

The Bible and Modern Science

The Early World, Dinosaurs and the Deluge: a Young Earth Model

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Introduction: Old earth or young earth? The issue continues to be debated among sincere believers of both persuasions. A straightforward exegesis of Scripture leans toward a literal six-day creation, and whereas some scientific evidence points toward long ages of time, other points toward a more recent timetable. Evolution, of course, *requires* long periods of time, and theistic evolutionists adopt modern science's timeline and propose an allegorical interpretation of the days of Genesis, chapter one. Progressive creationists also hold to an old earth model, deferring to scientific evidence indicating the earth is billions of years old. Young earth creationists, on the other hand, take issue with the philosophy of *uniformitarianism*, which assumes that natural processes have always operated in the same way, and instead point to God-induced *catastrophism*, and explain an old-appearing (but young) earth as God having created the universe and all things in it *fully mature* (e.g., full-grown trees with rings already present). Last week's lesson demonstrated that macroevolution doesn't fit with the facts. So, if all creatures weren't necessarily separated by long periods of time, is there any evidence for that, and are there other explanations for what we see in the fossil record? Obviously, the Bible is silent on a lot of these issues, nor were scientists present to actually observe what happened in the past. What follows contains, to be sure, speculation, but provides a possible biblical scenario.

The Early World

- Climate and Terrain -

Indications are that, in the past, the entire earth enjoyed a mild, subtropical climate, free from the extremes of heat or cold.*

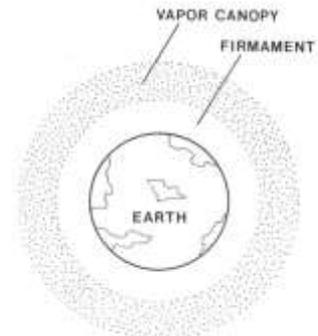
- The "waters that were *above* the expanse (firmament or sky - Gen. 1:6-8) may have existed in the form of a great vapor or crystal canopy around the earth, above the early atmosphere. This invisible water vapor canopy would have had a pronounced "greenhouse" effect on the earth by a dispersal of the sun's radiation over the planet, with no polar caps.**
- There was no rainfall (Gen. 2:5-6); the land was watered by mist, heavy dew, subterranean water and streams (Gen. 2:6). Therefore, the rainbow--God's covenant sign with Noah--did not exist until after the great flood.
- The surface of the earth contained larger land masses, smaller oceans and was characterized by a gentler topography (e.g., no ocean basins or high mountains which were post-flood phenomena).

- Flora and Fauna -

There existed a lush abundance of life that far exceeds our present biosphere. Evidences of this are:

Additional Notes

*There are currently over 30 theories by evolutionists to try to explain this.



**Note: Venus, Jupiter and Neptune have gas/vapor canopies.

Presently 75% of the surface of the earth is covered with water; of the 25% that is left, one-half is uninhabitable (mountains, deserts, tundra, etc.). Only 13% is "livable space."

- Fossils of reptiles and tropical vegetation as well as the remains of coral beds under the polar ice caps, giving evidence of a worldwide temperate climate.
- Vast coal beds--the remains of plant material--all over the world, as well as the extensive oil deposits (the remains of marine life) are a mute testimony to the enormous quantity of life that once existed.*
- Comparatively speaking, we live in a botanically and zoologically impoverished world today. Not only were there more plant and animal species than today, but they existed in far larger populations owing to the larger land mass and worldwide even temperatures. Also, they were generally of larger and more robust physical size (opposite of what evolution might predict).

*The plant material in the world today would not make even a fraction of the coal which we find presently contained in the earth.

The Dinosaurs

Modern scientific opinion insists that dinosaurs lived millions of years prior to humans. The basis of this reasoning is as follows:

1. *Dinosaur fossils are generally found in rock strata separate from strata bearing human fossils.* However, this would be expected of creatures that lived in different ecological zones which were caught, swept away and buried by flood waters.
2. *Differing ages of dinosaur versus human fossils according to radiometric dating.* However, this technique for determining the ages of rocks is based on uniformitarian principles (e.g., no leaching or contamination of the sample, no variance in decay rates), and the dates so produced are easily accepted or rejected depending on their agreement with . . .
3. *The underlying bias of the assumed evolutionary sequence and time scale* (the greatest driving force for such opinion).

On the other hand, if macro-evolution has not occurred, and if the earth is actually younger than supposed--more in keeping with a literal interpretation of Genesis, chapter one--then dinosaurs and humans could have lived contemporaneously. In fact, there are at least five evidences that support this idea!

