

CRITIQUE OF PROGRESSIVE CREATIONISM -- Part 2

Critique of Progressive Creationism -- Part 1 showed that (1) the days of creation were literal; (2) Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 do not imply figurative days of creation; (3) the concept of literal creation days is an old teaching, not a new one originating "just a couple of centuries ago" (Ross, 2004, p. 20); (4) early church fathers such as Augustine did not consistently allegorize the days of creation and often taught that they were literal; (5) there are no gaps in biblical genealogies, so the insertion of extra time into chronology is invalid; (6) the super-precise Ussher/Lightfoot timing of the earth's creation at 9:00 am, October 23, 4004 BC, is a fabrication; and (7) Ussher-like dates for creation are biblically and scientifically warranted.

Part 1 ended with statements of astronomers John Eddy and George Ellis, both believers in conventional chronology, that proof of an old universe is lacking and that its true age could be 6000 years (Kazmann, 1978, 18; Ellis, 1975, p. 346). Atheist astronomer Duncan Steele (2000, pp. 111, 135, 40) notes: "Many disparate civilizations have ... assumed beginnings of time occurring a few thousand years B.C.," specifically, "within a few centuries of 4000 B.C."

As *Part 1* pointed out, Hugh Ross is presently the key advocate of progressive creationism. *Part 2* therefore responds to additional claims of progressive creationism as enunciated by Ross (2004, p. 20).

10. ROSS RELEGATES GENESIS 1 TO FIGURATIVE, ALLEGORICAL, POETIC STATUS.

Liberals have long maintained that "Genesis is essentially a folk literature" and that Genesis 1-11 are "imaginative stories" which must be understood as "parables" (Gibson, 1981, pp. 2, 11). Though "these chapters have always been in the centre of controversy about the Bible ... [t]he old bitter controversy between science and religion is ... hopefully on the way to becoming a thing of the past" (Gibson, 1981, pp. 2, 10).

The controversy is waning because "There must be very few who would today seriously contend that the world came into being in six days," and instead, "We are admitting that science is the proper source to turn to for factual knowledge about the physical origin and nature of the universe" (Gibson, 1981, pp. 9, 11). Since human interpretations of science must be true, according to Gibson (1981, p. 13), "Genesis 1-11 (and a number of other passages dealing with the same subject of creation) [are not] based on things that actually happened."

Ross is aware that the controversy is not waning and he fuels it by using trigger words describing it as a "hurricane" which is "currently raging," causing "division and hostility" (Ross, 2004, pp. 15, 67, 71).

He acknowledges that Gallup polls since 1982 have consistently revealed that about half the American public believes in "a 10,000-year-old creation date" (Ross, 2004, pp. 34-35). Ross' (2004, pp. 82, 119) position is that "For six days (the fossil record eras) God created new life forms" and that "the theological underpinnings of a young-earth creation

scenario are untenable." He bemoans churches and schools which allow "only one position on the creation-day controversy" (Ross, 2004, p. 68). He describes himself as being in the "conservative evangelical" camp, and claims a desire to see the controversy "graciously quelled" with a "peaceful resolution" (Ross, 2004, pp. 135, 239, 247).

To Ross, however, resolution means (1) accepting evolutionary interpretations of scientific data (Ross, 2004, pp. 49, 213) as enunciated by "evangelical theologians" who are "esteemed" and "distinguished" scholars (Ross, 2004, pp. 242, 243, 244), and (2) positioning the Bible in a place of non-authority over such interpretations (Ross, 2004, p. 57, 62, 88).

By failing to acknowledge the Bible's authority over human interpretations of scientific data, Ross is driven to the liberals' position of forcing Genesis 1 into a strait jacket of human reasoning, thus allegorizing the creation days and rendering Genesis 1 little more than poetry which "[emphasizes] most strongly the who of creation" (Ross, 2004, p. 18). Ross echoes the position of framework theorist B.K. Waltke (1988, p. 45), and also the liberal position that Genesis 1 did not "actually" happen as written (Gibson, 1981, p. 13).

Ross (1994, p. 60) claims that he is not taking Genesis 1 to be figurative, but this claim is hollow. To Ross, God is speaking in the language of appearances, "anthropomorphically," for an ancient people ignorant of the teachings of modern science (Ross, 2004, p. 159). But genuine anthropomorphisms involve a body motion or body part picturing God's senses or actions, and "never take the form of anything like a weekday" (Kulikovsky, 2002, p. 40; Young, 1964, p. 58).

