



CREATOR

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THE CASE FOR CHRIST'S WISDOM

Decomposers v. An Unbelieving World
Second Day of Testimony

*The LORD is gracious and merciful;
Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.
The LORD is good to all, and His mercies are over all
His works. Psalm 145:8-9*

Editor's Note: We continue our fictional trial in which the nature of decomposition and the wisdom of our Creator, Christ Jesus, are presented. Springtail prepares to speak.

Judge: "The counsel for the plaintiff may continue to present evidence regarding Christ's wisdom and mercy seen reflected in decomposition."

Springtail: "Thank you, Your Honor. In many ways . . ."

Judge: "Where's Beetle?"



Springtail
(greatly magnified)

Springtail: "Oh, he's at home sick. I think he caught a bug."

Judge: "Caught a 'bug'?" *The judge just stares at Springtail with an annoyed look. Springtail becomes rather nervous.*

Springtail: "Ummm . . . in many ways, our Lord God made a compost heap to function just like the human liver."

Judge: "Hmmm. . . . How so?"

Springtail: "If you will permit, Your Honor, I have a slide that explains."

Judge: "Proceed."

Compost Heap and the Human Liver¹

- both perform a large number of chemical reactions
- both assist in digestion
- both remove toxins
- both are composed of living cells
- both fight infection
- both produce their own heat

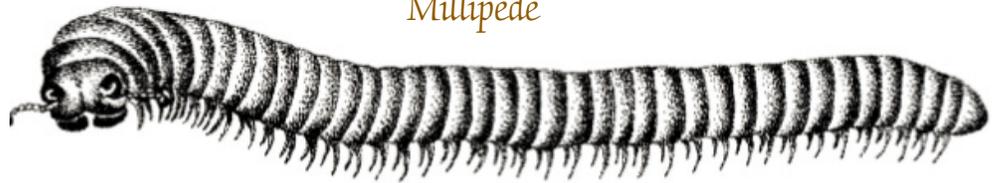
Springtail: "Like the liver—which generates heat to help keep your body warm—a compost heap produces a considerable amount of heat energy. There are an unbelievable number of chemical reactions that take place in a

¹ Read about the liver in *HIS NATURE* Issue 05.

healthy compost pile; the same is true for your liver. Both assist in digestion: a compost heap ‘digests’ plant material and a liver helps digest

ingested food. The liver plays a key role in removing poisons and germs from the human bloodstream. Decomposers also remove toxic substances from a compost pile, or the soil in which they reside. And as Beetle mentioned yesterday, Your Honor, soil and compost microorganisms manufacture antibiotics that prevent other microbes from ‘infecting’ or taking over the dirt. Actinomycetes (ak - tih - no - my - SEE - teez), in particular, produce some very common antibiotics: erythromycin, streptomycin, tetracycline, and neomycin.

“Finally, like the liver—which is composed of living cells—Christ Jesus populates dirt with trillions upon trillions of bacteria and fungi, not to mention macroorganisms, like us. I have another slide, Your Honor, that details the incredible number and variety of decomposers God has placed in healthy soil.”



Millipede

Springtail: “What’s even more astounding is that two tablespoons of rich forest topsoil possess one million species of bacteria . . . not just one million bacteria, but a million *different kinds* of bacteria! That would be equivalent to a million different species of birds living in a single forest.”

For a minute, the judge is left speechless.

Judge: “Wha . . . what do you mean when you refer to yourself as a macroorganism?”

Springtail: “At this time, I would like to call Millipede to the witness stand.”

Judge: “The witness may come forward.”

Due to its large number of legs, the millipede takes several minutes to lumber its way to the front of the courtroom.

Judge: “Have you ever considered getting a motor scooter?”

Millipede: “What do you mean, Your Honor?”

Judge: “Never mind. Now, what is a macroorganism?”

Millipede: “You and I are macroorganisms, Your Honor. Any creature our Lord Jesus has made that can be seen without the aid of a microscope is a *macro*-organism. On the other hand, a microscope is needed to view *micro*-organisms like bacteria.³ God uses macroorganisms—beetles, mites, worms, springtails, sow bugs, ants, snails, slugs, maggots and us millipedes—to chew up dead leaves and twigs, and the remains of deceased animals. Scientists call us ‘the shredders.’ We’re the ones that chew holes in freshly fallen leaves. Fungi then move in and, over time, create the leaf skeletons that are so commonly found on the forest floor.”

Decomposers living on one square yard of dirt ²	
10 trillion	bacteria and fungi
10 billion	protozoa
5 million	nematodes (tiny worms)
100,000	mites
50,000	springtails
10,000	rotifers and ‘water bears’
5,000	insects, spiders, and millipedes
3,000	earthworms and potworms
100	snails and slugs
1	vertebrate (e.g., bird or frog)

Judge: “Astounding!”

² In order to give a sense of size, a typical dinner table is about two square yards or two square meters.



³ The prefix macro- comes from the Greek *makrós*, meaning “long or large.” Micro- comes from the Greek word *mikrós*, meaning “small.”



