

LSI Journal



A Scriptural Case for Dinosaur Origins

**Does Genesis 6-9 Describe
a *Destructive* Flood?**

winter 2023



**Does Job 40:15-24 describe
an 85-foot long dinosaur (above) or
a 16-foot long hippopotamus (below)?**
See pages 13-14.



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Cover: An *apatosaurus* (*brontosaurus*) at sunset. Could this be the Behemoth described in Job 40? See pages 13–14. Images on cover and inside cover: from Adobe stock.

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A Scriptural Case For Dinosaur Origins

Mark Bergemann

Where did dinosaur fossils come from?

Does Scripture help us answer that question?

Yes, it does!

This issue of the *LSI Journal* will examine Scripture passages that support the apologetic thought that the Noachian Flood produced most fossils. What we will see is that there is significant Scriptural support for (and no Scriptural opposition to) the claim that dinosaurs were real creatures and that their fossils were laid down by the Flood.

We will also see that *the exact opposite* holds true for the apologetic thought that dinosaurs are imaginary creatures that never lived, and that God created fossils of these imaginary creatures to represent a history that never took place. There is no Scriptural support for this created fossil claim, while there is significant Scriptural opposition to it.

To be clear, Scripture does not tell us (God does not reveal to us) what we should think about dinosaur fossils. Scripture says nothing *directly* about fossils. That said, Scripture does help us evaluate the following two apologetic positions.

The two apologetic views we will examine in light of Scripture are both based on extrabiblical logic (based on reason, not on Scripture). The logical foundation for each apologetic, along with some details of their claims, are listed below.

Flood Geology Apologetic

Today, most Christians who believe in a 6-day creation think it likely that the Flood drastically changed the surface of the Earth. The Flood probably laid down most of the geologic column with fossil containing rock layers found on every continent and on the tallest mountains.¹ Coal, oil, and natural gas are probably the remains of pre-flood vegetation. Massive ice sheets probably sculpted the North American landscape during the years after the Flood. There may have been a single pre-flood continent that God broke apart during the Flood to form the Atlantic Ocean and to form today's mountains.

LOGICAL FOUNDATION: These creationists claim that evolutionists are *incorrectly* interpreting geological and fossil evidence. These creationists see the fossil-containing geologic column as being laid down quickly, during the Flood and in the years immediately following it, while evolutionists think it took 500 million years.

For at least 1,800 years, Christian apologists have used the Flood geology apologetic. Church father Tertullian (died 225) saw sea-creature fossils on mountains as evidence that the Flood covered the entire planet.² Church fathers Chrysostom (died 407) and Augustine (died 430) also attributed fossils to the Flood.³ Today, Flood geology is by far the predominant view among Christian apologists.

It is common for WELS publications to describe dinosaurs as once living creatures and to attribute their fossils to the Flood.⁴

¹ For details, see "Geologic Column" on pages 20-31 of the winter 2018 LSI Journal, www.LutheranScience.org/2018winter.

² Tertullian, "Part 4th On the Pallium," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, <https://ccel.org/ccel/tertullian/pallium/anf04> (accessed 1-25-23).

³ Terry Mortenson, *The Great Turning Point: The Church's Catastrophic Mistake on Geology—Before Darwin* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2004), 25.

⁴ Quotes from nine NPH books and other WELS publications (including the *WLO*) attributing fossils to the Flood or describing dinosaurs as once living creatures are on pages 33-34 in the winter 2020 LSI Journal at www.LutheranScience.org/2020winter.

Created Fossil Apologetic

Some Christians who believe in a 6-day creation think it likely that God placed fossils, coal, oil, natural gas, and most or all of the geologic column in the ground. Most of these Christians think God did this during creation week, while others claim later times such as when God cursed the ground after Adam and Eve sinned. Many of the fossils God placed in the earth (such as dinosaurs and trilobites) represent creatures that never existed as real living things. Ice sheets never covered North America. God simply made it look like that happened by creating ice age formations. The pre-flood continents were essentially the same shape and size as the continents we have today. The Flood was tranquil so as not to disturb the fossil-containing rock layers.

