

Did DEATH Exist Before Adam?

By Jack W. Langford, January, 2013

ANOTHER FAULTY EXTRAPOLATION

Young Earth Creationists have produced many articles through the years attempting to prove that there could be no fossilized bone graveyards buried deep within the earth's strata at the time Adam walked the earth. Since they postulate the earth is only a few days older than Adam, they are forced to believe there could have been no prior destruction of any type of life on the earth. Of course, they recognize that there is a vast number of layers of fossilized bones and bodies of species of animals and plants, many of which are different from those we know today. They account for all this by contending that Noah's flood was of such a grandiose scale that it laid down all the various strata on earth, including those that bear the fossils of all the animals and plants destroyed.

Their chief argument is to quote the statements made at the conclusion of each of the six days' work of God that it was "good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 and 31). "If God's work was good," they contend, "then there could be no death, because death is not good!" They continue to explain that death entered the human family because of Adam's transgression (Romans 5:12–21) and so they make the *extrapolation* that no death could have existed prior to Adam's transgression.

This argument is illustrated by a recent article in an *Acts & Facts* publication of The Institute for Creation Research. The article, *No Backdated Punishment in Eden*, was written by Dr. James J. Johnson of their Apologetics Department. His argument was concise and simple—

At the end of Day Six, God said all was 'very good' (Genesis 1:31), which means no death existed on earth because *death is not good* (Romans 8:20–22, 1 Corinthians 15). (Italics mine, J. L.)

What God pronounced as "very good" was only what He did during the six days beginning in verse 3, which was actually very cosmetic in nature—light, expanse, separation of land from water, function of solar system, birds and fish, animals and man.

Six reasons why we can KNOW "death" existed before Adam.

Reason No. 1. Surprising as it may seem, the very use of the word "**good**" is itself a major proof that *death* existed before Adam when the conditions of earth had become "good." Dr. Johnson apparently doesn't realize that if "death" did not exist *because death is "not good,"* then the reverse would also logically be true; where a condition exists that is *not good*, death must have existed because, as admitted in his argument, death is not good! In this regard an observation made by Steven Dill is very timely—

Gen. 2:18 ‘And the LORD God said, “It is **NOT GOOD** that man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him” (KJV, emphasis mine). God said something about Day Six was NOT GOOD. This is before Eve was created, which means it was before Adam sinned. Obviously if one equated “not good” with “death,” then “death” was already in creation (maybe not in the Garden itself, however) before Eve was created.

Again, it should be obvious to any reader of Genesis that the condition of earth immediately prior to the work of the “six days” was *not good*, and needed to be corrected so as to make it good! All the work of the “six days” was done to rectify the conditions that were bad as described in Genesis 1:2.

It is perfectly obvious that if calling light into existence (Gen 1:4) was “good,” then the earth being blanketed in total darkness was “NOT GOOD;” i.e., it was bad! The same deduction can be made for all the work done on the six days. God rectified a condition that was bad and not conducive to life on earth and made it “good.”

When God speaks of a thing or condition being “good,” it is held in contrast to the opposite reality which was “not good.” Indeed, in the very same context this contrast is made. God speaks of the “tree of the knowledge of *good* and *evil*” (Gen. 2:9). Here, “good” is held in contrast to “evil.” “Good” is the antithesis of “evil.” In addition we can say what is “not good” is “evil.”

Death is obviously “not good” and is certainly a consequence of “evil.” It is perfectly logical to reason that where “good” dominates, “death” and “evil” cannot exist. And likewise, it is also perfectly logical to reason that where “good” does *not exist*, “death and evil” can and will exist.

Apparently in the eyes of God, whatever the earth was immediately prior to the “six days” work, it was “*not good*.” It becomes obvious that the work of the six days was designed to correct the condition described by Genesis 1:2. That logically means that the condition of earth in Genesis 1:2 was fertile ground for “death” and “evil.”

Reason No. 2. “Without form and void” (KJV) is specific language which meant the earth was not good and *death* existed. Gen. 1:1 speaks of the *cosmos*. The condition of the earth as described in Genesis 1:2, literally translated, spoke of *chaos*—

But the earth was (or, had become) **wasted and desolate**,
and **darkness** was upon the face of the abyss, and the Spirit
of God hovered over the face of the **waters**.

