

Red in Tooth and Claw?

The lady said, “How can you say there is a God when He allows a small deer to be hunted to death by a leopard? Is it right for a fox to rip apart chickens?”

If you are of a sensitive nature, this may not be quite to your taste, but please do read on because this is a frequent and important discussion.

A Professional’s View

As a young student in animal health I visited a slaughterhouse on the side of a hill. It was my first visit. A beautiful Jersey cow entered, was shot and bled. I felt sickened.

Thirty years later, wiser, and acting as a professional, I watched a lorry load of pigs brought into the factory. Six were taken into a pen, and one was stunned and its throat cut. There was no reaction or fear shown by the other animals.

Why is that? Animals have no fear of death. They do not know what it is. When danger faces them adrenaline is

forced around the body prompting them to flee. An animal rarely grows old in the wild, because disease affects it, or it can be taken by a predator, either of which prevents the difficulties associated with old age.

This was demonstrated on a film I saw recently. A lion was stalking a gazelle, but the animal escaped and a few moments later was cropping the grass quite contentedly.

Animal Instinct

Animals are not cruel, they only kill to live. If they did not, then the countries of the world would be overwhelmed by masses of different species. Humans have free will but animals have set instincts given them by the wise Creator.

On another occasion I met a very aggrieved farmer, armed with a shotgun. A fox had killed 99 of his chickens, and he vowed, “It will not get the hundredth.” He settled down at

night but fell asleep and the fox had the hundredth! The fox took the one it wanted, but the farmer went home very aggrieved. The fox went back to his lair satisfied, because he was programmed to chase and catch prey – and had found the perfect scenario surrounded by scores of clucking chickens.

Finally, we have to see that animal suffering tends to be very short-lived, and although the thought of predators killing them affects our feelings, we have to see that there is no other way.



God's Principles for Nature

From the beginning God allowed man to supervise His animal kingdom and said:

Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth (Genesis 1:28).

Mankind has failed dismally to properly manage the earth, and many species are dying out. They are frequently killed, not by other animals but by the human greed of those who eradicate them, or take away their habitat, for profit. We hear all too often that many species are close to extinction.

Yet over all this, the amazing Creator is ultimately in command, and He has said:

For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are Mine (Psalm 50:10-11).

He expects us to treat our animals with consideration as He says:

A righteous man regards the life of his animal (Proverbs 12:10).

Setting it Right

Peace in nature will finally come with the establishment of God's kingdom, at Jesus Christ's return. The prophet Isaiah, looking forward, has an exciting verse which says:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion



and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them (Isaiah 11:6).

What a delightful phrase – a little child shall lead them. It is a lovely picture of an age where there is harmony everywhere. In addition, you who fear snakes will find comfort as Isaiah adds:

The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea (v8-9).

What a truly superb climax to the divine plan of the ages. Man has failed to have a caring dominion, so God's Son will take over the rule of the world with that grand result.

I cannot wait to see it; how about you, do you want to be there?

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