Even if Genesis 1 were poetry, "in the ancient world, devoid of printing, without paper for note-taking or on which to type lectures, the trained memory was of vital importance" (Yates, 1966, p. 4). A poetic syntax was an aid to memorizing concrete content.

Archeologist W.A. Albright (1957, p. 66) emphasized that "the verse form is much better adapted for oral transmission than is any kind of prose. The ease with which children learn poetry is well known; lists and recipes were formerly put into verse for mnemotechnic purposes." Thus we cannot truly say that a poetic syntax in Genesis 1 means that it did not convey the factual information intended by the context of its words.

Further, Genesis 1 is not actually poetry after all. The first poetic passage in Scripture is Genesis 4:23, sometimes called "The Song of the Sword" (Pfeiffer, 1958, p. 27; Sarfati, 2004, p. 95). Echoing Aalders, an early opponent of the framework hypothesis, Surburg (1959, p. 64) asks, "Would the account of Gen. 1 lead the ordinary reader to suspect that the order of created events recorded were not historical?"

Also echoing Aalders, Young (1964, p. 47), answers that in Genesis 1, "there is not a single allusion to suggest that the days are to be regarded as a form or mere manner of representation ..." Neither does the inclusion of repetitive phrases in Genesis 1 make it poetry. In the KJV, the phrase "the evening and the morning" and "God saw that it was good"

each appear five times, "but repetition is not a necessary component of Hebrew poetry. Repetition is actually more of a characteristic of Biblical Hebrew prose" (**Shackleford et al., p. 303**), but is sometimes confused with parallelism. "[I]f Genesis were truly poetic, it would use parallelisms throughout," but it does not (**Sarfati, 2004, p. 95**).

Thus Genesis 1 is a prose or narrative style which is "a positive record of things as they actually transpired" (**Leupold, 1949, p. 25; Kulikovsky, 2001, p. 242**). Other Scriptures and Jesus Himself cite Genesis 1 as history (e.g., Ex. 20:9-11, 31:17, Ps. 8, 104, Matt. 19:4-6, Lk. 3:38, 2 Pet. 3:5, Heb. 4:4).

If the only purpose of Genesis 1 were to teach *who* created, then the first verse would be sufficient (**Davis, 1975, pp. 74-75**). Summing up, "[I]t is often wrongly stated that Genesis 1 tells us *who* created the universe but not *how* it was done -- an obvious slighting of the phrase repeated ten times, 'and God said'..." (**Kaizer, 1980, p. 147**).

Conclusion: Genesis 1 is history, not anthropomorphic, allegorical, figurative or poetic. It tells us over what time period God created.

11. ROSS CLAIMS THAT TOO MUCH HAPPENED ON DAY SIX FOR IT TO BE LITERAL.

On Day 6 according to **Ross (2004, p. 80)**, (1) "God planted a garden in Eden"; (2) the trees grew, or as **Fischer (2003, p. 224)** elaborates, "the garden grew and matured to the extent that the seed which God planted became trees bearing edible fruit"; (3) Adam received "instructions from God" about caring for the Garden; (4) Adam "worked and cared for the Garden of Eden"; (5) Adam "carried out his assignment from God to name all the animals," which included according to **Fischer (2003, p. 224)** "all the world's thousands and thousands of animal species," and which according to **Archer (1982, p. 60)** "must have taken a good deal of study for Adam to examine each specimen and decide on an appropriate name"; (6) "God put Adam into a deep sleep [and] performed an operation" to create Eve, after which Adam exclaimed "now at length" he had found a help meet for him, i.e., "after a long wait or lengthy search" (**Fischer, 2003, p. 224**); (7) Adam "[learned] how to relate to Eve"; (8) "Adam and Eve [received] instructions from God for managing plants, animals, and other of Earth's resources"; and (9) "Adam and Eve learned how to manage Earth's resources."

Ross concludes that Day 6 must have covered "many weeks', months', or even years' worth of activities." **Archer (1982, p. 60)** concurs that just the "comprehensive inventory of all the birds, beasts, and insects that populated the Garden of Eden" would have required "some years, or, at the very least, a considerable number of months."

