

Groaning Under the Curse

Scripture: Genesis 6:5; Romans 8:20–23

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Evidence of man's sinfulness surrounds us. Daily newspapers publish it in their headlines; news programs feature it on the hour; websites make it public domain for all to witness; and it sweeps through the annals of human history. But how did we get into this condition?

Charles Spurgeon once said the slime of Adam's transgression covers the entire planet. He was right. Nothing is free from the stain of man's sinfulness. Even the creation itself groans under the strain of God's curse. The evidence is undeniable—we live among a fallen people on a fallen planet. But how did it get that way? Well that depends on who you ask . . . Here's John's answer.

Genesis 3 is one of the most vitally important chapters in all the Bible. It is the foundation of everything that comes after it. Without it, little else in Scripture or in life itself would make sense. Genesis 3 explains the condition of the universe and the state of humanity. It explains why the world has so many problems. It explains the human dilemma. It explains why we need a Savior. And it explains what God is doing in history.

In other words, the truth revealed in Genesis 3 is the necessary foundation for a true and accurate world-view. Every world-view that lacks this foundation is utterly and hopelessly wrong.

When God completed His perfect creation, there was no disorder, no chaos, no conflict, no struggle, no pain, no discord, no deterioration, and no death. Yet our lives today are filled with all those things all the time. Frankly, we find it hard to imagine what a perfect world would have been like. Genesis 3 explains how we got from that paradise of unimaginable perfection to where we are today.

Evolution offers no explanation for the human dilemma, much less any solution to it. Why is human existence fraught with so many moral and spiritual problems? Evolution will never be able to answer that question. In fact, pure naturalistic evolution cannot account for *anything* that is moral or spiritual.

Yet we are clearly moral and spiritual creatures, and we all know this. The concepts of good and evil are innate in the human psyche. (Even the most atheistic evolutionists have consciences.) We know from bitter experience that we cannot keep ourselves from evil. We find the pull of sin irresistible. We *cannot* do everything we know we ought to do. Worse, we cannot reform ourselves. Evolution offers no explanation for this dilemma and no hope for a solution.

Instead, the doctrine of evolution (if followed consistently) ends with a denial of the reality of evil. If naturalistic evolution is correct and there is no God, neither can there be any inviolable moral principles that govern the universe. And therefore there is no moral accountability of any kind. In fact, if evolution is true, things are the way they are by sheer chance, for no transcendent reason. Nothing under such a system could ever have any real moral significance. The very notions of good and evil would be meaningless concepts. There would be no reason to condemn a Hitler or applaud a Good Samaritan.

Who wired us to distinguish between good and evil? Where did the human conscience come from? And why is human nature universally drawn to evil? Evolutionists are clueless.

Genesis 3 answers that question with clarity and simplicity. Our first ancestor, Adam, deliberately disobeyed God. Somehow his sin defiled the whole race, and now every one of his natural offspring has inherited a love for sin and a contempt for true righteousness. And this manifests itself in our behavior.

Because of Adam's sin, creation was tainted and cursed. Romans 8:20-22 says, "The creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now." In other words, because of sin, no part of creation now exists as God originally made it. It "was subjected to futility," meaning that it was rendered unable to achieve the purpose for which it was originally designed. It was spoiled—defiled by sin, and thus subject to God's curse instead of His blessing. It was enslaved to corruption and placed in bondage to the debasing effects of sin—including decay, degradation, and death. All creation now "groans and labors with birth pangs"—picturesque language depicting the suffering and pain caused by sin's defilement. All these things, according to Scripture, are the effects of Adam's disobedience.

This clearly argues against evolution. If God used evolutionary processes or "natural selection" to create the world in the first place, then death, decay, mutation, and corruption were part of creation from the beginning. If death and natural selection were part of the means God used to create the world, then nothing was actually created perfect; everything had defects built in. But Scripture plainly attributes all such things to Adam's sin. They are the consequences of the curse that came after that first act of disobedience.

And deliverance from this state will not come from any process of evolution, either. In fact, the whole of creation—including the human race—is now subject to a kind of *devolution*, which no amount of education, enlightenment, environmentalism, psychology, civilization, or technology will ever be able to reverse. What is needed is *redemption* (Romans 8:23).

The remainder of Genesis is filled with evidence of humanity's downward spiral into utter moral degradation. Genesis 3 is the turning point. Before that, God looked at creation and pronounced everything "very good" (Genesis 1:31). But after Genesis 3, all human history has been colored by that which is very *bad*. (And the only exceptions are examples of God's redemptive work; they are *not* examples of human nobility.)

Genesis 4 records the first murder, a case of fratricide. Genesis 4:19 contains the first mention of polygamy. Verse 23 tells of another act of murder. And from there the human race declines so grievously that by Genesis 6:5, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So God destroyed the entire race, except for one family.

Genesis also records the beginnings of such evils as homosexuality (Genesis 19:1-5); incest (Genesis 19:30-38); idolatry (Genesis 31:30-35); rape (Genesis 34:1-2); mass murder (Genesis

34:25-29); harlotry (Genesis 38:14-19); and numerous other forms of wickedness.

All of this stemmed from Adam's one act of disobedience (Romans 5:19). Adam's sin poisoned not only his offspring, but also the rest of creation. How did this evil come about? Again, only Genesis 3 gives a clear answer. The only remaining question is: Will you believe it?

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