



## The Cataclysm

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(March-April, 2002)

*First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (II Peter 3:3-7)*

The term *Cataclysm* is derived from the Greek *kataklusmos*, the term used uniquely in the New Testament to describe "Noah's Flood." In the Old Testament another word is uniquely used to describe this event, *mabbuwl*. In each case other words are used for regular floods, demonstrating that this event was something unique. Indeed, dictionaries describe a cataclysm as a sudden violent change in the earth's crust, as well as a devastating flood. Thus "the Cataclysm" may be a more biblical way of referring to this event than calling it a "flood" (Blievernicht).



Modern revisionists seeking to "harmonize" Genesis with the worldview of Darwinian fundamentalism sometimes assert the Cataclysm was a local event, or a tranquil one. A "tranquil" Cataclysm? On the contrary the Bible consistently speaks of it as a world-shaking event, covering *all the high mountains* of the antediluvian (pre-Cataclysm) earth (Genesis 7:19). *All flesh* that moved upon the surface of the earth perished (Genesis 7:21). II Peter says *the world* was deluged and destroyed. God was perfectly capable of describing a local flood if He so wished; it is perfectly clear that the Cataclysm was global. It was not some local Mesopotamian regional disaster that Noah and the animals could have survived by walking uphill out of the area in the 120 years warning they were given.

And yet, where is the evidence for this event? After all, even regional floods leave evidence - erosion and new layers of sediment. For example, during the Ice Age glacial Lake Missoula burst across much of Washington state in what is known as the Spokane Flood, leaving massive evidence from the Grand Coulee canyon it cut to the giant spillways and ripple marks it left across the terrain. So if a global Cataclysm occurred, it must have left overwhelming evidence. Where is it?

You're standing on hundreds—if not thousands—of feet of it.

A worldwide Cataclysm would not only erode rock, it would subsequently deposit massive amounts of it in the form of sedimentary rocks around the globe. These deposits would be on an unprecedented scale, unlike anything we see today. Layer would form upon layer, rapidly, without intervening erosion from the passage of time. Huge numbers of living things would be trapped and buried, forming fossils. In short, a large portion of the geologic record we see beneath our feet would be formed.

We would expect most fossils to appear in a rough order from deep sea marine organisms to terrestrial life, based on factors like their ability to flee danger and hydrological sorting of their bodies. Of course marine organisms would be present at all levels, but land-dwelling life would not be found in the deep sea deposits. Darwinian fundamentalism does not *predict* this marine-to-terrestrial order we see in fossils, as the creation model does; it simply incorporates the evidence it finds. We even find marine fossils on the tops of the highest mountains, including Mount Everest, demonstrating that the layers from which the mountains formed were once under water.

Likewise, massive layers like the Morrison formation (which contains many dinosaur fossils) and the Dakota formation, each covering much of the western United States, reveal a scope of deposition far beyond anything we see in sedimentary deposition today. Layers almost invariably lay flat upon one another without evidence of intervening erosion which would occur if they were exposed for any length of time.

These layers formed rapidly. A large portion of the geologic record is now recognized to be composed of *turbidites*, series of individual layers that formed together in cycles in fast-flowing water. (Roth) In some locations thick sequences of strata are bent and plastically deformed. These bent sequences show that the bottom layers were still soft and unconsolidated when the deformation occurred because otherwise they would have cracked into many sections. Polystratic (“many-layer”) fossils such as tree trunks up to 30 meters tall show that the layers around them formed rapidly, as they would otherwise have been exposed and rotted away before burial and fossilization. Many other lines of evidence demonstrate the need for rapid formation of the geologic record, while evidence for the passage of time such as *paleosols* (ancient soil layers) and erosion between the layers is severely lacking (Morris).



### The Prophecy of Uniformitarianism

If the evidence is so clear why is it rejected? The answer is found in II Peter 3, quoted above. In the last days ungodly men would seek to deny Christ’s return. They would do so by rationalizing that the world would just continue as they thought it had always been. Refuting this, God points to Creation and the Cataclysm and says they deliberately forget about it. Not that they would prove that it did not happen, but that they would *assume* it did not happen and try to interpret the evidence according to their doctrine that “everything goes on as it has from the beginning of creation.”

In geology this doctrine is known as *uniformitarianism*. This word can refer to the regularity of God’s natural laws, but in this context it refers to the idea that geologic processes like we see today, and not special disasters, formed the geologic record slowly over millions of years. “The present is the key to the past,” they insist.

Charles Darwin, in a private letter speaking of his mentor Charles Lyell, who established the dogma of uniformitarianism, recognized its value (“real good” in his opinion) in undermining Christianity:

*Lyell is most firmly convinced that he has shaken the faith in the Deluge far more efficiently by never having said a word against the Bible than if he had acted otherwise... I have read lately Morley’s The Life of Voltaire and he insists strongly that direct attacks on Christianity (even when written with the powerful force and vigor of Voltaire) produce little permanent effect; real good seems only to follow the slow and silent side attacks.* (Darwin, in Taylor)

Today geologic uniformitarianism is almost universally recognized to have shortcomings and to be unable to explain all geologic data. *Neo-catastrophism* has developed, which teaches that the earth has suffered many small catastrophes such as meteor impacts, massive vulcanism, local floods and earthquakes. However, they still try to minimize the evidence for catastrophism by always reverting back to slow and gradual uniformitarianism wherever possible. As a result evidence for the Cataclysm is broken up into a thousand different minor disasters believed to have taken place in the past, with invisible periods of time passing between each.

## Modeling the Cataclysm

Still, the sheer scope of the geologic record is amazing. The Cataclysm would have to have deposited thousands of feet of sediments, on average, in one year around the globe. How can this be? New scientific models provide some interesting possibilities.

Based on descriptions of “the fountains of the deep” (Gen. 7:11) and other Scriptures (Gen. 1:9, etc.) a team of Christian physicists and geologists have developed what is known as Catastrophic Plate Tectonics (CPT), a synthetic model of earth history (Austin, et al).



According to CPT the earth once had a single supercontinent, Pangaea. According to geophysical modeling a catastrophic event in the earth’s crust (such as a major meteorite impact) began a process known as *runaway thermal subduction*. The earth’s crust began peeling away, moving down into the molten interior of the earth. The supercontinent fragmented, pulling apart as the subduction continued. Where it pulled apart the molten interior forced upwards, forming the mid-oceanic ridge runs between the continents today. Combined with isostatic uplift this had the effect of lifting the ocean basins, submerging the entire planet while hypercanes (super hurricanes) lifted vast amounts of water into the atmosphere to fall as rain.

The runaway subduction process eventually “recycled” the ocean floor, scraping off sediments at the margins where the oceanic plate fragments subducted under the continents. These sediments were carried inland by the rising waters, explaining why most sediments today are found on continents, not on ocean floors as one would expect. The continental plates, moving quickly due to the catastrophic forces acting on them, impacted one another and crumpled, forming the mountain ranges and ocean trenches we see today. Finally, runaway subduction ended and the new ocean floor stabilized, sinking due to the density of the new sub-oceanic crust. The waters receded off the continents, cutting new erosion patterns and leaving behind basins of water that would drain in coming centuries (Covey). *LSI*

## References

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