If the best that Ross and Archer can do is to stretch Day 6 into a few months or years, this is hardly warrant for further expanding Day 6, or any other creation day, into millions of years of geologic ages as **Ross (2004, p. 82)** does elsewhere. Even Ross' and Archer's expanded Day 6 leaves no room for conventional chronology. Further, the presumption of

excessive time to fulfill each of the nine events listed above is faulty, as we will now see.

Event #1. When God "planted a garden" (Genesis 2:8), He did so by instantaneous fiat as with nearly every other action in the Creation Week. The only Divine acts of creation which were not instantaneous were the creation of Adam from the "dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7), and the creation of Eve from Adam's rib (Genesis 2:21-22).

Event #2. Genesis 2:9 says that God made "to grow every tree" in the Garden, but not that trees grew from seed over a period of years. If this is what happened, why does the text imply that God planted trees, not seeds? "Actually there is nothing to suggest that the Hebrew can't simply mean that the trees were created as growing, as long as they were still mature enough to produce seeds" (**Sarfati, 2004, p. 89**).

Event #3. The Bible does not say that God gave Adam instructions about caring for the Garden; Genesis 2:15 says that God "put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it." This is not an action that would take hours, days, or weeks, let alone months or years.

Event #4. Genesis 2:15 states merely that Adam was supposed to dress and keep the Garden of Eden, not that he actually did so on Day 6. Thus work and care for the Garden occupied no time on Day 6.

Event #5. Adam did not name all the animals, only cattle, fowl, and beasts (Genesis 2:20). He did not name insects, as Archer claims, or marine creatures. Even granting that Adam named species as presently understood, omitting insects deletes most animal species from Adam's list. Archer acknowledges that only "many hundreds of species must have been involved" (**Archer, 1984, p. 326**).

Further, Adam spent no time at all building up a "comprehensive inventory" of animals to be named, for God brought the creatures to Adam (Genesis 2:19). Finally, the "species" concept is a modern invention. Genesis 1 and 2 refer to "kinds" (Hebrew *min*), basic types from which all modern species and varieties are descended. The number of kinds brought to Adam may have been quite small, requiring a few hours to name.

Event #6. To create Eve, God put Adam into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs, closed up Adam's flesh, and made Eve from the rib (Genesis 2:21-22). Supposing that this sequence required several hours, we have together with Adam's naming of the animals a span of time typical of an average working day. On the other hand, the absence of any miracle of healing in Scripture requiring even this long suggests a time span less than hours.

In the KJV Adam's exclamation about Eve in Genesis 2:23 is rendered, "This *is* now bone of my bones ..." This suggests immediate sequence, but Ross contends that the rendering should be, "This is now *at length* bone of my bones

..., " implying a long interval between Adam's creation and that of Eve, during which Adam named the animals, gradually realizing that there was not a "help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18). However, 2 Timothy 2:13 states, "For Adam was first formed, then (Greek *eita*) Eve." In the New Testament *eita* signifies one action soon following another, a conclusion evident from verses in which *eita* appears such as Jn. 13:15, 19:26-27, 20:27, Mk. 4:15, 8:25, Lk. 8:12, Jas. 1:14-15.

Event #7. Genesis 2:23-25 does not say that Adam learned "how to relate to Eve." Like Event #4 above, this was really a non-event.

Event #8. God's instructions to Adam and Eve about earth stewardship were simple, occupying only three verses of text (Genesis 1:28-30). Only a few minutes would suffice for these instructions.

Event #9. The Bible nowhere says that "Adam and Eve learned how to manage Earth's resources" on Day 6. Indeed, this is an on-going human activity which continues to this day.

Conclusion: Besides inflating the time required for Day 6 events, Ross envisions supposed Day 6 events which according to the Bible never really happened. The real events of Day 6 occupied a typical working day, and probably less, and so pose no challenge to Day 6 being a literal day.

12. ROSS CLAIMS THAT DAY SEVEN IS STILL CONTINUING SO IS NOT LITERAL.

Ross (2004, p. 81) states: "While each of the first six creation days is marked by a beginning ("morning") and an ending ("evening"), no such boundaries are assigned to the seventh creation day, neither in Genesis 1 and 2 nor anywhere else in the Bible."

