

After Eden – Chapter 9 Cursed Is The Ground



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First Published 15 August 2005
Answers In Creation Website
www.answersincreation.org/after_eden_9.htm

In this chapter Morris examines the curse of creation itself.

Where Do Death, Pain, and Suffering Come From? (Page 139)

My first response to this question would be, "From reading young earth creationist material." However, I'm sure that's not what the author is talking about...however true that may be. My only point of contention in this section is Morris' claim that death extended to the animal kingdom as a result of Adam's sin. I'm assuming then, that since Morris believed they were eternal, that they were allowed to eat from the Tree of Life along with Adam and Eve. If Adam and Eve had to eat of the Tree of Life (which they were permitted to do) to live forever, then it only stands to reason the animals did too.

Cursed Is the Ground For Your Sake (Page 140)

The Bible says that the ground will yield thorns and thistles. Many young earth creationists, including Morris' father, Henry Morris, claim that there were no thorns or thistles prior to the curse. However, they must have existed...otherwise God would be creating new plants after his creation period ended. We both agree that creation ended at the end of Day Six. To get around this, they may claim the plants mutated, with a dormant feature that God programmed into them now becoming dominant. Nice slight-of-hand trick, but now plants are "evolving."

In the middle of page 141, he attacks evolution with the claim that "The Bible teaches, and science confirms, that time and chance destroy order." Evolutionist research now claims that order increases with time, but we still have the "Bible teaches" part. This comes from the creation being corrupt and subject to change via entropy and the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Being a "young earth" interpretation, this presents no problems from an old earth perspective. Overall, I'll leave this one to the Theistic Evolutionists to iron out, although I see no problems.

The only other important issue is God replacing the old earth with a new earth. He says if the old earth of death and decay is "very good," then why would God need to replace it. God says there will be a new earth, and science confirms that our present world cannot last forever, therefore there is no need to doubt God. One could turn this around...since science shows that our world cannot continue indefinitely (the sun will not last forever), then God's creation was not perfect as young earth creationists say.

What Is Death (Page 142)

The first part of this looks promising. He addresses Genesis 2:17, where God tells Adam that "in the day that you eat of the tree you shall die." Morris admits that a simple reading looks like they should have dropped dead right there. I fully expected for him to come back to this and explain it away somehow, but he did not. He moved onto other facets of death, and never came back to it. It just goes to show that the young earth creationists do not have a valid answer for this straightforward verse. Aside from this, nothing else is important for this review.

Physical Death is the Result of God's Judgment (Page 145)

In a discussion about long life spans, he makes the claim that "the scientific mystery today is not how did the patriarchs live so long, but why do we die so young?" Funny, I've never seen this so-called scientific mystery before!

Yes, physical death is a result of God's judgment, but we have a different view. Man was eternal in the Garden, with access to the Tree of Life. What changed after the Fall is that man no longer had access to the Tree of Life. Nothing physical, either genetically or otherwise, changed with man's sin. It was the Tree that made him eternal, not his physical makeup.

What Is Life? (Page 145)

No problems with this section.

Do Plants Have Biblical Life? (Page 147)

Two points of contention here. First, he claims that plants do not have biblical life, or *chayah nephesh*, using the terms he uses in Hebrew for when God created animal life. We are talking here about young earth interpretations of life, and thus they have this "chayah nephesh" rule created to support their position. It may or may not be a valid point on their part.

Second, Dr. Hugh Ross of Reasons to Believe has argued that plants did experience death, and this shows there was death before the Fall. Young earth creationists accept that there was plant death, but say it's not the same due to their rule mentioned above. What do I say? Who cares? I don't need plant death to show there was death before the fall...the fossil record does an adequate job of that.

A more important issue, which Morris brings up, is the statement "An apple left uneaten on Eden's ground would decay." It is a young earth admission that decay is a part of the creation, even in Eden. In order to decay, you need microorganisms, which break down the apple. With microorganisms in the Garden, Adam and Eve were sure to have consumed, and killed some, that were on the plants that they ate. Hence, you have death of an organism, not a plant, proving that there was death of a "chayah nephesh" creation in the Garden, and thus, death before the Fall. Thank you, Mr. Morris, for confirming this for us.

Creation Is Subject to the Bondage of Decay (Page 148)

Morris says "The decay of uneaten fruit or of leaves falling in autumn would be part of the biogeochemical recycling system that God could easily call very good." This could easily include dead animals, which also contributed to the recycling system. There is no reason this could not be "very good." There is no need for elevating animals to the status of humans...humans are special creations, in the image of God...animals are animals, not worthy of the same status we enjoy. The pre-fall death of an animal is insignificant in the big picture.

In the middle of page 149, he argues against evolution, saying that change through time is ultimately a downward regressive corruption. It always tends towards disorder. Evolutionists will debate this now, as models now show that the process of mutations will yield increasing complexity. Evolutionary theory has come a long way!

For further discussions on the Second Law of Thermodynamics and Entropy, and on how they are misused by young earth creationists, see

<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/thermo.html>.

Morris says on the bottom of page 150, "...the second law could play a directive role in God's very good creation, its negative effects only manifest after the ground was cursed following Adam's sin." Isn't it interesting that Morris divides the second law, using part of it before the Fall (because he must explain plant death), and only applying its negative effects after the Fall. Either God created the Second Law or He didn't. It's not an issue of picking and choosing the features of the law that benefits you. Scientific laws are laws, put in place by God. It stretches the imagination to say God only created half the law, and then the other half after the Fall.

Again, he argues against evolution, with the claim mutations lead to disorder. Some research now shows the opposite, that the spontaneous production of order from disorder is the expected consequence of basic laws. For more, see

<http://www.entropy.com/thermoevolution10.html>.

He briefly refers to comets, and how they burn up. Of course, new comets emerge, coming from the Kuiper-Oort region just outside our solar system. He mentions stars that age and explode...but he doesn't mention that new stars form today.

He makes the blind claim that we must ignore the second law in order for our progressive creation to work. Nothing could be further from the truth. He continues to show his lack of understanding of progressive creationism, and the second law.

The Creator Must Now Conquer Death (Page 152)

There is nothing significant in this section for the age of the earth debate. Morris slips into some emotional arguments which are typical of the book. He effectively uses leading questions, such as "Why would people want to deny the Creator's words?" and builds upon it with question after question. The young earth reader will no doubt be convinced with this piling on of emotions, but we need not concern ourselves with such amateur tactics. As old earth creationists, our arguments are built on facts, not emotions.