) existence was claimed to be good, so that it is better to exist than not to exist.
- If both of these are correct, then existence is a necessary characteristic of God, because an existing God would be better than an imaginary God.
- God can't not exist.

11

- Stump believes God intended to create morally mature beings like us who could bear the image of God.
- But maybe not even an all-powerful God could create morally mature beings ready-made, as it were.
- Instead, our ancestors had to go through challenging times, choosing for themselves how to respond.
- Moral maturity means you have a record of responding to challenging situations with wisdom and insight. You consistently choose what is good.
- Would God create beings with a fictitious record of responding to challenging situations? Stump doesn't think so. God can't create morally mature persons without their own participation.

12

- How can God create morally mature beings through the random process of evolution?
- Answer: Evolution isn't random.
- Convergent evolution is the phenomenon that the same structures evolve independently from different starting points.
- There are enormous constraints on what can evolve, and this leads to the same things evolving time and time again—from wings, to eyes, to photosynthesis.
- Even the mass extinctions that were often driven by a “random” event like a mega-volcano or meteor strike did not fundamentally alter the trajectory of evolution.

13

- There is clear directionality in how life has developed with respect to cooperation.
- The development of life on Earth has progressed through major transitions, each of which included a substantial increase in the amount of cooperation.
- When we combine the phenomenon of convergent evolution with this clear directionality of increased cooperation, it's hard for me not to see a kind of intentionality there on the part of the Creator. These are the kinds of creatures that God wanted to exist, and it looks like evolution is perfectly capable of bringing them about.

14