According to Ross, a seventh day that is at least several millennia and possibly eternal means that the first six days must also have been indefinite intervals (**Ross, 2004, pp. 81-82; Ross, 1994, pp. 60, 146; Kline, 1996, p. 10**). But even if Day 7 could be shown to be extremely long, this "would say absolutely nothing about the length of the other six days" (**Thompson, 2000, p. 215**), for Ross himself in his words just quoted puts Day 7 in a category separate from the other six days.

Critique of Progressive Creationism -- Part 1 shows that *yom* signifies literal creation days in the context of Genesis 1, so Day 7 being one of these days was also literal. Absurdities follow from believing in a seventh day possibly millions of years long: (1) Adam, created on Day 6, would now be millions of years old (**Woods, 1976, p. 18**); and (2) "the seventh day which God blessed and sanctified [Genesis 2:3] would have been cursed when God cursed the world and cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden" (**Whitcomb, 1973, p. 64**), an event which the word "now" in Genesis 3:1 indicates clearly happened only later.

Ross (2004, p. 80) claims that "Hebrews 4:1-11 draws from Psalm 95:11 to signify that God's day of rest (day seven) continues." However, "Hebrews 4 never says that the *seventh*

day of creation is continuing to the present; it merely says that God's *rest* is continuing. If someone says on Monday that he rested on Saturday and is still resting, it in no way implies that Saturday lasted until Monday" (**Sarfati, 2004, p. 83**). Further, the term for "rest" in Psalm 95:11 and in Hebrews 4:5 has nothing to do with a time interval but with a *location* for rest:

"The Hebrew word used by David for 'rest' was 'menuwchuh' which is a general term for rest which has a special locational emphasis (e.g., 'the resting place or abode of resting'). ... This concept is echoed by the author of Hebrews who uses the Greek word 'katapausis' which may also refer to an abode or location of resting" (**van Bebbler and Taylor, 1995, p. 72**).

Ross (2004, p. 80) focuses on Hebrews 4:8-9, especially verse 9, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the children of God," and infers by linkage with Hebrews 4:4 and Psalm 95:11 that Day 7 is continuing. But the Greek construction of Hebrews 4:9 disallows that this verse is a reference to Day 7 in the present. It is a reference to a future day of rest, Greek *sabbatismos*.

The author "uses 'Sabbatismos' without an article (like saying *a* Sabbath, rather than *the* Sabbath). In Greek, this grammatical structure would generally represent the character of Day Seven, *without really being Day Seven*" (**van Bebbler and Taylor, 1995, p. 73**). Even as God rested on Day 7 when His physical creation was complete, so the church, now being built as "new creations" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NKJV) are added at conversion, will rest when the body of Christ is complete. This is the meaning of Hebrews 4:9.

Ross (2004, p. 82) also claims John 5:16-18 as "[s]upporting evidence for the seventh day as an ongoing rest period ..." But John 5:17 refers to Christ's present redemptive work, not His past work of physical creation.

Conclusion: Day 7 was a literal day like the other six days of creation.

13. ROSS CLAIMS THAT THERE WAS DEATH BEFORE THE FALL.

Ross (2004, p. 103) believes that "[t]he 3.8 billion years of plant and animal death and extinction that preceded humanity" require that death preceded the Fall. He recognizes that "God could have done things differently" (**Ross, 1994, pp. 63-64**), creating a death-free pre-Fall world, but the fossil record negates this possibility.

The ghastly aspect of slaughterhouses and the somber atmosphere of funerals have demonstrated through the ages the terror of the sin which brought death into the physical creation. **Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1966, p. 9)** once observed, "Many people seem to think that the sole theme of the Bible is that of man's personal relationship to God. Of course that is one of the central themes [but not] the only theme. ... Ultimately the main message of the Bible concerns the condition of the entire world and its destiny; you and I as individuals are part of that larger whole."

Ross (2004, pp. 104-105) ignores this by insisting that the entrance of physical death into the creation at the Fall is unrelated to the need for redemption. The physical suffering of Christ on the cross shows that there is a relation between the two. The shedding of His blood was necessary for the remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22), but He also allowed Himself to be abused and tortured, thus showing that the Fall was physical as well as spiritual. The following discussion focuses on the fact that death truly is evil and did not exist physically or spiritually before the Fall.

