

Is Genesis History? Analysis

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I have listened to and watched the DVD film “**Is Genesis History?**” and the following is my reaction having heard what was said in this film.

I will not discuss what was presented by all experts shown in the film because I do not have the expertise to suggest any reasons why I might disagree with what some of them say. However, all experts speaking in various sections of the film tend to choose only data that fit their model and ignore any data that do not. They may call themselves young-earth creation *scientists*, but that is not the way science is properly done.

For example, Steve Austin, notes that the transitions between different sedimentary formations in the Grand Canyon seem to be sharp and then claims, because many contacts are flat, therefore, these formations cannot represent millions of years of time between their deposition. He points out that there are no abundant erosional channels at their contacts (Austin 1994). But he somehow seems to overlook the facts (1) that the Redwall limestone formation has ancient karst topography with caves and sinkholes, indicating that this formation was once lifted out of the water so that percolating rain water could dissolve out cavities and tunnels in the limestone, and (2) that erosion channels of the Temple Butte Formation, as much as 100 feet deep, cut the top of the Muav limestone and networks of channels of the Surprise Canyon Formation, up to ½ mile wide and 400 feet deep, cut the top of the Redwall limestone, indicating that these rocks were exposed at the earth’s surface to river erosion (Hill et al. 2016). He cannot rightly choose only what fits his young earth model and ignore that which does not.

Steve Austin also discusses the “great unconformity” at the bottom of the Grand Canyon on which the Cambrian Tapeats sandstone rests and claims that this unconformity was created by a giant rush of water in a very short period of time (perhaps in less than a week?) and somehow this water had sufficient force to

erode over great areas of the earth's surface and beveled granitic rocks that contained feldspars and quartz with a Moh's hardness of 6 and 7 in the bottom of the canyon (Collins 2017). Of course, he never explains where all this eroded rock went, but when miracles are produced, one does not use science. The Maine coast line consists of granite outcrops, and no hurricanes that have produced enormous waves that have pounded on these outcrops for hundreds of years have ever eroded these rocks in a short interval of time to produce an unconformable surface of any great extent. His imagination defies all physical laws that the Creator also made.

Andrew Snelling claims that the decay rate for radioactive elements was much faster in early biblical times, but if the decay rate was as fast as he claims for all the radioactive elements used in dating methods, the amount of heat generated by this decay would have been so great that the earth's crust would have melted. Noah and his family in the ark would have had to be floating in boiling water. He also claims that a particular rock was dated by four different methods and produced ages that were very different in time, and, therefore, age dating cannot be trusted. However, rocks in many different places have been examined by different dating techniques and have produced ages that are well within scientific error of being the same age. (Dalrymple 2000) These same age dates that were obtained were duplicated even when many different laboratories examined the same rocks. This gives considerable confidence that radioactive dating methods can be depended on. He also does not tell you that these radioactive dating methods are commonly used to date different geologic events. For example, one method is used to indicate the time of crystallization of molten rock; another gives the time in which these rocks were re-melted and/or metamorphosed. So, different times can be found to occur in the same rocks in some places.

What is quite significant is that the radioactive-age-dating methods give so-called "absolute ages" for igneous rocks that occur between or within sedimentary rocks whose relative ages are known by their positions in the geologic column. Because the absolute and relative ages are consistent and make logical sense with their positions in the geologic column of sedimentary rocks around the world, that also creates confidence in these measurements. How can this consistent dating happen during a flood that lasts only a year? God is a miraculous creator, but I do not think this nearly perfect correlation is the way He operated when He created the Earth to make these ages to be really the timing of events during the Flood

about 4,500 years ago. It is just as miraculous to have everything operate according to the natural laws that He made over millions and billions of years, otherwise, scientists cannot call them laws. As a geologist, when I do geologic studies I am totally dependent on the laws being laws, otherwise I cannot make any predictions or truly understand what happened in the rocks I have studied. I cannot say: “Well, it is best explained by miracles,” as the young-earth creationists seem to want me to do.