- # 1: Evidence from ARCHAEOLOGY -

Cave paintings that seem to depict dinosaurs have been discovered in Zimbabwe, Africa, near Latrone, France, in Siberia and in a canyon in Arizona (Havasupai pictographs)

- #2: Evidence from ANCIENT LITERATURE -

- The Greek explorer Herodotus (460 B.C.) described small flying reptiles in Egypt and Arabia that had snake-like

heads and bat-like wings that had to be driven out of spice trees with smoke. Aristotle said that in *his* time it was common knowledge that creatures like this existed in Ethiopia.

- In ancient literature and legend there is an almost universal belief in (and traditions of) large, unusual reptiles referred to as dragons. Because of the universality of ancient beliefs in such creatures, we might assume that legends could be based on *fact*, recounting times when men did indeed encounter huge reptiles which are now known as *dinosaurs*!
 - Dragon legends are found in the early literature of the English, Irish, Danish, Germans, Greeks, Romans, Scandinavians, Germans, Egyptians, and Babylonians. There are also legends of dragons that flourished among Native American tribes such as the Crees, Ojibwas, Hurons, Chinooks, Shoshones, Algonquins, and Alaskan Eskimos.
 - The ancient Chinese included the dragon (dinosaur?) in their zodiac with eleven other *real, known* animals, aside from thousands of dragon stories and pictures in their books and art.

- #3: Evidence from MODERN FORENSICS -

In 2005 a paleontologist, Mary Higby Schweitzer (student of famed dinosaur expert Jack Horner), announced the discovery of soft tissue found inside a thighbone of a Tyrannosaurus from excavations near Hells Creek, Montana. The bone matrix was rehydrated to remove surrounding minerals and was surprisingly stretchy and flexible. Blood vessels and red blood cells were still evident and medullary tissue had remained elastic--this from a creature supposedly dead for 70 million years*!

- #4: Evidence from CONTEMPORARY REPORTS -

A smelly, two-ton reptile corpse was snagged by a Japanese fishing troller off the coast of New Zealand near Christ's Church on April 10, 1977. Measurements, photos, and colored sketches were taken of the creature before it was thrown overboard for fear of contaminating the cargo. Professor Yashinori Imizumi, Director General of Animal Research at the National Science Museum in Tokyo, viewed the evidence and stated, "*It is not a fish, whale, or any other mammal--it's a reptile and the sketch looks very much like a plesiosaurus.*" The plesiosaurus is a marine dinosaur which is thought to have died off about a hundred thousand years ago!

*Paleontologist Jack Horner from Montana State University, who discovered the fossil, announced, "It's a fantastic specimen." Nor was this an isolated finding. Schweitzer and a colleague, Dr. John Asara, also found similar soft tissue and protein fragments in another dinosaur, a Hadrosaur (*Science*, May 1, 2009)

Natives in the Congo region of Africa have insisted there exists a creature they call *Mokelembembe* ("the animal that can stop the flow of rivers") that they identified in a picture book as looking like a brontosaurus.

- #5: Evidence from THE BIBLE -

The authorized King James Version contains the word "dragon" sixteen times, rendering two Hebrew words (*tannin, tannim*) which mean "land or sea monster." Modern translations (with modern biases, perhaps?) prefer to translate this as "sea monster" or "serpent." And in the Book of Job (the earliest Bible writing), God directs Job's attention to various animals that Job is familiar with, including two which appear to describe large reptiles (dinosaurs?) although modern translators have made other guesses.

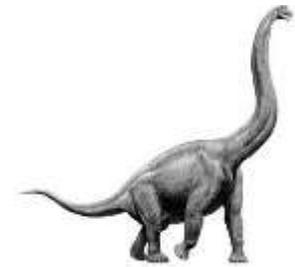
- The creature called "Behemoth" (Job 40:15-24) is usually footnoted as "hippopotamus" or "elephant," but more aptly describes a huge dinosaur. For example, his tail was like a cedar tree (hippos and elephants don't qualify!) and any beast with such a tail, along with the expression "he is the first of the works of God" (v. 19) more easily exemplifies an animal such as the 75-ton, 80 ft. long and 40 ft. high *Brachiosaurus*.
- The creature called "Leviathan" in Job 41 (from the Hebrew '*lawa*' meaning "twist, coiled"), usually footnoted as "crocodile," brings to mind something even more awesome and terrifying. It had reptilian scales (v. 15-17) but its underside was hard, unlike a crocodile. No one could subdue it (v. 1-10), but men have been killing crocodiles as long as can be remembered, and "nothing on earth was its equal" (v. 33). References to its fire-breathing capabilities (v. 18-21) may be poetic, but is certainly reminiscent of our legendary *dragons*.

