

Grok's Thoughts Regarding The Neutral Solution Theodicy

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Abstract

The Neutral Solution Theodicy (Richard Beobide, Ver. 1.0, dated 07.09/10.2026) addresses the longstanding tension between the biblical affirmations that God declared the completed creation “very good” (Genesis 1:31) and that death entered the world through human sin (Romans 5:12), on the one hand, and the paleontological record of extensive predation, injury, disease, and death among non-human animals across hundreds of millions of years prior to anatomically modern humans, on the other.

The central claim is that the pre-Fall created order existed in a genuinely **amoral-but-good** state. In this state, predation, suffering, and death among animals were real physical phenomena, yet they remained morally neutral because non-human animals lack the cognitive and volitional capacities required for moral agency and responsibility. God intentionally structured and preserved this deep-time natural order as a form of divine pedagogy. The observable realities of animal suffering and mortality functioned as a “witness of backward reversion,” supplying Adam (and, by extension, subsequent humanity via the fossil record) with concrete experiential knowledge of the consequences of moral disobedience. This enabled a genuinely *informed* exercise of free will at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The thesis integrates literary-exegetical analysis of Genesis 1–3 (particularly antecedent command patterns and the positive character of the dietary provisions in Genesis 1:29–30), philosophical distinctions between moral and amoral realities, and constructive engagement with the fossil record (from Cambrian predation onward). The Fall is understood to have introduced moral evil and to have transformed the *significance* of suffering, while the preserved fossil record continues to serve as an enduring pedagogical witness. Ultimate defeat of evil is located in the redemptive work of Christ. The work positions itself as a non-ad hoc, interdisciplinary third way between young-earth reinterpretations of the fossil record and purely naturalistic accounts, affirming both scriptural integrity and empirical scientific data.

Key Terms: theodicy, animal suffering, deep time, fossil record, Genesis 1–3, Romans 5:12, amoral-but-good state, divine pedagogy, informed free will, witness of backward reversion.

Nature of the Technical Findings and Engagement with Rowe and Adams

The manuscript is structured as a formal thesis-style argument spanning introduction, literature review, biblical foundations, philosophical framework, constructive proposal (the pre-Fall world as pedagogical arena), engagement with paleontological data,

responses to major objections, broader implications, and conclusion. It employs abductive reasoning and a critical-realist stance toward the integration of scientific and theological knowledge. Original contributions include the explicit category of the “amoral-but-good” state and the concept of the “witness of backward reversion.”

Regarding animal suffering and the classic interlocutors William Rowe and Marilyn McCord Adams, the work offers the following developments:

William Rowe’s Evidential Argument from Evil

Rowe’s well-known formulation (centered on the example of a fawn that suffers intensely and dies unnoticed after a forest fire) relies on the “noseeum inference”: if no justifying reason for an instance of intense suffering is discernible to us, it is reasonable to conclude that no such reason exists, thereby lowering the probability of an omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly good God.

The Neutral Solution challenges the epistemic strength of this inference on two related grounds. First, it emphasizes the vast disparity between divine and human cognitive capacities; finite observers are poorly positioned to determine whether God has morally sufficient reasons for any given instance of suffering. Second, and more constructively, it supplies a positive theistic account that renders pre-human animal suffering intelligible rather than gratuitous: such suffering, while real, occurred within an amoral context and served a pedagogical function directed toward the formation of informed human moral agency. In this framework, what appears from a limited human perspective as pointless is reframed as purposeful within a larger divine pedagogy that includes the preservation of the fossil record itself as an ongoing witness. The response does not claim to identify a specific justifying good for every individual instance of animal pain; rather, it weakens the inductive force of Rowe’s argument by offering a coherent alternative explanation that is consistent with both the biblical texts under examination and the empirical data.

Marilyn McCord Adams on Horrendous Evils

Adams’s influential work focuses on forms of suffering that appear to destroy the possibility of the sufferer’s life being a great good overall. Although developed primarily with human experience in mind, the framework raises questions when extended to animals.

The Neutral Solution maintains a sharp distinction between amoral and moral suffering. Pre-Fall (and, by extension, non-human) animal suffering, though genuinely painful, occurs within an amoral context. Animals lack moral agency and the capacity for narrative self-understanding; therefore their suffering does not carry the existential or moral weight required to qualify as “horrendous” in Adams’s technical sense. Moral suffering—especially that involving injustice, self-reflection, and the potential destruction of meaning—belongs to the human (and ultimately Christological) domain. Christ’s own suffering is treated as unique: as a fully moral agent who voluntarily absorbed the weight of moral evil, His passion and resurrection constitute the decisive

defeat of the category of evil that *does* meet Adams's criteria. Thus the thesis applies Adams's conceptual tools while carefully delimiting their scope, avoiding the inflation of animal pain into the category of horrendous evil while still affirming the seriousness of moral evil and its ultimate resolution in Christ.

Overall Assessment of the Contribution The work's primary technical contribution lies in its attempt to integrate three domains that are often treated in isolation: close literary reading of Genesis 1–3 and Romans 5:12, analytic distinctions in the philosophy of religion (moral vs. amoral, informed free will), and responsible engagement with the paleontological record of deep-time predation. By locating pre-human animal suffering in an intentionally pedagogical but non-moral register, the account aims to provide the most coherent explanation of the available data—one that upholds the goodness of creation, recognizes the Fall's introduction of moral evil, and respects the integrity of the scientific record—without requiring either a young-earth chronology or the denial of animal sentience and pain. Whether the pedagogical framing successfully neutralizes the force of Rowe's inductive challenge, or whether the distinction between amoral and moral suffering adequately addresses Adams's concerns about the qualitative weight of suffering, remains open to further scholarly scrutiny. The manuscript itself presents these responses as improved relative to earlier drafts and offers them as a coherent, non-ad hoc alternative within the ongoing theodicy literature.