When God finished His creation (Genesis 1:31, 2:1), "there was no actual evil. In fact, evil is not a 'thing' *in itself*, even though it is real. Rather, evil is the privation of some good ... Murder is the removal of a good human life. ... Good is fundamental and can exist in itself; evil cannot exist in itself. ... [A] wound cannot exist without a body, and the very concept of a wound presupposes the concept of a healthy body. ... [S]ince evil is not a thing, God did not create evil" (Sarfati, 2004, p. 197). Death, whether physical or spiritual, is the cessation of life which is good, so is evil.

Paul calls death "the last enemy" (1 Corinthians 15:26). Death before the Fall would mean that "the 'last enemy' was part of God's 'very good' creation," a logical absurdity (Sarfati, 2004, p. 201). Revelation 21:4 says that the new creation will have no more death, because there is "no more curse" (Revelation 22:3), showing that death entered the world with the curse pronounced in Genesis 3:17-19. When "Jesus wept" at the death of Lazarus (John 11:35), He responded to death as an evil, not as a good thing.

Since Ross needs billions of years of death and extinction to accommodate the conventional interpretation of the fossil record, he claims that the words "good" (Hebrew *tov*) and "very good" (*tov me'od*) in Genesis 1 do not signify a death-free pre-Fall world unlike the present one (Ross, 2004, p. 104).

In passages after Genesis 1 (e.g., Gen. 24:16, Num. 14:7, Judges 18:9, 2 Sam. 11:2, 1 Ki. 1:6, Jer. 24:2-3), *me'od tov* signifies superlative beauty or wonder, but not absolute perfection. It is "unwarranted expansion of an expanded semantic field" (Carson, 1996, p. 60), however, to insist on this meaning in Genesis 1.

The five-fold description of God's creation as "good," and after the sixth day as "very good," shows that consistent with the character of the Creator there was yet no evil in the world. "By the application of the term 'good' to everything that God made, and the repetition of the word with the emphasis 'very' at the close of the whole creation, the existence of anything evil in the creation of God is absolutely denied ..." (Keil and Delitzsch, 1949, p. 67). Being absolutely good, God cannot create evil, so no physical death existed in Genesis 1 and 2.

Another Hebrew word, *tamim*, translated "perfect" or "without blemish," is used in Genesis 6:9 to describe the "completeness and moral integrity, not sinless perfection," of Noah, a fallen man. The related Hebrew word *tam* is used of Job, also a fallen man (Sarfati, 2004, p. 196). Neither word is suitable in Genesis 1 which describes a world which evil had not yet

entered. Thus the lack of *ta'am* or *tam* in Genesis 1 does not weaken the meaning of *tov* and *tov me'od* in Genesis 1.

The curse itself (Genesis 3:19) brought physical consequences ("sweat," implying arduous physical labor) and physical death ("to dust you shall return"), not just spiritual death. After Adam's sin, access to the Tree of Life, which prevented physical death, was banned (Genesis 3:22). "Since God's will cannot be thwarted, even by the Fall (which He foreknew), the tree's [life-preserving] property would need to be true even after the Fall" (Sarfati, 2004, p. 202). Access will be restored in the new creation when physical death is no more (Revelation 22:2).

Ross argues that New Testament verses linking death and the Fall refer only to human spiritual death, thereby allowing billions of years of physical death and extinction in the putative pre-Adamic world, including the death of "pre-human primate species" such as Neandertal man (Ross, 2004, p. 225).

According to Ross (1994, p. 60), "Death through sin is not equivalent to physical death." Echoing Ross, Fischer (2003, p. 225) claims, "... the Bible tells us ... who or what is affected by Adam's sin -- humans, not animals." To strengthen this case, Ross links Romans 5:12 with 1 Corinthians 15:21, which he says "also must refer to spiritual death rather than to physical death" (Ross, 1994, p. 61). Sarfati (2004, p.202) comments: "[T]his is amazing, since the whole of 1 Corinthians 15 is about the bodily (*physical*) resurrection of Christ, who was *physically* dead."

Ross also argues that the phrase "the whole creation" (Greek *pasa he ktisis*) in Romans 8:22 means only humans (Ross, 1994, p. 65), so only mankind was affected by the Curse. Arndt and Gingerich (1957, p. 457), however, state that *ktisis* signifies "the whole creation below the human level ... animate and inanimate"; old earther Hodge (1864, pp. 269-270) concurred. To Foerster (1965, p. 1031), *ktisis* is "the whole of creation." Thus all the creation was cursed, along with man who was cursed spiritually and physically.