So it is that a “wasted, desolate earth, smothered in darkness and submerged under water” is the scene of Genesis 1:2. The condition of the earth was totally unacceptable to God, inappropriate and nothing more than a devastated ruin. The reason we can know this is an accurate description is not only by the *primary* definition of the words used but also by the other times this *precise language* is used. “Wasted and desolate” (Hebrew, *toho wa-bohu*) are used together on only two other occasions. Both times the passages describe a tremendous devastation of certain cities and nations. We shall first quote Jeremiah 4:23–26—

I (the prophet Jeremiah) looked on the earth, and behold it was without form and void (Genesis 1:2, *tohu wa-bohu*); and to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and behold they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and behold, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. I looked, and behold the fruitful land was a wilderness, and all the cities were pulled (cast) down—before the LORD, and before His fierce anger

If this passage tells us anything, it says that the conditions of *tohu wa-bohu* come, not by God's perfect creative hand, but by the "fierce anger" of God."

The second passage where these precise words are used is Isaiah 34:11. The exact context for this passage is described several times as the "LORD'S indignation against all nations" (34:2); "All the host of heaven will wear away, and the sky shall be rolled up like a scroll" (34:4) and "The LORD has a day of vengeance" (34:8). Then specifically upon the land of Edom we are told—

And He (the LORD) shall stretch over it (Edom) the line of destruction (*tohu*) and the plumb line of emptiness (*bohu*).

In other words, these two words used together in this manner are spoken of as God's measuring instruments for *destruction* and *desolation*. Therefore, there should be no mistaking the meaning of the language used in Genesis 1:2. Genesis 1:2 means a wasted desolation of judgmental destruction from God.

Another passage, Isaiah 24:1-23, which does not use the same precise Hebrew words, states in similar language—

Behold the LORD makes the earth empty (*bahkak*) and makes it waste (*bahlak*), and distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants the earth was defiled under its inhabitants Therefore the curse has devoured the earth The earth is violently broken. The earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly

Now in **all three** of these passages where the description of waste and desolation is clearly used, "**death**" was also positively meant and included in the context of each passage. In fact, the death toll on humanity and beasts was devastating. Consequently, it is perfectly reasonable to understand the same to be a reality in Genesis 1:2, because it uses the same precise language of such a destruction. That is why the condition of earth in Genesis 1:2 was not "good" and it was God's intent to make it "good."

Reason No. 3. Death in the universe did not originate with Adam. **Satan is the origin of evil and death** in the universe, *not* Adam. Adam was infected with the disease of death by Satan's craftiness, and merely passed it on to the rest of his descendents and the animal kingdom as well. But all should get this fact straight—Adam was not the originator of sin and death. Every reader of the Hebrew Scriptures realizes that a distinct angelic creature named Lucifer was responsible for deceiving Eve and bringing sin and death to the human family. Adam and Eve were responsible for passing on the

consequence of sin and death to the human family, but Satan was responsible for the origin of sin and death in the universe and passing it on to Adam and Eve.

The book of Genesis concerns itself with the creation of the physical universe including the present earth. However, there is another sphere of created beings which was not the concern of the Genesis record God gave to Moses. Long before God created the earth He had created the angelic world with its multiplicity of dominions and authorities. Genesis 1:1 only states that God created the physical “heavens and earth.” In other places in the Bible we are told that God had also created the heavens beyond the physical heavens. For instance, some of the saints in Nehemiah’s day spoke of this other creation. They stated in prayer—

You alone are LORD. You made the heavens, *the heaven of heavens with all of their hosts*, and the earth and all that is upon it. (Neh. 9:6).

Here are two different realms of creation. The one is physical; the other, “*heaven of heavens with all their hosts*,” is understood by expositors as speaking of the realm of the angelic hosts. (See also Colossians 1:16.) Moses told us nothing about the creation of the angelic world. In the book of Job we are informed by God that the angelic hosts, called the Sons of God, who were already created, actually witnessed the creation of the earth itself—

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
when the morning stars sang together and all the Sons of God
shouted for joy? (Job 38:4–7).