LOGICAL FOUNDATION: These creationists claim that evolutionists are *correctly* interpreting geological and fossil evidence—evidence that God placed in the ground to give the earth *appearance of a history that did not take place*.

The created fossil apologetic has also been used by Christian apologists since the time of the church fathers. It was used by some Christian apologists while evolutionary thinking took over geological science between 1790 and 1850. The created fossil apologetic was further popularized in 1857 by the book *Omphalos*.⁵

It is rare for WELS publications to propose that God may have placed fossils in the ground. To my knowledge, only once has any WELS publication advanced created fossils while rejecting Flood geology, and that was in a recent *WLQ*.⁶ Other than that, one NPH book⁷ and several older *Forward in Christ* articles briefly advance both apologetic views.

5 Philip Henry Gosse, 1857, *Creation (Omphalos) – An Attempt to Untie the Geological Knot*, (London: John Van Voorst, 1857). Free pdf at (accessed 1-25-23) <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/147016#/summary>.

6 Arthur A. Eggert, “Genesis 1 and Science,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* vol. 117, no. 4 (fall 2020): 266.

7 Richard L. Gurgel, *This We Believe—Questions and Answers*, (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2006), 32, 47.

Passages Supporting

Flood Geology Apologetic	Created Fossil Apologetic
Behemoth Job 40:15–24 Pages 13–14	<p>None</p> <p>Created fossil apologists claim that several passages support their apologetic. For reasons why these passages do not, see pages 32–36.</p>
Leviathan Job 41:1–34 Pages 15–18	
God reveals that the Flood will destroy all people and animals. Genesis 6:13,17; 7:22 Page 22	
God reveals that the Flood will also destroy the earth itself. Genesis 6:13; 9:11; 2 Peter 3:6–7 Pages 22–24	
40 days of worldwide rain. Genesis 7:11–12 Pages 24–26	
150 days of rain and volcanic eruptions. Genesis 7:17–21,24; 8:1–2 Pages 27–28	
165 days of receding flood water. Genesis 8:4–9 Pages 28–30	

These charts list Bible passages that are examined in the following pages.

Passages **Opposing**

Flood Geology Apologetic	Created Fossil Apologetic
<p style="text-align: center;">None</p> <p>Created fossil apologists claim that several passages oppose the Flood geology apologetic. For reasons why these passages do not, see pages 32–36.</p>	Sickness and death before sin? Romans 5:12; 8:19–21 Pages 37–38
	Thorns before sin? Genesis 3:17–18 Page 38
	Eating meat before sin? Genesis 1:29–30 Page 38–39
	Behemoth Job 40:15–24 Pages 13–14
	Leviathan Job 41:1–34 Pages 15–18
	God reveals that the Flood will destroy all people and animals. Genesis 6:13,17; 7:22 Page 22
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Job 40-41

Job made charges against God.⁸ God then confronted Job by asking approximately seventy-seven questions regarding the world which God created—pointing out Job’s meager knowledge of that world and his feeble ability to control it.⁹ God finishes His questioning of Job with forty-four Bible verses in which He describes two enormous creatures. God spends ten Bible verses describing Behemoth (Job 40:15-24) and thirty-four verses describing Leviathan (Job 41:1-34). I cannot think of any other Bible book that describes an animal in even half this much detail. Let’s consider several questions about Behemoth and Leviathan.

Does the Bible present Behemoth and Leviathan as real creatures that were living in Job’s lifetime?

God questions Job regarding ten animals (Job 38:39–39:30): a lion, raven, antelope, deer, wild donkey, wild ox, ostrich, horse, hawk, and eagle. All these animals are real creatures living today—so they were also real animals that were living during the time Job lived. All ten were real animals which were familiar to Job, which is why God mentions them in making His points.

Then God moves to questioning Job about two much greater animals, Behemoth and Leviathan. God says that Behemoth “stands at the head of God’s creatures.”¹⁰ About Leviathan, God says, “There is nothing at all like him on earth, a creature without fear. He looks down on everything that is lofty. He is king over every proud creature!”¹¹

⁸ Job 40:1-2, The LORD responded to Job and said: Will the one who makes charges against the Almighty dare to correct him? The one who accuses God should make his case!

