



# Your Living Environment

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## WHAT'S BEHIND THE FOOD CATASTROPHE?

We have heard many times how knowledge has doubled in the last ten years. And also that troubles too have doubled! Of all these troubles -- what do you think is the biggest problem?

Would you say -- the HYDROGEN BOMB! Maybe POLLUTION! Or perhaps FOOD is the biggest problem confronting mankind? It is certainly one of man's most fundamental problems!

From the day we are born -- WE NEED FOOD! If we don't get it we die! It's as simple as that. And if we do get food -- many still die, (prematurely), because of its low quality!

Regardless of whether we live in the under-fed, or over-fed part of the world, millions of us die through UNDER-nourishment each year. Most die through lack of QUANTITY, but also many through lack of QUALITY in their food. Both stem from a single cause -- STARVATION! One just happens to be more subtle and less obvious than the other.

### What Is The Problem?

Why is man failing to supply himself with enough food of sufficient quality to avoid the premature and agonizing death of millions? Is it just too many hungry mouths? Too few acres? Insufficient machines? The breaking of some simple law? Or not enough scientific knowledge?

This issue of Your Living Environment will take you right to the trunk of the tree and answer this question for you. In the process you will see that humanity is perhaps closer to nutritional catastrophe than you have imagined. First let's look at some recent news quotes showing a cross-section of the difficulties that are piling up against those who produce your food:

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE, AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT, RESEARCH NEWS

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### Widespread Disease in Cattle!

"Mastitis [a disease that produces thick pussy-looking clots in the cow's udder and destroys all or part of her milk-producing ability] loses us up to £35 million a year ..... in 272 herds surveyed, every cow in herds over 80 strong had some degree of clinical mastitis" (Farmer's Weekly, Nov. 1970).

".....It is unlikely that there is a single dairyman in Britain who, with his hand on his heart, can claim never to have seen the tell-tale clots..... And it is suggested that a badly-infected herd may be losing up to 200 gallons of milk a cow" [Per year] (Farmer's Weekly, Oct. 1970).

### Poultry Are Even WORSE!

Britain's fowl pest plague worsens! "Last week the total number of outbreaks reached 3,600 -- the highest ever recorded in Britain since statistics began in 1947.

"It is estimated that about 14.5 million broilers, 9.5 million layers and 1.7 million turkeys have so far been affected by the disease. Financial loss is put at more than £10 million due to mortality and lost production" (Farmer & Stockbreeder, Jan. 1971).

### Plants Fare No Better!

"Little by little, the misplaced aura of magic invested in that misused bit of phraseology 'the green revolution' is wearing thin" (Ceres, July-Aug. 1970, p. 45).

"Dr. Norman Ernest Borlaugh, the agriculturalist who won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to foster the so-called 'green revolution' of hybrid crops, may instead have opened a Pandora's box of pestilence, famine and social disruption.

"Many agricultural experts now believe that the green revolution is in fact a myth and that continued extensive use of hybrid seeds will have devastating social and scientific repercussions" (Paragould Daily, Arkansas, Dec. 11, 1970).

Disaster -- for America's No. 1 agricultural product: "The devastating southern leaf blight disease, which already has wiped out 50 per cent of the South's corn [maize] crop this year, has reached epidemic stage in many other areas.

"The corn blight organism has been with us 50 years..... but since it is so widespread this year, we suspect something else is in operation" (UPI Release, Aug. 18, 1970).

THE CAUSE -- Whatever Could It Be?????

These problems are the scourge of man in his herculean efforts to feed himself and we have just lightly touched on a fraction of them. Can you imagine, for example -- "AT A CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE FUNGAL PATHOGENS CONSUME OVER ONE THIRD OF ALL THE CROPS PRODUCED" (Science Journal, Aug. 1970).

That's quite an admission!!!

Are there many causes for these multiple problems, or can they be traced back to just one simple underlying fact? In spite of our knowledge explosion, (especially in science and technology) man is still blind to the truth about his agriculture. As knowledge increases, we might well expect problems to decrease. Never before have so much science and technology been applied to the business of food production, as today. Yet never before have problems loomed so large over the agricultural industry as a whole!

We must therefore conclude that there is no correlation between problem-solving and our knowledge explosion. "Science" just does not have the answer for the world's food producers. It seems unable to focus an ecological view of the environment now being destroyed. Could it be that farmers and scientists alike -- refuse to face responsibility for their own ACTIONS??