The Deluge

Some Bible critics dismiss the flood account in Genesis 6-8 as mythology, yet the Lord Jesus referred to the flood (Matt. 24:37-39) as did other New Testament writers (Heb. 11:7, 1 Pet. 3:20), so such unbelief calls into question not only the authority of Scripture but that of Jesus Christ himself.* At least 88 different worldwide flood accounts have been collected from the ancestral traditions of various cultures all over the world (e.g., Babylonians, Chinese, Sumerians, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders).** All account seem to agree in three main areas:

1. a universal destruction of the human race and all living things by water.
2. an ark, or boat, was provided as a means of escape.
3. a seed of mankind was preserved to perpetuate humanity.

This obviously begs the question of how so many diverse and separated cultures around the globe could have the *same story*



Brachiosaurus

*Others try to explain away the flood as a local occurrence (i.e., not worldwide), but any waters that "covered the mountains by about 20 feet" (Gen. 7:19-20)--even assuming a much gentler topography than today--would be more than a local flood! And if it had been only a local flood, Noah and the animals could have more easily migrated on foot out of range.

**E.g., according to a Mexican flood tradition, Coxcox, also called Tezpi by other tribes, saved himself, his wife, his children, some animals and some grain, from a great flood by embarking in a boat or raft. When the Great Spirit ordered the water to withdraw, Tezpi sent out from his ship a vulture. This bird feeds on carrion and hence did not return because of the great number of carcasses strewn all over the earth. Tezpi sent out other birds, of which the hummingbird alone returned, bringing with it a branch covered with leaves.

unless it was an actual, historical event of common ancestry.

- Source of the Waters -

Condensation of the great water vapor or crystal canopy which surrounded the earth resulted in a torrential downpour of rain. These were the "windows of the heavens" (Gen. 7:11-12) which were opened to produce heavy rain for 40 days and nights (there is presently only two inches worth of precipitation in the atmosphere). In addition, the "fountains of the great deep" (Gen. 7:11) were opened, i.e., great subterranean reservoirs of water that burst forth upon the land along with steam and lava. Indeed, this was likely the greatest source of the flood waters, since the waters continued to rise on the earth for over 100 days *after the rain stopped* (Gen. 7:24).

- Noah's Ark -

Its size (450 ft. long x 75 ft. wide x 45 ft. tall) had the equivalent carrying capacity of 522 standard railroad stock cars--more than ample for all known land animals (existing *and* extinct) with two-thirds space left over for food, waste, and living quarters for the people. It was composed of stories or decks, each equipped with rooms, cages, and stalls. Many of the animals need not necessarily have been full-grown (e.g., reptiles can reproduce before they attain full stature).

- Noah did *not* gather the animals--they came to him (Gen. 6:20, 7:15-16) as God evidently implanted a migratory instinct into the pairs of all kinds. Similarly, He could have brought about a state of hibernation upon all animals in the ark to reduce care and feeding. In any event, the same God who supernaturally cared for the provisions for His people during the Exodus (i.e., manna) would have no problem preserving the animals during the flood.
- Circumstantial evidence for the existence of Noah's ark abounds; as early as 700 B.C. and up to present times numerous sightings have been reported of a large boat-like structure on Mt. Ararat in Turkey.

Aftermath of the Flood

Approximately 70 percent of the earth's surface is (now) covered by sedimentary, i.e., water-laid, rock. Not only was the earth flooded but huge volcanic and seismic upheavals occurred in the earth's crust. During the latter stages of the flood (and afterward) mountains were formed as land masses rose and ocean basins were formed to accommodate all of the (new)



Full-scale replica of the ark constructed in Dordrecht, Holland

If the surface of the earth had no irregularities (i.e., was smooth) the present oceans would cover it to a depth of nearly 2 miles. Therefore, there were no high mountains prior to the flood, otherwise they would not have been covered. Scripture informs us that it was until *after* the flood that the high mountains rose (Psm. 104:6b-8)

water (Psm. 104:5-9). As the waters receded to the ocean basins massive quantities of unconsolidated earth and rock were excavated and eroded away, gouging huge canyons and valleys all over the world.*

- Sedimentation, Deposition, and Fossilization -

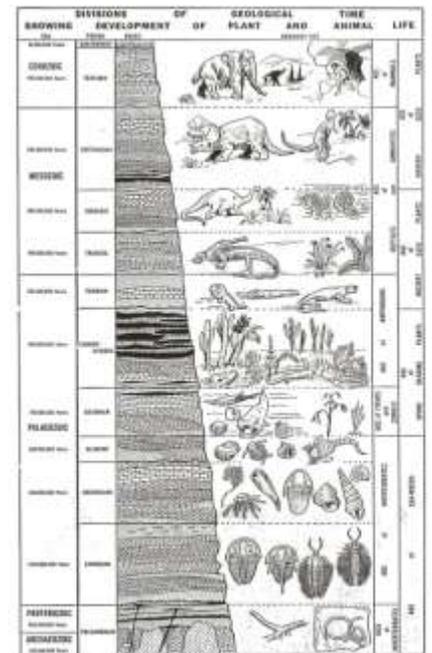
Out of the chaos and destruction, the resulting geologic deposits would have assumed a certain order as determined by gravity, density, and so forth.