⁹ Job 38-41.

¹⁰ Job 40:19.

¹¹ Job 41:33-34.

God asks Job to “look” at Behemoth and later to “look at the power of his hips and the strength of his belly!”¹² Job could only “look” if Behemoth was a real animal that was living at the time of Job. God tells us that Behemoth “eats grass like cattle” and lives in the Jordan River where he “lies under the lotus plants hidden among the reeds in the marsh.”¹³ Raging floodwaters coming down from the mountains do not frighten Behemoth, who stays calm.¹⁴

Later God asks fourteen questions, showing that Job and others would be unable to tame, capture, or harm Leviathan.¹⁵

In His Job 38-41 speech, God shows that He is the Creator of the world and everything in it. God has full knowledge of nature and complete control of nature. God even has full control of the most powerful creatures like Behemoth and Leviathan. God says that, since no one can overcome or stand up to Leviathan,¹⁶ then, “Who then can stand before me? Who can confront me and demand that I repay him? Everything under the whole sky belongs to me.”¹⁷ After God’s speech, “Job responded to the LORD. He said: ‘I know that you can do all things. No purpose of yours can be thwarted.’”¹⁸ God’s point is greatly weakened if Behemoth and Leviathan are mythical creatures (not a part of nature like all the other animals which God mentions).

Another reason our Bible text supports Behemoth and Leviathan as being real living creatures (as opposed to imaginary creatures) is that God reveals that He “made” Behemoth and Leviathan.

God declares in Job 40:15, “Take a look at Behemoth, which I made just as I made you.” If Behemoth is an imaginary creature, then is Job an imaginary person? The text strongly implies that both must be real

12 Job 40:15-16.

13 Job 40:21.

14 Job 40:20, 23.

15 Job 41.

16 Job 41:9.

17 Job 41:10-11.

18 Job 42:1-2.

or both must be imaginary. Four verses later, in Job 40:19, we read that Behemoth is “God’s creature” and God is his “maker.”

As for Leviathan, Job 41:12 tells us that Leviathan has a “beautiful design.” Since Behemoth and Leviathan were made by God, they were made during Creation Week.

Does anything in the text even imply that Behemoth and Leviathan may be imaginary or mythical creatures? No. Everything in the text points to these animals as real, living creatures.

CONCLUSION: The plain reading of Job 40-41 presents Behemoth and Leviathan as real animals with which Job was familiar. To think that these are imaginary creatures must be forced on the biblical text in many places, ignoring plain meaning and context.

What animals best fit the biblical descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan?

Over the centuries, it has been suggested that Behemoth is a hippopotamus (or even an elephant or rhinoceros) and Leviathan is a crocodile (or even a whale). Those are the best candidates from animals that are still living, but they do not come close to fitting the biblical descriptions. The extremely poor fit is probably what leads some to suggest that Behemoth and Leviathan are mythical creatures, even though that goes against the plain reading of the biblical text.

Thanks to modern paleontology (the study of fossils), we now have additional animals from which to choose. When we take into account the biblical descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan, including their interactions with people and their physical features, habitat, and diet, it is clear that extinct creatures like dinosaurs much more closely match Be-

hemoth and Leviathan than any animal alive today.¹⁹ Behemoth may be one of the many sauropod dinosaurs, such as *Apatosaurus* (a.k.a. “brontosaurus”). One of several choices for Leviathan is the 39-foot-long “super croc,” *Sarcosuchus imperator*.

Behemoth

Read Job 40:15-24. Does this description of Behemoth better fit a hippopotamus or a sauropod dinosaur such as *Apatosaurus*?

Hippopotamus²⁰

The modern river hippopotamus is the third largest living land mammal after elephants and white rhinos.

Height: 5 feet at the hip.

Length: 16 feet.

Weight: 9,900 pounds.

Shown on page 2 (inside front cover).

*Apatosaurus*²¹

Sauropod dinosaurs include the largest animals to ever live. *Apatosaurus* is one of the largest.

Height: 15 feet at the shoulder.

Length: 85 feet.

Weight: 40,300 pounds.

