

Plant Self-Defense

Every day, all over the earth, plants engage in chemical warfare against insects and animals that would eat them. When this drama is described by evolutionary scientists, they usually talk about plants as though the plants were skilled chemists who developed their abilities on their own.

For example, the leaves of the oak tree contain tannins. Tannins form complexes with proteins so that, when eaten, they have little nutritional value. An evolutionary account of how this arrangement came about describes how the trees supposedly developed this strategy for self-defense. Stories like this make one wonder how oak trees gained so much knowledge about animal digestion and chemistry. Some species of milkweed and dogbane produce powerful muscle relaxants that can be fatal to humans.

One might picture, in the far distant past, white-smocked milkweeds working in the chemistry lab. Other “doctor” milk-weeds are feeding various concoctions to humans in cages to test their responses. When one tries to account for this without a Creator, the picture can become silly.

The Bible provides an answer that makes a great deal more sense. In Job 38 and 39, the Lord—the Creator—asks Job about dozens of aspects of the creation. In His questioning, He asks Job about the source of the knowledge and abilities found in living things. The answer, of course, is that the creating God, and no one else, designed, built, and taught the creation. Other answers simply can’t satisfy.

Job 38:4

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.”

Prayer: Father, remind me that You are the source of all true knowledge and wisdom in the world, especially when I am tempted to follow human wisdom. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.