

Lesson 15 “Catastrophe” – The New World

“You did cover it [the earth] with the deep as with a garment; the waters were standing above the mountains. At your rebuke, they fled, at the sound of thunder they hurried away. The mountains rose; the valleys sank down to the place which you did establish for them. You did set a boundary they may not pass over; that they may not return to cover the earth.” (Ps 104:6-9)

God’s Grace Displayed Again

God closed the ocean geysers and restrained (limited, restricted) the rain so that it was no longer torrential. The waters stopped rising. God put forces into place to turn the raging waters into receding waters. Wind, earth rising and sinking.

What evidence would we expect to find?

- Continents once below sea level having thick deposits, especially marine
- Soft sediments folded, thrust, overturned and uplifted in a short time
- Massive volcanic deposits throughout the rock record.
- Mass erosional features from receding waters.
- Larger and deeper ocean basins to hold the receding water.

The Earth Gets a New Look

Uplift of sediment-covered land

The continents were once below sea level. Thick water-laid sediments full of marine fossils were deposited on them. Those rocks have been uplifted thousands of feet, folded, thrust and overturned on a gigantic scale. Scientists believe present mountain ranges were uplifted almost simultaneously and during relatively recent times (*70 million years ago*). Marine fossils are found at the top of the highest mountains.

How are mountains formed?

- Folding of rock layers— Appalachians, Arbuckles
- Faulting (cracking and shifting of rock)— Guadalupe Mtns, Big Bend region of W. TX
- Volcanic eruption above the surface or bulging from below after hardening below the surface—Mt St Helens, Stone Mtn, GA
- Uplift of land above sea level—the Ozarks
- Combination of the four— the Rockies

Strata is too tightly bent for extended time

In many mountainous areas, strata thousands of feet thick are bent and folded into hairpin shapes. If the rocks were old at the time of folding and uplift, having been deeply buried and cemented, they should behave in a brittle fashion, shattering in the process. Yet, cement binding the grains has not been broken. Each grain in the rock layer had to rotate.

Injected Sandstone Shortens Time

Sandstone dikes (vertical wall-like features) several miles long, 150 ft high. Squeezed upward into cracks in a thick limestone layer. Deposited millions of years apart. No evidence the sand was cemented. Had to be semi-fluid when squeezed into the overlying cracks (like toothpaste).

Massive volcanic activity also built up the land

During the past, lava flowed much more freely than now, spouting from craters, and pushing upward from immense cracks, miles long. Volcanic rocks are mixed with sedimentary rocks everywhere. Huge quantities of granite bulged up from below the surface to form great domes (Pikes Peak).

- Columbia Plateau in Northwestern U.S.—oozing lava covered 200,000 sq. mi., 1000's of ft thick
- India's Deccan Plateau—lava is 2 miles thick!

Uplift of land above sea level resulted in enlarged, defined ocean basins

Release of water and magma would cause readjusting of oceans and continents.

- Grand Canyon is currently 7-8000 ft above sea level. The land supposedly went up and down several times and remained horizontal. The ocean was over the continent each time. Harder to believe than a onetime event!
- Continental shelves and slopes plus drowned river canyons indicate sea level was once lower than today.

The Waters Receded

Once the crust began to move (the previous land surfaces downward to form the new ocean basins, the previous sea bottoms and their new deposits of stratified sediments upward to form the new continents), the waters began to drain off the emerging lands, "and the water receded steadily from, the earth" (Genesis 8:3). The expression in the Hebrew indicates a rapid subsidence. The waters began to drain off the emerging lands.

Terraces and valleys

Subsiding waters leave water lines. Ancient water lines can be clearly seen along the coasts of all continents. In California, cities are built on them. Also seen along the great inland lakes that have now dried (Lake Bonneville, Death Valley).

Leveled Land with Remnant High Spots

Rapid withdrawal of water causes sheet erosion.

- Llano Estacado or "Staked Plain" stretches from Glen Rio, Texas, to Santa Rosa, New Mexico. Early travelers put stakes into the ground to find their way from place to place on this almost featureless surface.
- Great Plains
- Mesas and Buttes—Leveling off the tops of hills to form mesas in west Texas and New Mexico.
- Caves—the Flood waters receding is the best explanation for the formation of caves.

Rapidly Developed Mature Landscapes

Erosion of fresh surfaces takes place rapidly then slows down as an equilibrium is reached with the stability of the surface, plant coverage, cementation.

- Modern example in *Surtsey Island*—born in 1963; developed beaches, soil, meadows, and canyons by 1970.
- *Carved Valleys Adopted by Rivers*—In less flat areas, the receding waters would split into channels, which cut deep valleys in the soft, unconsolidated earth. Practically all river valleys are far deeper and wider than their present river systems require indicating they once carried a far greater volume of water. More in line with a flood than river erosion.

- *Canyons*—Modern example in Mt St Helens where layers of ancient solid rock, 500' thick eroded by mud flows and water in 1 day. Produced canyons 100' deep; had mature looking in only 4 years. Later creeks formed at the bottom of the canyons. The canyons caused the creeks, not vice versa.

Followed by an Ice Age

Besides the changes in landscape, climate had changed as well. Water was being taken off the land by taking the form of ice.

Conditions provided for an Ice Age

- *Increased evaporation*—Heat added to the ocean during the Flood would encourage evaporation and more snowfall available to high latitudes and elevations. Expect to find thick snow accumulation forming ice sheets.
- *Increased snowfall*—The key to snow rather than rain falling in an area is cooling. The condensed canopy would cause drastic cooling in the polar regions. Expect quick-frozen creatures, plants and soil.
- *Decreased snowmelt*—Slick continents, denuded of vegetation, would radiate heat back to the atmosphere. Volcanic ash would have reduced incoming solar radiation, enhancing the cooling. Resulting in cooler summers, not necessarily colder winters. Example: the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883.

Post-Flood Ice Age

- Vast ice sheets covered about one third of the land surface at their greatest extent. Today's polar ice caps and alpine glaciers are just remnants of those vast ice sheets. The ice left behind some pretty good clues—those frozen animals and plants plus volcanic ash throughout the glaciers at both Poles and in the tundra muck.
- The rest of the land close to the warm oceans and on either side of the equator would still have had a pleasantly warm climate like today. Two-thirds of the land was NOT covered by ice. The buildup and advance of the ice sheets would have ended as the oceans gave up their heat and conditions stabilized. The ice then retreated. Because the sea level was ~600 ft lower at this time, land bridges connected continents and islands which assisted the migration of animals and later people after the Flood.

Conclusion

The earth's features appear to have been fashioned largely by rapid, catastrophic processes that affected the earth on a global scale.

- Deposition of thick fossil-bearing water-laid sediments
- Uplift of mountain ranges
- Initiation of the ice age
- Extinction of animals

Fourteen references to the Flood in the New Testament including Jesus' own words. Combined with all this evidence, it must be true!

What We See in God's World Agrees with What We Read in God's Word