Shown on page 2 (inside front cover).

¹⁹ Then MLC professor Dr. Paul Boehlke spends four pages discussing Behemoth and Leviathan, how animals living today are not what God is describing, and how these biblical descriptions best fit extinct creatures like dinosaurs.

Paul R. Boehlke, DINOSAURS, GOD’S CREATURES, *The Lutheran Educator*, 31 no. 3 (February 1991): 52-55, <https://mlc-wels.edu/library/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2015/12/luthed313.pdf> (accessed 1-25-23). Republished as, Paul R. Boehlke, “Dinosaurs, God’s Creatures,” *LSI Journal*, 32 no. 4 (fall 2018): 6-9, www.LutheranScience.org/2018fall.

²⁰ Alina Bradford “Facts about hippos,” Live Science, February 18, 2022, <https://www.livescience.com/27339-hippos.html> (accessed 1-25-23).

²¹ Per summary graphic at <https://www.livescience.com/25093-apatosaurus.html> (accessed 1-25-23).

In verses 16-19 God describes the great strength and power of Behemoth in his hips, belly, tail, thighs, bones, and skeleton. What animal living in today's world has a tail comparable to a cedar tree? None do. The tiny and weak tail of a hippopotamus is the opposite of this description. The tail of an *Apatosaurus* fits the description perfectly. Its tail was so strong that paleontologists propose *Apatosaurus* used his immense tail as a combat weapon against other dinosaurs.²²

God rhetorically asks if people can pierce Behemoth's nose with a hook.²³ The required answer is no, yet ancient Egyptian drawings show that the Egyptians hunted the hippopotamus by piercing its nose and mouth with harpoons. That same method was still used in recent times. A science journal that focuses on ancient animals reports,

Harpoons represented in New Kingdom tombs are very similar to those used by modern Shilluk of Sudan and the Wandamba of Tanzania (1953: 8). The method they use to hunt hippopotamuses is to ... They try to reach the most vulnerable parts of the animal, the nostrils, the sides or the interior of the mouth (which in turn prevents the animal from submerging again). The barb prevents the head of the harpoon from detaching from the animal. ... With all probability, African peoples today hunt the hippopotamus the exact same way ancient Egyptians did, and Palaeolithic men before them.²⁴

Since people today can hook the nostril of a hippopotamus, people at the time of Job were certainly capable of doing it. While people can pierce the nose of a 16-foot-long hippopotamus, no one would ever dare to pierce the nose of an 85-foot-long *Apatosaurus*.

22 Riley Black, "Busted and Broken Fossils Show How Dinosaurs Fought," 1-17-23, *Smithsonian Magazine*, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/busted-and-broken-fossils-show-how-dinosaurs-fought-180981443/> (accessed 1-25-23).

23 Job 40:24.

24 Sebastian F. Maydana, "Hippopotamus Hunting in Predynastic Egypt: A Review of Archaeozoological Evidence," *Archaeofauna* (International Journal of Archaeozoology) vol. 29 (July 29, 2020): 145, 147. <https://doi.org/10.15366/archaeofauna2020.29.009> (accessed 1-25-23).

Leviathan

Read Job 41:1-34. Does this description of Leviathan better fit a crocodile or the extinct “super croc” which we find in the fossil record?

Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*)

The largest modern reptile is the saltwater crocodile.

Maximum Length: 23 feet.^{25,26}

Weight: 2,200 pounds.

Super Croc (*Sarcosuchus imperator*)

The “super croc” was not just much larger than modern crocodiles, but it also had different physical features.²⁷

Maximum Length: 39 feet.

Weight: 17,600 pounds.²⁸

25 “Saltwater Crocodile,” Oceana, <https://oceana.org/marine-life/saltwater-crocodile/> (accessed 1-25-23).

26 Ancient historian Herodotus, writing around 430 BC, reports a similar size for the Nile River crocodile which “grows to a length of seventeen cubits [25.5 feet] and more.”

Herodotus, *The Histories* (circa 430 BC), Book II Chap. 68, English trans. A. D. Godley (Harvard University Press, 1920 through 1925), from the Univ. of Chicago website at <https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Herodotus/home.html> (accessed 1-25-23).

