

# Trouble in Paradise: Why the Young Earth Paradigm Fails the Test of the Biblical Worldview

by Rich Deem

## Introduction

The standard young earth paradigm says that God originally created the heavens and earth as a perfect paradise in which God's image bearer, mankind, was to live. However, Adam and Eve's sin resulted not only in the fall of mankind, but the fall of creation itself to its current imperfect state. The fall of creation is usually attributed to the curse - God's judgment on mankind and His perfect world.<sup>1</sup> Changes attributed to God's judgment include the initiation of death for both mankind and animals,<sup>2</sup> the creation of weeds,<sup>3</sup> parasites, disease, carnivorous activity,<sup>4</sup> and any other aspect of creation that causes either pain or suffering (including natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, volcanoes, etc.). Nearly all young earth creationists believe that God will restore God's original perfect paradise (Eden) at the return of Jesus Christ.

## Was the original creation perfect?

It should be noted that the Bible never says that original creation was perfect. It is described as being good<sup>5</sup> and very good,<sup>6</sup> but never "perfect." How does one determine what God's perfect creation would look like? It turns out that young earth creationists have *assumed* that God would not have been able to create any world less than "perfect" - based upon biblical descriptions of the millennial kingdom and the new creation. Unfortunately, the Bible never indicates that either the millennial kingdom or the new creation represent the state of the *original* creation. In fact, the Bible indicates that this creation was *not* created to be perfect, but is only a partial representation of that which is to come,<sup>7</sup> which *will be* perfect. The new creation will be the perfect tabernacle - the city "whose architect and builder is God",<sup>8</sup> which will not be of this creation.<sup>9</sup> Old earth creationists agree that the creation was perfect for the *purpose* for which it was created. However, the Bible indicates that the purpose of creation is *not* what has been claimed by young earth creationists.

## The purpose of creation

The young earth paradigm assumes God created the earth for mankind to give us a perfect place to live, "designed for our enjoyment."<sup>10</sup> However, nowhere does the Bible indicate that God

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<sup>1</sup> A minority view is that Satan caused God's creation to fall into its current state. However, since this view implies that Satan has creative abilities that God was unable to stop, this view is largely rejected by most young earth creationists.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.godandscience.org/youngearth/death.html>.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.godandscience.org/youngearth/genesis3.html>.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.godandscience.org/youngearth/carnivores.html>.

<sup>5</sup> And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that **it was good**. (*Genesis 1:10*)

See also *Genesis 1:4, 12, 18, 21, 25*.

<sup>6</sup> And God saw all that He had made, and behold, **it was very good**. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (*Genesis 1:31*)

<sup>7</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. (*1 Corinthians 13:9-10*)

<sup>8</sup> for he [Abraham] was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (*Hebrews 11:10*)

<sup>9</sup> But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; (*Hebrews 9:11*)

<sup>10</sup> Van Bebbler and Taylor, *Creation and Time: A Report on the Progressive Creationist Book by Hugh Ross*, Eden Communications, 1996, pages 43-44.

created the earth for our pleasure or enjoyment. In contrast, the Bible indicates that the earth was established to accomplish the purposes of God.<sup>11</sup> What are the purposes of God regarding this creation? First and foremost, the creation is designed as a place where evil can be conquered.<sup>12</sup> Jesus Christ, through His sacrifice on the cross, provided a sacrifice to remove our evil and reconcile us to God and each other.<sup>13</sup> Our role in this purpose is to choose between good and evil.<sup>14</sup> By choosing to do good, we participate in God's purposes and bring glory to Him.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; For You have worked wonders, Plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness. (*Isaiah 25:1*)

Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; (*Isaiah 46:10*)

The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil. (*Proverbs 16:4*)

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. (*Philippians 2:13*)

<sup>12</sup> Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The LORD has aroused the spirit of the kings of the Medes, Because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it; For it is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for His temple. (*Jeremiah 51:11*)

Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, For what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light; (*Amos 5:18*)

"But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, And they do not understand His purpose; For He has gathered them like sheaves to the threshing floor. "Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion, For your horn I will make iron And your hoofs I will make bronze, That you may pulverize many peoples, That you may devote to the LORD their unjust gain And their wealth to the Lord of all the earth. (*Micah 4:12-13*)

the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. (*1 John 3:8*)