“Macroorganisms are similar to a demolition team. They ‘roll in’ and dismantle the bodies of dead plants and animals, like workmen who bring down old buildings with dynamite, wrecking balls, and cranes. Then the microorganisms (bacteria, actinomycetes, and fungi) use powerful chemicals to reduce the rubble of dead organisms and animal waste into smaller and smaller pieces. To the untrained eye, all this may seem chaotic, but decomposition is actually extremely orderly—reflecting the incredible wisdom of Christ.”

Judge: “Do you *enjoy* chewing on dead things?”

Millipede: “It’s the work Jesus has given me to do and I enjoy obeying Him!”

Springtail: “Your Honor, I would like to now call my next witness to the stand.”

The judge motions with his hand for the next witness to come forward. Millipede makes his way back to his seat as an earthworm squirms up to the witness stand. Meanwhile, several more minutes tick off the courtroom clock.

Judge: “I don’t want to seem impatient, but is there any way of speeding up testimony?”

Springtail: “Oh, sorry about that, Your Honor. I’ll work on it.”

Worm: “Good day, Your Honor!”

Judge: “Ah . . . yes . . . well, what do you have to tell us about our Creator today?”

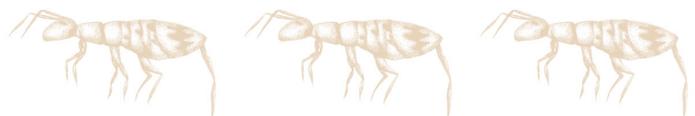
Worm: “Deep within the recesses of the soil in which I swim, I have been privileged to observe the many mysteries of Christ’s work. And we earthworms ought to know—we can process up to 10 tons of soil on one acre of land in just one year, so we’re exposed to much of what takes place in the ground.

“As Millipede just mentioned, decomposition is extremely orderly, yet also extremely complex. Once the ‘shredders’ have done their job, countless microorganisms then apply their skills. One after another, different microbes use their God-given chemicals to disassemble once-living tissue.



Soil
fungus

“Microbes break down organic remains using a staggering number of secreted enzymes. Since even a small amount of soil contains a million distinct types of microscopic creatures, the number of chemicals they produce is mind boggling. After one type of microbe is finished with





Earthworm

its duties, the detritus [pronounced dih - TRY- tus] is worked on by a different microorganism. It, too, alters the chemical nature of the decomposing material and then ‘passes it on’ to the next type of microbe, and so forth, through a long, mysterious chain of divine activity within the earth.”

Judge: “What is *detritus*?”

Worm: “Oh, sorry, Your Honor. I should have explained that right off. Detritus is the remains of dead plants and animals after they’ve been ground up by the ‘shredders.’

“As microbes process this detritus, nutrients must be released at just the right rate and in just the right amount in order to keep the soil healthy and free of disease. If too much nitrogen is suddenly released, for instance, large quantities of poisonous ammonia can accumulate in the ground. Decomposition is a delicate balancing act performed by our infinitely wise Creator!

“Another way to understand all this, Your Honor, is to see it as de- . . . composition. Jesus is the Composer of all life. He is the Orchestrator of a beautiful living symphony. Because of the sin of mankind, creation’s praise to its God has been muted (Job 26:14). All of nature strains to worship its Creator—its slavery to corruption and decay interrupts that praise (Romans 8:20-22). So Jesus faithfully breaks down the ‘notes’ of this living melody by the process of decomposition, releasing nutrients into the soil, which then can be re-composed via photosynthesis into a fresh song of praise to the Triune God (Psalm 96:1-3; 104:30).⁴

⁴ This is well summarized in the Reformation Study Bible: “God is a sovereign Lord. . . . He has power to redeem, recreate, and renew.” Reformation Study Bible, Ligonier Ministries, 2005, p. 868.



“Despite intensive research, the many details of decomposition remain a mystery—a mystery to all except the Almighty. I think I can best summarize the enigma of decomposition by quoting soil researcher and author, J.I. Rodale: ‘No one really knows all that goes on in the soil—what exactly the bacteria, the fungi, the worms and the other soil organisms do—and probably no one ever will know.’”⁵

Springtail: “If it would please the court, I would like to present our final witness.”

Judge: “Proceed.”

Springtail: “The counsel for the plaintiff calls Pastor Sergei Golovin to the stand.”

A dark-haired, bearded gentleman approaches the witness chair. He carefully scoops up the worm with his right hand and gently holds it as he sits down.

Judge: “What say you, Pastor?”

Pastor Golovin: “When our Lord Jesus Christ first created the universe, the world was uncorrupted and His creatures did not face death. But then Adam sinned, and plants and animals began to perish.

[Because of sin] the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky, and also the fish of the sea disappear (Hosea 4:3).

“Our incredibly wise God knew beforehand that our sins would have far-reaching consequences. Therefore, He placed tiny, mysterious organisms—which we call decomposers—into the fabric of the earth’s surface. As you have learned, Your Honor,

⁵ Jerome Irving Rodale, *The Complete Book of Composting*, (Emmaus PA: Rodale Books Inc., 1960), p. 23.



decomposers return essential minerals and nutrients back to the soil after an organism dies. Christ Jesus then creates life out of death. Through decomposition, He reveals His wisdom, the mysterious working of His hand, and His steadfast love, goodness, and mercy.”