27 “They’re quite different from any of the living crocodilians we have today ... *Sarcosuchus* has a few skeletal differences to modern crocodiles. It didn’t have the ball-and-socket joints found between each of the vertebrae you’d see in a modern croc, and its osteoderms (bony deposits on the skin) were much larger, making it much less flexible.”

Sara Rigby, “*Sarcosuchus imperator* : The ‘super croc’ that could have hunted dinosaurs,” Science Focus, July 29, 2021, <https://www.sciencefocus.com/nature/sarcosuchus-imperator/> (accessed 1-25-23).

28 “SuperCroc Unleashed,” Australian Museum, May 7, 2018, <https://australian.museum/about/organisation/media-centre/supercroc-unleashed/> (accessed 1-25-23).

Impossible to Subdue

God spends many verses explaining how impossible it would be to subdue Leviathan. God sums it up by saying,

Listen! Any hope you have of overcoming him is unfounded. Wouldn't you be knocked down by the mere sight of him? No one is fierce enough to risk stirring him up (Job 41:9-10).

Yet ancient Egyptian drawings show that the Egyptians hunted crocodiles, and historian Herodotus reports in 430 BC,

There are many and various ways of crocodile hunting; I will write only of that one way which I think most worthy of mention: — The hunter baits a hook with a chine of pork, and lets it float into the midst of the river; he himself stays on the bank with a young live pig, which he beats. Hearing the cries of the pig, the crocodile goes after the sound, and meets the chine which it swallows; then the hunters pull the line. When the crocodile is drawn ashore, first of all the hunter smears its eyes over with mud; when this is done the quarry is very easily mastered, which, without that, is no light matter. Some of the Egyptians hold crocodiles sacred, others do not. ...But about Elephantine they are not held sacred, and are even eaten.²⁹

Leviathan cannot be a crocodile since God tells us that Leviathan cannot be controlled by people, yet crocodiles can be captured and killed simply by using primitive hand weapons, hooks, and rope.

God rhetorically asks “Can you pull out Leviathan with a fish hook.”³⁰ The required answer is no, yet Herodotus reports in the above quote that ancient Egyptians did that very thing. This is another reason why Leviathan cannot be a crocodile.

²⁹ Herodotus, chaps. 69, 70.

³⁰ Job 41:1.

God says that pointed weapons have “no effect” on Leviathan,

If someone strikes him with a sword, it has no effect. Neither do spears, arrows, or javelins. To him iron is like straw; bronze is like rotten wood. Arrows do not make him flee. To him sling stones are like chaff; clubs are like stubble. He laughs at the shaking of a javelin (Job 41:26-29).

Yet spears can pierce crocodiles in several vulnerable places such as the neck, and that is even depicted on ancient Egyptian drawings. For this reason too, Leviathan cannot be a crocodile.

God also states that Leviathan’s “underbelly is like sharp pieces of broken pottery.”³¹ The smooth underbelly of a crocodile is not “like sharp pieces of broken pottery.” This is yet another reason why Leviathan cannot be a crocodile.

His Tongue

Herodotus mistakenly reports that the crocodile “is the only animal that has no tongue.”³² It is understandable that he would make that error, since the unusual tongue of a crocodile is very difficult to see. It is small, fixed in one place, attached at the front of the crocodile’s mouth, and points backward.³³ God asks Job, “Can you tie down his tongue with a rope?”³⁴ This question seems to make little sense if God is speaking about an animal with no apparent tongue—a tongue that only moves in the far back of the mouth to keep water out of the throat.

³¹ Job 41:30.

³² Herodotus, chap. 68.

³³ “*A crocodile’s tongue is very short, and is attached firmly to the bottom of its mouth. They can’t stick it out; waggle it around; drink with it or lick their own teeth clean. ...it is so short and fixed in one place. ...the tongue’s main job is to keep water out of the throat when the crocodile is underwater.*”

“Do Crocodiles Have Tongues?” WildlifeFAQ.com, <https://wildlifefaq.com/do-crocodiles-have-tongues> (accessed 1-25-23).

³⁴ Job 41:1.