<sup>13</sup> ...Jesus the Nazarene... this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (*Acts 2:22-23*)

For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (*1 Corinthians 1:18*)

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (*Ephesians 2:13-16*)

and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-- (*Colossians 1:20-22*)

...Christ...When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (*Colossians 2:11, 13-14*)

and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. (*1 Peter 2:24*)

<sup>14</sup> "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, (*Deuteronomy 30:19*)

"If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (*Joshua 24:15*)

"Let us choose for ourselves what is right; Let us know among ourselves what is good. (*Job 34:4*)

Do not envy a man of violence And do not choose any of his ways. (*Proverbs 3:31*)

"He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. (*Isaiah 7:15*)

<sup>15</sup> Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. (*1 Chronicles 16:24*)

Therefore glorify the LORD in the east, The name of the LORD, the God of Israel, In the coastlands of the sea. (*Isaiah 24:15*)

Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made." (*Isaiah 43:7*)

"The beasts of the field will glorify Me, The jackals and the ostriches, Because I have given waters in the wilderness

According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”<sup>16</sup>

According to the young earth paradigm, mankind’s sin thwarted God’s original perfect plan, requiring Him to institute “plan B.” Henry Morris says, “it seems unthinkable that the God of the Bible—the God who is omniscient and omnipotent, merciful and loving—would do anything like that. Surely He could devise and implement a better plan than this.”<sup>17</sup> What was plan B? God created weeds, caused some animals to become carnivorous, cursed mankind with pain and suffering, and instituted death for humans and animals - all because of the sin of mankind. The problem with this thinking is that it contradicts the nature of the God of the Bible, who is described as being omniscient and omnipotent. If God is truly omniscient, He would have known that mankind was going to fall into sin. In addition, the Bible says that no purpose of God can be thwarted.<sup>18</sup> So, maybe weeds, carnivorous activity, and suffering were all part of God’s *original* plan?

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And rivers in the desert, To give drink to My chosen people. (*Isaiah 43:20*)

“Then all your people will be righteous; They will possess the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. (*Isaiah 60:21*)

“I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations. (*Isaiah 66:19*)

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (*Matthew 5:16*)

But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.” (*John 11:4*)

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Romans 15:5-6*)

For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, “THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME.” (*Romans 15:8-9*)

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*)

In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. (*Ephesians 1:8-12*)

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (*1 Corinthians 10:31*)

For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. (*2 Corinthians 4:15*)

Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. (*1 Peter 2:12*)

Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (*1 Peter 4:11*)

but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. (*1 Peter 4:16*)

and he said with a loud voice, “Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.” (*Revelation 14:7*)

<sup>16</sup> Westminster Shorter Catechism (<http://www.opc.org/documents/WSC.html>) from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

<sup>17</sup> Henry Morris, “The Fall, The Curse, and Evolution,” *Back To Genesis No. 112a*, The Institute for Creation Research, April 1998.

<sup>18</sup> “I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. (*Job 42:2*)

## ***The problem of evil***

Of great importance to young earth creationists is the problem of evil. Since the days of David Hume<sup>19</sup> and Charles Darwin,<sup>20</sup> skeptics have claimed that a benevolent God who is omnipotent would never create a world in which suffering was allowed to exist. Young earth creationists have bought into the atheists' argument and attempted to circumvent it by shifting the blame for the presence of evil and suffering from God's original plan to God's plan B response to human sin. The failure of this explanation is that it brings into question God's omniscience. Shouldn't an omniscient God have known that human beings were going to rebel, and plan His course of action accordingly? In addition, young earth creationists claim that God is justified in condemning all mankind to a life of evil and suffering just because Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. Although God can and does judge sin, not all "bad" things that happen to people are the result of sin. When Jesus' disciples passed a blind man, they asked Jesus if his blindness was due to his own sin or the sin of his parents. Jesus replied that it wasn't due to sin at all, "but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him."<sup>21</sup> Peter tells us that those who do what is right will be reviled for the name of Christ, although it will bring glory to God.<sup>22</sup>