Snelling also talks about the Coconino sandstone with cross-bedding and claims that the angles of dip of the cross-bedding must mean this sandstone was deposited underwater. But the wide distribution of this sandstone formation and its thickness means that if the sand grains in this rock were deposited in a short time (say a couple of weeks during the flood), the rate at which moving water would have to have moved to transport that amount of sand grains would have been so fast that making underwater dunes that way verges on being unbelievable. Moreover, moving sand grains being carried up a dune face to spill over the crest would have wiped out fossil foot prints found in many different levels in the same outcrop of a supposed dune face. See the discussion of the Coconino sandstone and “Ten Myths of the Coconino by Whitmore” by Tim Helble. (Helble 2011, 2017) He gives several more examples of why Andrew Snelling is incorrect.

Kurt Wise disputes the evidence from studies in astronomy for long periods of time. He claims that the sun and stars were created during the Genesis Week, that the Creation ended then, and that this creation occurred in an unrepeatable way. But he ignores the fact that our sun is a second generation star and that this observation gives evidence of the evolution of our cosmos through long periods of time. There is plenty of evidence that creation is still going on as is apparent from the collisions of neutron stars that produce heavy elements, such as gold, are being created even now (Greenfieldboyce 2017). He also suggests that the Ice Age fits into his young-earth model on the basis that the oceans heated up following the flood to generate lots of evaporation of water, that this water then fell as snow in the polar regions of the Earth, and that subsequently the glaciers that were created there following this abundant snowfall have been melting to the present time. In his model this creation of glaciers only happened once. But geologic evidence shows that there were at least four times that continental glaciers, as much as 18,000 feet thick, were formed in Canada that flowed down into the United States

and not just once (Collins and Collins 2011). If there were four such events, then in his model four different periods of heating of the ocean must have occurred, and four different times blow-torch climates must have existed to melt that much ice to repeat the four cycles of glaciation. It is strange that historic records of civilizations since the time in which Noah's descendants lived never recorded such hot climatic conditions.

Marcus Ross claims that all fossils that were formed in sequential deposition from oldest at the bottom and youngest at the top resulted from early creatures being caught in the first part of a catastrophic flood and through time the flood level rose to overflow the different animals at higher levels, and that ultimately the dinosaurs at a higher level, living on the land, were overflowed and drowned. In his model all fossils were deposited during the catastrophic pulsing of the waves back and forth to pile the sedimentary layers on top of each other. But there are many, many examples where sedimentary rocks containing fossils were deposited in quiet water in which the animal communities are totally undisturbed. In these places the fossils are not jumbled (Senter 2011; Collins 2015; 2017).

Part of his argument is that fossil foot prints are found in older layers and the fossils of animals that made these foot prints are only found in younger layers. That statement is simply not true.

On the basis that flood waters were encroaching on the land as the ocean filled with the flood water, he disputes the idea for evolution of different creatures through time. In other words, Ross has the shore line being progressively submerged through time with the widening of the volume of the water in the ocean, so that different communities of animals at different levels with more advanced forms higher up were eventually buried by the uprising flood waters. But the geologic record shows that the shoreline in most places has not shifted through time. Creatures being buried to become fossils are on top of each other and are not shifted by lateral positioning because of the advancing flood as they were buried. That is, the fossils of different animals are stacked and not extended laterally. For example, Morton (2001) reports 25 places around the world where all 15 formations of the different ages in the geologic column can be found on top of each other.

Arthur Chadwick was shown examining a dinosaur fossil-collecting locality. He pointed out that the heavy bones were at the bottom and progressively upward the bones became smaller with the smallest at the top. I agree that this sorting by size likely is good evidence that these dinosaurs were caught in a flood, but that flood is likely a local event and not worldwide. Making it worldwide is a stretch of his imagination to make it fit a young-earth creation model.