Fire Breathing

Job 41:18-21 describe Leviathan's ability to breath fire. Verse 21 is very clear, "His breath sets coals on fire, and flames come out of his mouth." A crocodile does not breath fire, so Leviathan cannot be a crocodile.

Those who think that Leviathan is a crocodile ask that we take verse 21 as poetic imagery. The alternative is that Leviathan really did breathe fire.³⁵ This possibility should not be casually dismissed. We would just as easily dismiss the possibility of an animal spraying out 212 °F boiling chemicals to defend itself, if it were not for the fact that the bombardier beetle *does that very thing*. We would just as easily dismiss the possibility of an animal generating its own electric current to disable other nearby animals, if it were not for the fact that the electric eel *does that very thing*. We would just as easily dismiss the possibility of an animal generating its own light, if it were not for the fact that the fire fly *does that very thing*. It is entirely possible that the now extinct Leviathan (maybe the super croc) really did breathe fire. Maybe the many historical reports of fire-breathing dragons—from multiple cultures and time periods—have their origin in actual fire-breathing creatures.

More About Behemoth and Leviathan

A full discussion of what particular creatures God is describing in Job 40-41 would fill multiple journals. For those who desire additional discussion, I recommend starting with the article, "Behemoth and leviathan in the book of Job."³⁶ For more beyond that see, "Scholars and the

35 An NPH *People's Bible Teachings* book states, "When those who doubt Scripture read about a beast whose breath 'sets coals ablaze,' they begin to scoff. ... Who should laugh at the idea that God wished to have a fierce fire-breathing dinosaur among his collection of interesting beasts? Sadly, we cannot take our children to the zoo to view such an animal. They are now extinct."

Cleone H. Weigand, *The People's Bible Teachings: Creation—God Made All Things* (Milwaukee, Northwestern Publishing House, 2000), 79-80.

36 Mart-Jan Paul, "Behemoth and leviathan in the book of Job," Creation Ministries International, <https://creation.com/behemoth-and-leviathan> (accessed 1-25-23).

What We Learned from Job 40-41

1 The plain reading of Job 40-41 presents Behemoth and Leviathan as real animals with which Job was familiar. To think that these are imaginary creatures must be forced on the biblical text in many places, ignoring plain meaning and context.

2 Animals living today, such as the hippopotamus and crocodile, do not fit the biblical descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan. To think that Behemoth and Leviathan are animals that are still living today must be forced on the biblical text in many places, ignoring plain meaning and context.

3 Animals in the fossil record—such as the 85-foot sauropod dinosaur *Apatosaurus* (a.k.a. “*Brontosaurus*”) and the 39-foot “super croc” *Sarcosuchus imperator*—match the biblical descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan as far as can be determined from our more limited knowledge of these fossil record creatures.

4 Who Can Stand Before God? A major point of Job 40-41: since no one can stand up to Behemoth³⁹ nor Leviathan,⁴⁰ then, “Who then can stand before me [God]? Who can confront me and demand that I repay him?”⁴¹ God is far more powerful than the invincible Behemoth and Leviathan, so it is certain that no one can overcome God. God’s point would be greatly weakened if Behemoth and Leviathan are mythical creatures. Even worse, God’s point would make no sense at all if Behemoth and Leviathan are animals that were regularly captured or killed by people in Job’s day.

37 Simon Turpin, “Scholars and the Mystery of Behemoth,” *Answers in Genesis*, March 17, 2020, <https://answersingenesis.org/dinosaurs/scholars-mystery-of-behemoth/> (accessed 1-25-23).

38 Simon Turpin, “Drawing Out the Biblical Leviathan,” *Answers in Genesis*, August 8, 2020, <https://answersingenesis.org/dinosaurs/drawing-out-biblical-leviathan/> (accessed 1-25-23).

39 Job 40:24.

40 Job 41:9.

41 Job 41:10-11.

Apologetic Application of Job 40-41

Job 40-41 presents very strong and compelling evidence that Behemoth and Leviathan are real animals known to Job, and that Behemoth and Leviathan are extinct creatures that are found in the fossil record (a sauropod dinosaur and a “super croc”). This means that some now extinct animals found in the fossil record (including dinosaurs) were living at the time of Job (centuries after the Flood and the Tower of Babel).