Our Environment And Its Inter-dependent Parts

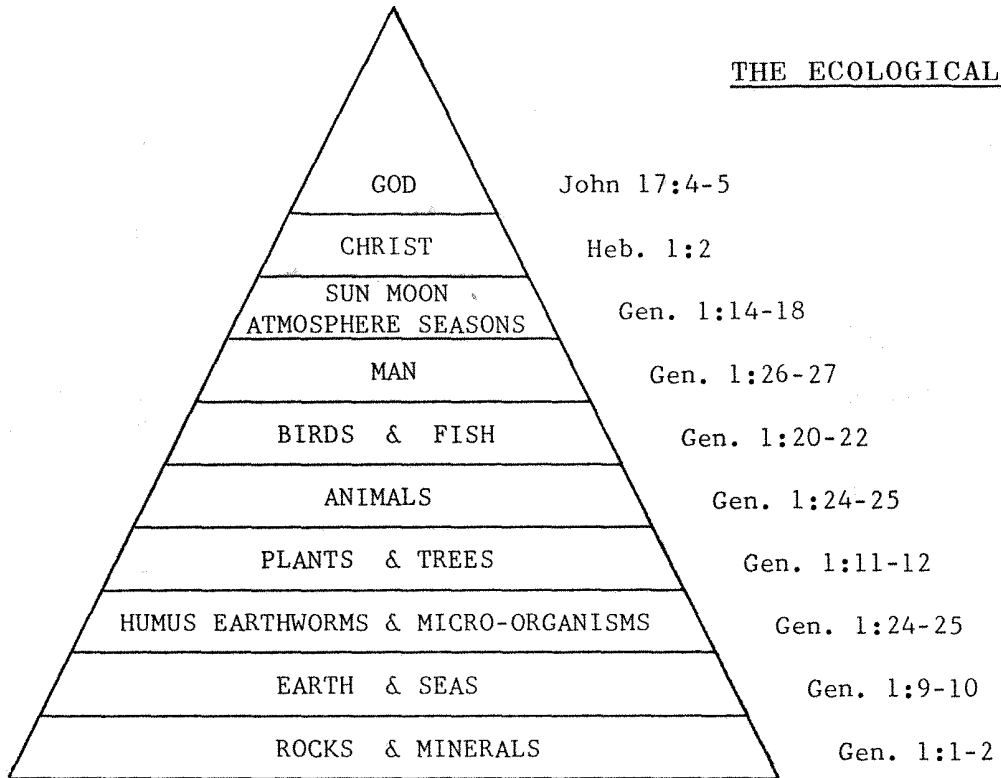
There exists a tight inter-relationship between all the major segments of our God-created environment. Below we have diagrammatically represented the parts of that system, of which God said: "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it and have dominion....." (Gen. 1:28).

The quality expected of that rulership and "DOMINION" is expressed in Gen. 2:15 -- ".....God took Adam and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it."

Our whole approach to this beautifully designed ecological system is bound up in those two words: "dress" and "keep." The Creation is for the service of man, but these two words give us the key to man's approach: "to dress" means that we should be bound to that creation in a grateful attitude of service and dedication. And "to keep" means that we should guard, protect and preserve our environment -- just as parents would their own children.

It is true -- the environment is for our service, but the more we serve it and hedge it about with loving care -- the more it will serve US! Contrast this kind of approach with the news quotes given earlier in this article!

THE ECOLOGICAL PYRAMID



A Plan For Destruction

Instead of learning from his daily disasters -- man shrugs his shoulders, saying in effect: "We have always had problems and disease is inevitable anyway!" BUT IT IS NOT INEVITABLE!

That pyramid can help us understand ecology by appreciating the inter-dependence of each segment. Looking at it closely, one can conclude that the entire structure contains only ONE non-essential unit -- MAN! Knock out any one of the other integral parts of this biotic pyramid and the entire physical system would collapse. We never pause to reflect that MAN could be removed and yet the environment would continue right on without him.

When you put man in this kind of perspective it makes one think that we ought to exercise a little caution and discretion. After all, why should the only non-essential part threaten the continued operation of the whole!

Man appears to be bent on destruction, if that is what is "necessary" to achieve his own greedy ends. We live in a God-designed and created environment, but humanity is filled with a carnal mind which is hostile to the laws of Almighty God (Rom. 8:7).