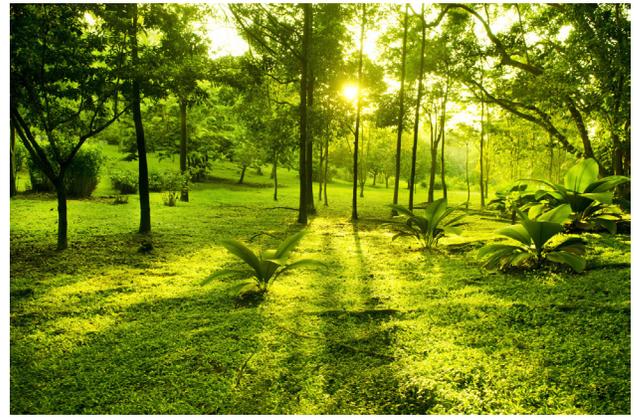
Decomposition is proof positive that God knew ahead of time that mankind would fall into sin (the Fall) and would drag all of creation into corruption and death (Romans 8:20-22). It was necessary, therefore, for Jesus to create decomposing organisms when He placed life on Earth.

Judge: “In what way is His mercy seen?”

Pastor Golovin: “Your Honor, if God had not planned for the effect death would have on His creation, the corpses of billions of creatures and dead plants would now cover the entire earth and fill the oceans, stacked postmortem one on top of another. The world could not survive long under such horrible conditions.

“Through decomposition, the Lord Jesus gives us a peek into His heart of compassion. Scripture tells us that only people who believe in Christ, and what He accomplished on the Cross, will be forgiven *in eternity*. But by providing a way for life to be reborn from death, God also reveals His forgiveness and mercy, *here and now*—because of the effects our sins have had on the state of His creation. Healthy ecosystems are a testimony to His mercy. If the Triune God had not provided decomposition as a means to counteract the effects of man’s sin, the world would have ceased to exist long ago.”

Judge: “So, you might also say that Christ’s mercy is seen in moldy fruit, like this orange



presented as evidence yesterday?”

The judge points with a face of disdain to the fruit still rotting on his desktop.

Pastor Golovin: “Yes, Your Honor—it also shows His power, His wisdom, and the mystery of His being! The rebirth of life from death is what decomposition represents, and it points to the sacrifice our Lord made on the Cross.”

Judge: “How so?”

Pastor Golovin: “Jesus died to redeem His people from sin and eternal death, Your Honor. Those who surrender their lives to Him, though they may die in this world, will live forever in paradise with God. This new earth, spoken of in the Bible (Revelation 21:1), is a place that will never again be visited by death and decay. It is this hope that daily encourages and strengthens those of us who truly trust in Christ (Romans 8:23-25; 2 Corinthians 4:16).

“There is coming a time soon when all those who receive Christ as their Lord and Savior will be transformed from corruption into heavenly glory. Those Christians who have already died will be snatched from the ‘hungry jaws’ of decomposing organisms and be given bodies that will never again see decay.

“Contrast this with what the Bible says will happen to those who reject Christ.”



Pastor Golovin reaches for the Bible on the judge's desk and opens it to the middle.

Pastor Golovin: "And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against Me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."⁶

Judge: "Seems harsh, doesn't it, Pastor?"

Pastor Golovin: "It isn't, Your Honor. To me, what is incredible is that Jesus willingly endured the wrath of His Father because of *my sins!*"

The judge sits motionless for the longest time with his right hand under his chin, pondering what Pastor Golovin just said.

Judge: "So what should we do?"

Pastor Golovin: "Surrender yourself to Jesus Christ and receive Him as the infinite gift He is. Believe that He died on a cross for your sins, and that He rose from death to redeem you, and is now seated in heaven with His Father, interceding on behalf of His own. The Heavenly Father freely bestows eternal life on all who believe in His Son.

"The testimony over the last two days—and more importantly the testimony of the Bible—urges us to take the character of God much more seriously, and practice here on Earth what the Saints in Heaven have the privilege of doing all the time . . . marveling at Christ Jesus, our Creator, Savior and Lord!"

There is a hush in the courtroom as the judge again considers Pastor Golovin's words.

Judge: "I wish to thank the counsel for the plaintiff for an excellent presentation these past two days. It would seem that the Unbelieving World did not think it worthwhile to appear in court. If we are to take Pastor Golovin's words at face value, then there will be a day of reckoning in a infinitely higher court, which the Unbelieving World cannot escape!"

⁶ Isaiah 66:24

"In anticipation of the unavoidable conclusion to the evidence presented to me over the past two days, I have taken the liberty of locating testimony from one of the World's own. This is an excerpt from a poem called, *This Compost*, by Walt Whitman:

It [the earth] grows such sweet things out of such corruptions. . . . It gives such divine materials to men, and accepts such leavings from them at last.

"If one of society's celebrated poets could recognize Christ's hand at work through decomposition, why does the rest of the Unbelieving World choose not to? Court adjourned."

*"I am the resurrection and the life;
he who believes in Me will live even if he dies."
John 11:25*



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