Conclusion: There was no evil in the world until Eve and Adam's sin, and physical death is evil. Thus physical death entered the world because of the Fall.

14. ROSS CLAIMS THAT THE PRE-FALL WORLD WAS HARSH AND CRUEL.

Ross (2004, p. 108) states, "In Genesis 3:16, God says to Eve, 'I will greatly increase ... your pains in childbearing.' He does not say 'introduce'; He says 'increase' or 'multiply,' implying that pain already existed." Since physical pain existed in the pre-Fall world, the Curse did not introduce pain, and by implication, physical death was not introduced either. The only remaining change for the Curse to bring in was human spiritual death, according to Ross.

Even in the initial sinless state of the creation, however, some pain was good. Pain prevents a person's losing fingers by fire or by handling searing hot objects. Lepers lose

body parts because they lack the normal sense of pain (**Brand and Yancey, 1980, p. 37**). A sense of pain can save a person from death. Indeed, after President McKinley was shot in 1901, he developed internal gangrene, but the absence of pain deluded physicians into believing he was healing almost up to the day of his death (**Olcott, 1916, pp. 322-323**).

Thus the existence of some protective pain in the pre-Fall world is consistent with the absence of physical death then.

Further, it cannot be ruled out that pain sensation may not have been as unpleasant before the Fall as after.

Ross (2004, p. 108) also asserts that there was hard physical labor before the Fall, again implying that the Fall introduced only human spiritual death: "Likewise, to Adam, God explains that henceforth he will work *harder* (Genesis 2:15; 3:17-19)."

We saw above that Genesis 3:19 did in fact introduce a harshness to labor not existing before the Fall. Further, Ross erroneously references Genesis 2:15 as indicating man would work harder after the Fall. This verse is about pre-Fall life and says nothing at all about man working hard.

Finally, Genesis 1:28 has also been used as supposed evidence that the pre-Fall world was physically harsh and cruel, leaving the Curse without effect except spiritually in man. This argument centers on the words "subdue" (Hebrew *kabash*) and "dominion" (*radah*).

Whether *kabash* signifies constructive or destructive control depends on context. In Micah 7:19, God "subdues" our sins, a compassionate control. This meaning is consistent with the use of *kabash* in Genesis 1:28 when evil had not entered the world. Likewise, *radah* can have a positive or negative connotation. Leviticus 25:43-46 condemns harsh, cruel dominion, but 1 Kings 4:24-25 says that Solomon's dominion brought peace and safety, a positive connotation consistent with the sinless context of Genesis 1:28. Ironically, accommodationists using Genesis 1:28 to minimize the effects of the Curse unwittingly join ideological forces with radical environmentalists who blame the "Christian" West for the earth's environmental woes (**Lewis, 1992, p. 244**).

Conclusion: Some pain existed in the pre-Fall world but was not evil, and so cannot imply the presence of physical death then. Genesis 1:28 and 2:15 do not imply a harsh, cruel pre-Fall world with physical death.

15. ROSS EQUATES DIGESTION OF PLANTS AND BACTERIAL DECAY WITH DEATH.

Ross (2004, pp. 98-99) claims that before the Fall, "plants or plant parts" and plankton died as other creatures ate them, and that insects and other small invertebrates as well as various one-cell organisms died as they were "stepped on and crushed" by larger creatures or killed by "[s]now, hail, rain, heat, wind, and waves ..." According to **Ross (1994, p. 61)**, "the mere digestion of food by animals requires death of at least plants or plant parts."

Ross echoes earlier accommodationists seeking to insert physical death, and therefore geological time, into Genesis 1. Gap theorist **Arthur Custance (1971, pp. 135-**

136) wrote: "... one might ask ... whether herbivorous animals ate anything during the days or hours of Adam's innocence: and if they did, whether they were careful not to eat any microbes ... that happened to be on the leaves. Or did they not perhaps tread on some and kill them -- ants for instance ... Is it possible indeed for vegetable matter to be sought and eaten at all without the death of some life? Does not the digested leaf die?"

Biblical Hebrew classifies plants apart from animals and humans. Each human and each animal is a *nephesh chayyah*, a "living creature" (Genesis 1:20, 24, 2:7). These were the only creatures which God brought to Noah for protection on the Ark (Genesis 6:18-20, 7:7-9, 14-15).

Other creatures experience merely a permanent cessation of activity, not death in the sense of animals and humans, and are not said to have died in the Flood (Genesis 7:21-23).