## ***Weeds and work***

In contrast, the old earth paradigm says that, indeed, God has a purpose for weeds, carnivores, suffering, and death. Weeds don't seem like something a perfect God would create - at least from a human perspective. The reason why we think in such a way is that we are basically lazy. We don't like the idea that we have to work hard for our food and that we are opposed by "useless" plants, pests (such as insects, rodents, disease), and uncooperative weather and other natural hazards. What purpose could God possibly have in making us work? Going back to Genesis 2, we know that God created the man and placed him into a garden that He had planted with trees that produced fruit.<sup>23</sup> My guess is that God did not plant any weeds in the garden, although the text does not specifically say. Even so, Adam was given charge over cultivating and tending the garden.<sup>24</sup> If weeds never grew in the garden, Adams "work" would be virtually non-existent. What work did Adam have to do to tend the garden? Maybe God does have a purpose for work.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> "Is [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Whence then is evil?" David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, ed. Norman Kemp Smith, New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1947, pg. 196.

<sup>20</sup> "There seems to me to be too much misery in the world." I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the ichneumonidae (a parasite) with the express intention of their feeding within living bodies of caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice." Charles Darwin in a letter dated May 22, 1860, taken from *Letters to Asa Gray*.

<sup>21</sup> As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (*John 9:1-3*)

<sup>22</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name... Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right. (*1 Peter 4:12-16, 19*)

<sup>23</sup> The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. (*Genesis 2:8*)

<sup>24</sup> Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (*Genesis 2:15*)

<sup>25</sup> Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. (*Colossians 3:23-24*)

...But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward

## ***Killing carnivores***

Young earth creationists say that God would never create a world in which there were millions of years of animal death and suffering.<sup>26</sup> However, the Bible indicates that God Himself is implicated in the death of animals. First, God killed animals to clothe Adam and Eve after the fall<sup>27</sup> and then killed many animals during the flood.<sup>28</sup> God set up the system of animal sacrifice for atonement for sin.<sup>29</sup> In addition, scripture tells us that God created carnivores on day 6. Contrary to young earth doctrine, the scriptures indicate that God provides food for the carnivores of the Earth, therefore condoning the death of some animals for the survival of others:

- “Who prepares for the raven its nourishment, When its young cry to God, And wander about without food?” (*Job 38:41*)
- “Can you hunt the prey for the lion, Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,” [God speaking] (*Job 38:39*)
- The young lions roar after their prey, And seek their food from God. (*Psalms 104:21*) There is the sea, great and broad, In which are swarms without number, Animals both small and great... They all wait for Thee, To give them their food in due season. (*Psalms 104:25, 27*)
- Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. (*Luke 12:24*)

If God is responsible for feeding the carnivores and brags about doing so, maybe the young earth creationists are wrong in their assessment that carnivorous activity is evil and not part of God’s original design.

## ***Purposes for evil and suffering***

Part of God’s original plan involved the defeat of evil. According to the Bible, Satan, God’s highest created angelic being,<sup>30</sup> rebelled against God, taking one third of the angels with Him.<sup>31</sup>

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outsiders and not be in any need. (*1 Thessalonians 4:10-12*)

For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. (*2 Thessalonians 3:10-12*)

<sup>26</sup> See “Why is there death and suffering” ([http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2002/death\\_suffering.asp](http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2002/death_suffering.asp)) from *Answers in Genesis*.

<sup>27</sup> And the LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. (*Genesis 3:21*)

<sup>28</sup> See Genesis 7.

<sup>29</sup> “You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor is the fat of My feast to remain overnight until morning.” (*Exodus 23:18*)

<sup>30</sup> “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. “You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. “You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. “You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. “By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you. “By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade, You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see you. (*Ezekiel 28:12-18*)

These beings attempt to deceive human beings into following them into rebellion against God.<sup>32</sup> Jesus Christ came to earth as part of God's original plan to defeat evil<sup>33</sup> and redeem mankind.<sup>34</sup>

God has a higher purpose for this creation than the prevention of evil and suffering. The Bible indicates that evil and suffering provides believers with a means to witness to others,<sup>35</sup> including angels,<sup>36</sup> about our faith. Suffering also produces patience and endurance<sup>37</sup> and conforms us to the image of Christ,<sup>38</sup> the purpose for which we were created.<sup>39</sup>