Secondly -- man is not alone and unaided in the job of destruction he is doing. Right now Satan, who is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4) is plotting and scheming with everything in his power. He aims to thwart the 7,000-year plan of our Creator.

To do that he must destroy man -- the focal point of that plan. Because the ecological pyramid sustains man, every physical section of it is under attack. None has been overlooked! But Satan is cleverly working with the most insignificant unit of all -- THE LIVING SOIL, as contrasted with dead, inert earth.

#### What Is Soil?

A fertile soil is 90% inorganic. Under the microscope, even the finest of these rock particles (that's what they are) look like the smashed remains of a pile of broken bottles. The other 10% (or thereabouts) is "waste" organic matter. It is of vegetable and animal origin and ideally is in every stage of decomposition. Ultimately it becomes what is called HUMUS.

#### What Are The Facts About Humus?

- A. It provides a buffering action against acidity, thereby retaining a favourable environment for earthworms and other organisms involved in organic decomposition.
- B. It preserves the essential crumb-structure, thus preventing soil compaction and also erosion by wind and water.
- C. It aids water absorption, moisture retention, temperature control, drainage and the release of inorganic nutrients.

One of the world's leading authorities on soil micro-biology states that: "The importance of humus in human economy seldom receives sufficient emphasis. Suffice to say that it probably represents THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF HUMAN WEALTH ON THIS PLANET" [Emphasis ours] (Humus, by Selman Waksman, p. 414).

A man knighted by a past British Government for his work on organic agriculture, writes as follows: "Nature has provided a marvellous piece of machinery for conferring disease-resistance on the crop. This machinery is only active in soil rich in humus; it is inactive or absent in infertile land and in similar soils fertilized with chemicals" (An Agricultural Testament, by Sir Albert Howard, p. 167).

Elsewhere the same authority states: "I have several times seen my oxen rubbing noses with foot-and-mouth cases. Nothing happened. The healthy well-fed animals reacted to this disease exactly as suitable varieties of crops, when properly grown, did to insect and fungous pests -- no infection took place.

".... Nothing was done in the way of prevention beyond good farming methods and the building up of a fertile soil" (Ibid, pp. 162-163).

The organic 10% is the basic key to the ecological structure. Without it, the earthworms and other organisms of decomposition disappear from the soil. Without organic decomposition, soil texture is destroyed and plant nutrients become unavailable. Without a balanced and continuous supply of nutrients, the entire plant kingdom is threatened with disease and starvation!

Without healthy plants, the herbivora of the animal kingdom and man are threatened with disease and starvation. And without a diet of healthy animals, both carnivora and man are doomed!

### The Collapse Of Our Environment

Are not these the exact conditions facing mankind at this moment in time? Yes, they certainly are and the cause is the same too. Look at the following quote:

"An official inquiry into the health of farmland soils has found that in parts of England and Wales the fertility and structure of the soil have broken down to 'dangerous proportions.' In the most critical areas... the deterioration has gone so far that arable farming will probably have to be abandoned. The survey reveals that the organic content of these heavy clay soils is often as low as three per cent..." (The London Observer, Aug. 30, 1970).

Do you see the fearful implication? There are many ways in which our society can be destroyed, but one of them is by the simple and seemingly innocent device of lowering the organic content of the earth's food-producing soil.

If Satan can only induce man to remove that vital 10% of organic matter, the ecological pyramid will collapse -- this planet will then be agriculturally as dead and inert as the moon!

### Man Misses The Connection!

LACK OF HUMUS IS THE KEY TO THE PROBLEMS OF FOOD PRODUCTION!

Huge manmade deserts attest to the fact that every civilization has depleted that vital organic content of the soil. Today the agro-chemical industry is a lethal facade, hiding the falling humus levels in a smoke-screen of low quality, high production! The fact that this produce is nutritional JUNK -- phases neither farmer nor consumer. Stealthily, soil destruction takes over!

On the other hand, research at Ambassador College is daily improving our ecological understanding. God promises a return to Garden of Eden conditions (Ezek. 36:33-35). And then HUMUS REPLACEMENT will again assume its proper importance. Obedience to this law will go far to eliminating: soil destruction, man-made deserts and disease in all life forms! Meanwhile, robbing soil of its organic 10% continues to undermine our entire ecological structure!