Similarly, individual cells and microorganisms are not "living creatures." Thus neither programmed "cell death" (apoptosis) nor cell destruction by pathology or decay (necrosis) signifies pre-Fall physical death of animals or humans.

Today's pathogens have harmless variants. The cholera microbe, *Vibrio cholerae*, has a variant causing no illness (**Merrell et al., 2002, p. 642**), and harmless flu variants exist (**Freemantle, 2005, p. 49**).

Viruses, possibly benign initially, become more virulent as they lose information (**Wood, 2001, p. a**). Virulent microbes appear to have resulted from natural selection or by loss of information as conditions on earth changed after the Curse and after the Flood. These processes are not evolutionary because neither generates new information, a point taken up fully in Part 3 of this Critique.

Ross (2004, p. 99) presents examples of biblical passages saying in English that animals are dead or have died (Ex. 17:18-21, 8:13, 10:17,; Ps. 105:29; Eccl. 10:21; Isa. 50:2), but the Hebrew words for "die," "died" and "death" in these verses are *mut* and *mawet*, signifying a cessation of activity, not death of a *nephesh chayyah*. Further, these passages refer to the Post-Fall world so do not signify a pre-Fall presence of physical death.

Ross (1994, p. 63; 2004, p. 102) claims that plants when harvested or eaten "experience bleeding, bruising, scarring, and death." The implication is that plants must also have experienced physical death before the Fall. But this claim is baseless, for plants "have [no] brain to interpret tissue damage as pain" (**Sarfati, 2004, p. 210**).

Conclusion: Plants and other non-"living creatures" do not die in the sense that animals and people do. Thus pre-Fall digestion or decay of non-"living creatures" does not restrict the Fall to effecting spiritual human death only. Some microbes beneficial in the pre-Fall world have become virulent due to post-Fall natural selection and information loss, neither process an evolutionary one.

16. ROSS CLAIMS THAT CARNIVORES EXISTED BEFORE THE FALL.

Pre-Fall carnivorous predation would mean that physical death was inflicted on vertebrates and humans before the Curse. Accordingly, **Ross (2004, pp. 100, 101)** claims that carnivores existed from "creation day six" because "carnivorous behavior results from the laws of thermodynamics, not from sin." Although thermodynamic laws existed when the creation was "finished" (Genesis 2:1), there is no thermodynamic requirement even today that certain animals be carnivores.

The "laws of nature" are nothing more than the pattern by which the Creator ordains the universe normally to operate; before the Fall these patterns may have been somewhat different than afterward. It is possible "that God withdrew some of His sustaining power at the Fall. He still sustains the universe (Col. 1:17) [but most] of the time He doesn't sustain it in the way that ... prevented the Israelites' shoes and clothes from wearing out during the 40 years in the wilderness (Deut. 29:5). But this special case may have been the rule rather than the exception" before the Fall (**Sarfati, 2004, pp. 213-214**). The burning bush (Exodus 3:2) may be an additional window into the workings of the pre-Fall world in which fire burned but did not consume.

God created certain animals with the potential for predation on Day 6, but not predation itself. Many animals are truly herbivorous, but few are totally carnivorous and are actually omnivores. Predatory behavior appears to have been superimposed on a more fundamental herbivorous state.

Wonderly (1977, pp. 239-240) observed, "[M]any carnivores even now eat large amounts of [small invertebrates, fruits and other plant materials]. For example, cats eat grasshoppers; bears often eat fruit and honey; and raccoons eat corn, nuts, and other fruits, and even leaves and grasses." Likewise, **Rendle-Short (1984, p. 147)** noted, "[M]any so-called carnivores can easily live on a purely vegetarian diet -- the domestic dog or cat for example. Teeth apparently designed to tear prey can also be used to tear tough vegetable fibre."

Genesis 1:29-30 state that the pre-Fall diet included "every green plant," but no meat. This vegetarian diet was supplied by plants "upon the face of all the earth," so the pre-Fall absence of carnivorous behavior was worldwide, not just in Eden.

These points are so obvious that even **Ross (2004, p. 101)** admits a "prohibition on meat consumption" for humans until after the Flood, and old-earthier **Dan Wonderly (1977, p. 239)** states, "The seemingly ruthless capturing of other mammals, and even of human beings by carnivores appears to be -- and perhaps is -- contrary to what we believe concerning God's original creation. So we are quite willing to say that the carnivorous mammals may have begun their ruthless hunting of other animals only after the fall of man."