### **God's original plan or "plan B"?**

Did God really change His plans because of mankind's sin? Actually, the Bible indicates that God's purposes are unchangeable<sup>40</sup> and eternal,<sup>41</sup> and that He finished His work at the foundation

<sup>31</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth... And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (*Revelation 12:3-4, 9*)

<sup>32</sup> Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (*1 Peter 5:8*)

<sup>33</sup> the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. (*1 John 3:8*)

"And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' (*Acts 26:15-18*)

<sup>34</sup> But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose." (*Luke 4:43*)

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. (*John 12:27*)

but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (*1 Peter 1:19-20*)

<sup>35</sup> "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. "It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. (*Luke 21:12-13*)

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, (*2 Timothy 1:8-10*)

"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. (*Revelation 12:11*)

<sup>36</sup> For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. (*1 Corinthians 4:9*)

<sup>37</sup> For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, (*1 Peter 2:20-21*)

<sup>38</sup> Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (*1 Peter 4:1-2*)

<sup>39</sup> To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. (*1 Peter 3:8-9*)

<sup>40</sup> In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an

of the earth.<sup>42</sup> In fact, many verses indicate that God's plan was formulated before He even created the time dimension of our universe.<sup>43</sup> God had already prepared the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ<sup>44</sup> and prepared a place for the redeemed in heaven.<sup>45</sup> A passage from Isaiah summarizes what God has said about the establishment of His plans:

“Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’; Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it. Listen to Me, you stubborn-minded, Who are far from righteousness. I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off; And My salvation will not delay. And I will grant salvation in Zion, And My glory for Israel.” (*Isaiah 46:9-13*)

Contrary to the claims of young earth creationism, God is not going to restore paradise (Eden) at the return of Jesus Christ, but will deliver us from paradise into an entirely new and perfect creation that is eternal.

## Conclusion

Young earth creationists believe that God's original creation was “perfect” in every way - no weeds, no disease, no suffering, and no death. In reality, the “perfect paradise” paradigm fails in its lack of biblical support and also in the underlying assumptions that it forces upon a “Christian” worldview. Under the “perfect paradise” paradigm, God is relegated to the position of a poor designer, whose plans for the perfect creation are ruined by the disobedience of Adam

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anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. (*Hebrews 6:17-20*)

<sup>41</sup> To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, (*Ephesians 3:8-11*)

<sup>42</sup> For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, “AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. (*Hebrews 4:3*)

<sup>43</sup> No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. (*1 Corinthians 2:7*)

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time (*2 Timothy 1:9*)

The hope of eternal life, which God... promised before the beginning of time (*Titus 1:2*)

To the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (*Jude 1:25*)

<sup>44</sup> “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. (*John 17:5*)

“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. (*John 17:24*)

For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (*1 Peter 1:20*)

<sup>45</sup> “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (*Matthew 25:34*)

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. (*2 Corinthians 5:1-5*)

and Eve. God is forced to come up with “plan B,” in which He vindictively creates weeds, disease, carnivorous animals, and death to get back at humanity for their sin. Young earth creationists inadvertently buy into the atheistic worldview that suffering could not have been the original intent of God, stating that the earth was created “for our pleasure.”

In contrast, old earth creationists believe that the universe was created with a perfect purpose, in which human beings are to choose good over evil and bring glory to God in doing so. The “perfect purpose” paradigm states that God created the universe as a temporary place, in which evil and suffering fulfill the will of God toward a higher goal than just to give us pleasure or a nice place to live. We, the followers of Jesus Christ, manifest the abundant grace of God, even in our sufferings, witnessing for the gospel to our fellow human beings and also the angels.

*...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)*

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Much of the information on this page comes from the book *Peril in Paradise: Theology, Science, and the Age of the Earth* by Mark S. Whorton, Ph.D., a scientist from the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center. Dr. Whorton’s book goes beyond the superficial doctrines espoused by the young earth “perfect paradise” paradigm to examine underlying assumptions and extrabiblical teachings of the movement. *Peril in Paradise* examines verses cited as support for the perfect paradise paradigm in context to determine their actual meaning. In addition, the book compares the perfect paradise paradigm to the perfect purpose paradigm proposed by old earth creationists. Since the book sticks to the scriptures almost exclusively, it cannot be claimed that old earth creationists ignore the scriptures in preference to “fallible science.”