It is obvious from this revelation that the angelic hosts, called in the book of Job “the Sons of God,” existed before the creation of the earth as spoken of in Genesis 1:1. We are not told *when* they were created or *how long they existed before* God created the physical universe.

Again the prophets tell us that sin and rebellion originated with the supreme angelic creature named Lucifer, later called Satan or the Devil. Ezekiel 28:15 reveals, “Iniquity was found in you (Lucifer)” and 28:16, “You have sinned.” In addition, Isaiah 14:13 and 14 describe Satan’s initial sin while situated on earth. In Ezekiel 28 there is a whole separate and distinct history of Lucifer enumerated for us. There is on the one hand, his original creation and his magnificent performances, wisdom, prosperity and rule. There is also revealed on the other hand, his original rebellion and wicked manipulations, and consequent judgments, some of which look far into the future.

When does sin bring death?

We know that when Adam sinned, he died to God instantly. The Scriptures give the principle—“In the day you eat thereof you shall surely die” (Gen. 2:17); “The wages of sin is death!” (Rom. 6:23); “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:20) and “(we all) were dead in trespasses and sin” (Eph. 2:1). The Scripture further states “Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin” (Rom. 5:12 and 17-19). This is how sin and death were passed down to our world of the present human family.

However, we ask the question—did **sin** exist before Adam? Of course it did! It originated, as stated above, through Satan. Was Satan “**dead**” to God when he sinned? Of course, just like man’s case, Satan became “dead in sin and towards God” the instant he sinned! He, in fact, became the archenemy of God. So we know the very same thing happened to Satan at the time he rebelled against God, as described by the prophets. He died to God and led a host of other angelic creatures in his rebellion. “Death” became his condition of existence. So “death” clearly existed in the universe before Adam sinned.

When Satan, here on earth, used the serpent to tempt Adam and Eve, **sin** and **death** already existed as realities both in the angelic world, and I believe also where Satan had a previous rule over this earth (Isa. 14:13–14 and Ezek. 28:13). Satan, who deceived Eve through the serpent, was already a **fallen creature**, **dead** towards God. This is proof positive Death existed before Adam sinned!

Reason No. 4. In consistency with the truth above, God had already told Adam that in the “*day you eat thereof you shall surely die*” (Genesis 2:17). Where “death” stands as a warning it means that death was already a known factor in existence in the universe. It simply was not yet experienced by Adam. He was clearly warned that such **death** would come upon him as the consequence of his disobedience to God.

God, therefore, knew all about death. He had already ordained “death” as a principle in judgment upon Lucifer. Satan and probably a great number of his cohorts had already experienced “**death**” in the angelic realm. As Isaiah indicates, Satan’s rebellion originated from his position on earth. Death, therefore, was a **known reality** in existence, even on earth, before Adam sinned.

Reason No. 5. The very fact that God placed a tree in the midst of the garden, described as “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” (Gen. 2:9 and 17) meant that **good** and **evil** existed as known entities. In addition, Genesis 3:22 says—

Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil’

All in the Tri-une Godhead knew of the existence of “good and evil.” The whole angelic world knew of the existence of “good and evil.” Mr. Satan, and his cohorts, certainly experimentally knew of “good and evil.”

Where there is the existence of **evil** there is automatically the existence of **death**. An “**evil**” and “**dead**” angelic being tempted our first parents. Eve heard the words of **evil**. Therefore, **death** was already a reality.

Consequently, we must understand that the existence of the tree “of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden” spelled the existence of “death,” both *past*, *present* and *future*. Death in the *past* was initially experienced by Lucifer. Death in the *present*, at the time of Adam’s temptation, was an already existing condition of Lucifer himself. And Death in the *future* became the realization of Adam.

Reason No. 6. As to those layers of mountain strata, bearing in fossilized stone the memorial graveyard of Lucifer’s rebellion, they are clearly indicated in the account of the flood. And instead of revealing the “CREATION” of the rock strata forming the

mountains, the inspired flood account manifests only the “COVERING” of the mountain rock strata. Genesis 8:17–22—

(17) Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth . . .

(19) The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the HIGH MOUNTAINS everywhere under the heavens were—

COVERED (not created).

(20) The waters prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the MOUNTAINS were COVERED (again, not created).

(21) All flesh that moved on the earth *perished*, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms on the earth, and all mankind;

(22) of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life *died*.