Even after the Fall, the permitted diet for man continued to be vegetarian (Genesis 3:17-19). After the Flood meat eating was permitted: "Every moving thing that liveth [*nephesh chayyah*] shall be meat for you ..." (Genesis 9:3). This verse would be

meaningless if man had been allowed to eat meat before the Flood. However, before the Flood the earth was "filled with violence" (Genesis 6:13), perhaps signifying that between the Fall and Flood some animals had become carnivores, and that rebellious humans may have been meat-eaters.

In the present God allows predation as His provision for some animals. Verses such as Psalm 104:21, Job 38:39-41 and Job 39:27-30 reflect only this present provision and yield no insight on pre-Fall conditions. Allegorically, predation is portrayed negatively in Scripture, for example, as judgment on Israel (Hosea 13:8) or as rapacious world powers in Belshazzar's dream in Daniel 7:1-7 (**Whitcomb, 1985, pp. 91-93**).

In the future the creation will be restored in many ways to its pre-Fall state. If the pre-Fall state were one of predation and death, how would such a "restoration" differ from the present world? But the restored creation will be very different from the present, with no bloodshed in the animal kingdom (Isaiah 11:6-9, 65:25), reflecting the lack of predation and carnivorous behavior before the Fall. This is obvious enough that old-earthier Norman Geisler states,

"... God originally created animals and human beings to be herbivorous. ... God did not appoint animals to be eaten in paradise, and animals weren't eating each other. ... What changed things was the Fall. When God was told, in effect, to shove off, he partially did. ... Ultimately [the damage to paradise] will be remedied" (**Strobel, 2000, pp. 125-126**).

Conclusion: Carnivores and predation were non-existent in the Pre-Fall world, thus did not cause physical death then.

17. WOULD A DEATH-FREE PRE-FALL WORLD BECOME HOPELESSLY OVER-POPULATED?

Such concerns originate partly from the misconception that the earth today is in the throes of a population explosion. How much more severe would this problem be, the reasoning runs, in a world without death?

But the earth is far from overpopulated. It could support up to some 50 billion people: "A diet based on 4,000 to 4,500 kilocalories of edible plant material [per day] could be provided for between 38 and 48 billion people," about 7 times the current population (**Revelle, 1974, p. 168; Easterbrook, 1999, p. 28**). Most people need far less than 4,500 kilocalories per day, so the earth's ability to support human life has not been pushed near the limit.

There is no population explosion either: "44 percent of the world's people live in countries where the fertility rate has already fallen below the replacement rate, and fertility is falling fast almost everywhere else" (**Singer, 1999, p. 24**).

Population growth rates are falling so fast that the U.N. predicts global population to peak at some 8 to 9 billion in 2050. After that, a precipitous decline will occur, with the result that, "Unless people's values change greatly, several centuries from now there could be fewer people living in the

entire world than live in the United States today" (Singer, 1999, p. 22).

Nevertheless, in a death-free pre-Fall world animal and human population would eventually mount. **John Calvin (1847, p. 180)** suggested that in such a world people would be translated much like Enoch (Genesis 5:24) was in the post-Fall world: "Truly the first man would have passed to a better life, had he remained upright; but there would have been no separation of the soul from the body, no corruption, no kind of destruction, and, in short, no violent change."

Finally, the possibility cannot be ruled out that men and animals may have been able to travel to other planets and places in the universe. Though this idea is speculative, it has long been known that at one time planets such as Venus and Mars may have been habitable, though supporting no indigenous life (**Audouze and Israel, 1985, pp. 74, 138**).

Interplanetary travel may appear to have been impossible then, but the early potential of mankind was enormous. Even after the Fall and Flood at the building of the tower of Babel, human prowess was so great that God acknowledged "now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:6).

The brilliant achievements of prodigies such as Amadeus Mozart, who at age six gave virtuoso public piano performances and composed some of the world's greatest music before he died at 35 (**MacLeish, 1984, p. 71**), may have been within reach of the average person before the Fall.

Conclusion: Had the world remained sinless, God would have foreknown the needs involved in growing population, as surely as He foreknew life's needs in the sinful world. We may safely trust that He would have provided for these needs.

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