Kevin Anderson says that nerve cells and proteins have been found to be preserved in dinosaur bones and that this is good evidence that the dinosaurs were buried during Noah's flood. (Anderson 2016) Mark Armitage also found fossil nerve cells in a triceratops dinosaur horn (Armitage & Anderson 2013; Armitage 2016). But nerve cells and proteins are preserved for many years in bones of humans, Neandertals (Green et al. 2010), and animals, even their genomes, for example. The preservation of these organic compounds occur in places where their preservation had nothing to do with being buried in a flood. Therefore, it is a stretch for Anderson and Armitage to say that what they found indicates that the fossils of dinosaurs were buried during Noah's flood. It is surprising that such cell and organic compounds can last for a long time, but time is not necessarily a reason to insist that such cells and organic compounds will necessarily disappear through time. If they are inside a protective coating of some kind within a bone where mineralizing fluids or bacteria cannot reach them, they could last for an extremely long period of time (say millions of years). What really is going to cause them to disappear?

Robert Carter talked about how communities are so well adapted to their ecosystem that he believes that this could only happen if a Creator formed them that way, almost instantly, so to speak. That adaptation is amazing, of course. I agree that this ability to adapt can be built into the way the Creator made DNA and RNA atoms to be able to adjust to environmental changes. Otherwise, the many times through the Earth's history the changing environments would have wiped out all life during episodes of catastrophic events and mass extinctions. All geologic formations have such events at their tops when some animal forms cannot adjust to changing conditions and cannot make it through to a younger age, and new species evolve that are able to survive. He also claims that there were many creation times to produce the different kinds (cats, dogs, and bears, for example), and that there are no transition forms. That simply is not true. As more and more fossils are

being found, transition forms are becoming more abundant and evident. Whales evolved from land-living leg-bearing animals to ocean-living marine creatures with flippers and hind legs missing is an example. (Understanding undated) Thus, some transition forms have been found.

Danny Faulkner claims that the galaxies were formed at the start of Genesis 1. In his model the light coming from the stars in distant galaxies, that supposedly are millions or billions of years away, had been created as if the light was already traveling at great speeds to us from these stars. This makes his model work, but it is purely based on faith and not on any known laws of science. Astronomers are still puzzling over why spiral galaxies have their inner parts going at the same speed as their outer parts and can only explain it at this point to be the result of dark matter and dark energy existing near them to make this possible.

George Grant, a pastor, points out that Jesus, Paul, Peter, and the apostles believed that the Old Testament recorded real history and claims that if Genesis 1, 2, and 3 are not real historical events, then the whole Bible cannot be trusted. That is total nonsense. The Old Testament authors were writing to give theological meaning to their history, and they were inspired to tell stories that made good theological sense to the Hebrew tribes that lived in biblical times. There were no scientists then, and these writers had the total freedom to explain things in ways that today we know to be not true scientifically. Nevertheless, they can be very true theologically.

What is ignored by all young-earth creationists (YEC) shown in this film is the ancient history in Precambrian time. According to them, all present mountains and modern erosional land surfaces were produced at the end of the flood and that the continents rapidly slid around after the flood during plate tectonics. But the 14,000-foot thickness of radiolarians deposited on the ocean floors give evidence that this rapid sliding never occurred. Dead radiolarians settle much too slowly to have this thickness to be deposited in 4,500 years since the flood.(Collins 2015). Modern GPS measurements also show that the oceanic crust has been sliding only by 2 to 5 centimeters per year. The YEC ignore the many different histories recorded in the Precambrian rocks of intrusion and crystallization of ancient magma, uplift and erosion of former continental mountains, and the slow sliding around of ancient continents. It is very doubtful that the Creator did all of this

miraculously on Day 3 of the Genesis Week. More than 95 percent of earth history is not mentioned in the Bible. If God is truly the author of Genesis 1, as some YEC seem to think, one would think He would have inspired a more complete history of creation.

Shown below is a power point image of two kinds of buildings (the building images were provided by Stephen Moshier at Wheaton College). The left half shows real buildings with substance behind the fronts; the right half shows movie-set buildings with no real substance behind their fronts. I think this two-part image is a good analogy for what the YEC present in the film “Is Genesis History?” The experts in this film seem to put up what they believe is good science, but what is presented really is pseudoscience with no real acceptable scientific evidence that includes all the data that should be included. That is, the film does not have the proper substance that one expects in a proper scientific investigation. Why bother to do science if the conclusion is that you must have faith to believe it? You might as well just say: A miracle happened here and not waste a lot of words.

Real buildings & sham buildings



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