Notice please, that all the animal world and man as well were NOT buried in the depths of the rock strata forming the mountains. Rather, they died and perished by drowning in the waters that *covered* the mountains. So the various and sundry rock strata forming the mountains and land was merely “covered” by water, not created by the water. Nor were the bodies of the animal world placed in the rock strata forming the mountains; they were instead merely drowned by the waters, their carcasses simply becoming debris in the water, sinking down to lie in the mud on the surface of the land.

Furthermore Genesis 8:4–5 goes on to say—

(4) In the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the MOUNTAINS of Ararat. (5) The water decreased steadily until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the MOUNTAINS became visible.

Now as anyone should know, if the mountains of Ararat were just freshly formed by means of the flood waters, then the various strata would for the most part be pure mush, mud and sand. It would absolutely be the most dangerous place on earth for the ark to land. In fact, there would not be a safe place anywhere on earth. On the other hand, if these mountains were the same mountains that the flood waters covered in the first reference of Genesis chapter 7, and we have no reason to believe they were not, then they would be very stable, because all the strata had long before formed into solid rock.

So it is that all the rock strata bearing the fossil record of a vast graveyard of evidence of death prior to Adam remains intact. It was not created by the flood, nor was it affected by the flood in Noah’s day. These rock layers contain the evidence of a reptilian age, all encased in stone. This is called by geologists the Mesozoic Era. Metamorphosed bones of man are not to be found in these layers. However, on the surface of the earth in the shallower residue of gravel, sand and dirt, lie the bones of man and the ancient animal world of Adam’s day, precisely as the flood left them. They all lie in what geologists call the Cenozoic (recent) Era. This harmonizes with the revealed Biblical record, and proves beyond any shadow of a doubt that DEATH existed before Adam.

In Conclusion

I would like to make a final quote on the subject. This is taken from a new edition of Steven Dill's book *In the Beginnings*, which is soon to be published—

There are a number of Young-Earth books, magazines, and websites that insist that God would never build The Garden of Eden on top of something dead. They illustrate their opinion with a variety of cartoons where Adam and Eve are looking down in revulsion at the 'skeletons beneath their feet'. They insist that a good God would never build something holy on something dead! They are disgusted by the thought that God would build something good on top of a 'heap of dead bones'. Well, if they are right, then God is not good. God had Solomon build the Temple on a foundation of white limestone blocks. In fact, the walls were white limestone as well. Limestone is sedimentary rock composed of the skeletal remains of dead marine organisms: DEAD ANIMALS. So, God seemed to have no problem building His Temple on a pile of dead things. He had no problem placing the Ark of the Covenant on top of a 'heap of dead bones'. God seemed okay with making His Dwelling place, the Holy of Holies, sit on top of millions of long-dead sea creatures. According to the Young-Earth definition of 'good', God did a disgusting thing when He had Solomon build the Temple. That makes God evil. Do you see what these Young-Earth Creationists do? They impose their own standards of good and evil back onto God. Since they are disgusted by the thought of a wicked, fallen, sinful Pre-Adamic world being restored, they insist that God would be disgusted by the thought of a wicked, fallen, sinful Pre-Adamic world being restored. The unbelieving Pharisees rejected what Jesus revealed because it didn't agree with their Interpretation of God's Word. In the same fashion, these Young-Earth Creationists reject what science reveals because it doesn't agree with their Interpretation of God's Word. 'Whitewashed Tombstones' seems to be a fitting description.

Many Young Earth Creationists do not realize what they are doing. They are attacking both Biblical and scientific reality. Just imagine God having His magnificent Temple resting upon and partly composed of fossilized remains of dead animals. This very fact calls to our remembrance two things: first, "the wages of sin is death," and second, it is even more amazing to realize that God can and does cleanse and purify where Satan has polluted. After the purifying judgment of Genesis 1:2, the work of God during the six days was actually a reordering of the earthly Temple God had made "in the beginning" (Gen. 1:1), which Satan had polluted.

For additional information see *The Gap Is Not A Theory* (2011) by this author. Contact at langfordjw@sbcglobal.net

Or see, *In The Beginnings*, (2010) by Steven E. Dill, D.V.M. Contact at thegaptheoryguy@gmail.com