- The different geological "ages" represented in the rock strata by the fossils are actually indications of different ecological zones separated and buried by the mud. Simple marine organisms (snails, mollusks, jellyfish and the like) were buried first due to their dense shells or limited mobility, then the more highly mobile fishes were trapped in the sediments. After that, animals that lived at the interface of land and water, viz., amphibians were buried, followed by land animals such as reptiles and finally birds and mammals which have the highest degree of mobility and intelligence and that sought higher ground to escape the floodwaters.
- Fossilized rock strata, therefore, speaks of sudden catastrophism with predictable depositions according to different ecological zones, not a hypothetical sequence of evolutionary "ages." Fossils can only form--and be found--in sedimentary (water-laid) rock, where the animal is buried suddenly and without air (otherwise complete decomposition occurs). The great fossil graveyards can be reasonably explained as herds of pre-flood animals overtaken by the vast sediments propelled by the waters of the Great Flood.
- Coal beds are *not* accumulations of age after age of peat bog growth (not seen in nature) but could have been formed in a relatively short time as huge masses of vegetation were transported, buried, and subjected to great pressure and geothermic temperatures.**

- Climatic Changes -

The loss of the vapor/crystal canopy resulted in a drastically "thinned" atmosphere (as today) without the greenhouse effect. Now began climatic *seasons* with their accompanying extremes of hot and cold. Such a drastic alteration of worldwide climate could certainly have been the cause of the extinction of dinosaurs--the relative few individuals that survived the flood by means of the ark could not adapt to the new world and reproduce in sufficient numbers. Other changes:

*Many geologists maintain that deep canyons were formed by slow erosion over long periods of time. Yet even the Grand Canyon could have been formed in a matter of *months*, not millions of years as uniformitarian principles would have us believe, e.g., by the massive erosion and/or splitting of miles' deep layers of mud. In fact, only at the very bottom of the Grand Canyon, along the low cliffs of the Colorado River, do the rocks show the polishing effects of years of water and silt abrasion. An eruption of the Mt. St. Helens volcano in Washington State created a 150 ft. deep *stratified* canyon by a mud and water flow within a day!



**Note: Heat and pressure applied to organic (plant and animal) material has produced coal and oil in a few hours during experiments at the University of Utah.

- Rain, snow, and cloud formations were now possible, along with God's covenant sign, the rainbow (Gen. 9:16f).
- Harmful cosmic radiation was now able to penetrate through the earth's atmosphere to a greater degree and, along with the cumulative, degenerative effects of sin, bring about a decrease in people's life spans (note the sudden drop in the ages of the patriarchs after the flood).
- The drastic change in climate brought the formation of polar caps and ice sheets as well as the onset of an Ice Age with accompanying ice flows (note that *some* geologic formations attributed to ice flows--water-laid rocks, gravel and silt, erosion--could also be attributed to a catastrophic flood). Many of "Ice Age" theories which attempt to explain present geologic phenomena are built on un-provable assumptions. Some major problems are:
 - Unexplainable changes in the earth's climate
 - There is no reasonable cause for glacial origins in the geographical areas assigned to them; the centers of origin are relatively *flat*, and the glaciers supposedly formed on one side of the poles (Americas) and not the other (why?).
 - Unexplainable movement, e.g., no known force could have pushed an ice mass over 2000 square miles of relatively flat land (Keewatin area of Canada to the St. Louis region).
 - The well-preserved remains of woolly mammoths and other animals in the arctic wastes of Siberia and Alaska cannot be reasonably explained by a slowly encroaching glacial age or other uniformitarian means. These animals were "quick-frozen" by an almost instantaneous and extreme change in climate, likely attributable to the collapse of the canopy.
- Continental *separation* could have occurred soon after the flood as geological forces on a worldwide scale broke up much of the lithosphere (crust) so that a floating effect was created over an unconsolidated base.
 - Not only do the continents of the eastern and western hemispheres appear to be pieces cut from the same puzzle, but there are amazing similarities between the sedimentary and other rock layers in the north-eastern U.S. and Britain as well as beneath Florida and Africa.
 - This breaking up may be alluded to in Scripture as happening during the lifetime of Peleg (Hebrew = "division") when "the earth was divided" - Gen. 10:25