Most likely these things are true, and if they are, then based on clear Scripture, it is also true that:

- Dinosaurs were created on Day 6 of creation week (Genesis 1:24-25).
- Dinosaurs were on the ark (Genesis 6:19-20, 7:8-9, 7:14-16).
- Dinosaurs that were not on the ark died in the Flood (Genesis 7:21-23).
- Dinosaurs that died in the Flood were available to be made into fossils, assuming that the Flood made fossils.

Created fossil apologists claim that dinosaurs are imaginary animals that never lived, and that Behemoth is definitely not a dinosaur. They claim Behemoth is an imaginary animal, or a real animal living today such as the hippopotamus. *To do so, the created fossil apologist must force his view on the biblical text in many places, ignoring plain meaning and context. Keep this application in mind as we move to the next section, which is about the Flood.*

The Flood

The two apologetic positions that we are evaluating in light of Scripture make opposing claims about the Flood and about the pre-flood world. Let's first review a summary of these two apologetics (expanded details on pages 6–7).

Flood Geology Apologetic

Creationists using the Flood geology apologetic think it likely that the Flood drastically changed the surface of the Earth. The Flood probably laid down most of the geologic column with its fossil-containing rock layers found on every continent and on the tallest mountains. Coal, oil, and natural gas are probably the remains of pre-flood vegetation. There may have been a single pre-flood continent that God broke apart during the Flood to form the Atlantic Ocean and to form today's mountains. These creationists see the fossil-containing geologic column as being laid down quickly, during the Flood and in the years immediately following it.

Created Fossil Apologetic

Creationists using the created fossil apologetic think it likely that God placed fossils, coal, oil, natural gas, and most or all of the geologic column in the ground. The pre-flood continents were essentially the same shape and size as the continents we have today. The Flood was tranquil so as not to disturb the fossil-containing rock layers—fossils that God placed in the ground to give the earth *appearance of a history that did not take place*.

**Does Genesis 6-9 describe a
destructive flood or a tranquil flood?**

I Will Destroy All Flesh

The first indication that the Flood would change the Earth's surface is in Genesis 6:13, where God states that He will destroy all flesh and that He will also destroy the earth itself,

So God said to Noah: I have decreed the end of all flesh, because the earth is filled with violence because of them. Now I am going to destroy them along with the earth (Genesis 6:13).

Consider how “all flesh” would be destroyed by a flood.⁴² People not on the ark may attempt to survive on any nearby boat. Some people may have already been on a ship when the Flood began. Many animals can swim, and they might try to survive on floating wood. Birds could do the same. These people and animals might try to stay alive by drinking rain water and eating floating carcasses and vegetation. In modern times, people have survived on the open ocean for many weeks. Could they survive a year-long tranquil flood? Maybe. They might survive a tranquil flood that way, but they could never survive a fast-moving destructive flood with tsunamis and volcanic eruptions. Now God would certainly ensure, through miraculous means if needed, that all flesh not on the ark dies. But God is using mostly natural means to end all flesh, so would not a destructive, violent flood better serve His purpose of ending all flesh?

I Will Destroy the Earth

What is God telling us in Genesis 6:13 when He adds the words “along with the earth”? Why are these words included? Could “destroy them along with the earth” mean that God will destroy the earth—and in doing so—He will thereby destroy all flesh? It seems to me that is the most reasonable way to understand what God is saying.

⁴² God gives more details in 6:17—He will “destroy all flesh under the sky that has the breath of life.” This includes people, land animals, and birds too (also see Genesis 7:21-23).

Genesis 6:13 explains that to “destroy” all flesh will “end” all flesh. Nearby passages make it even more clear that to “destroy” all flesh means that all people and animals (those not on the ark) would die and be wiped off the face of the earth (6:7, 7:4, 7:21-23).

What does “destroy the earth” mean? Does it mean that the Flood would leave the earth substantially unchanged (as the created fossil apologetic claims)? Or, does it mean that the Flood would be very destructive to the surface of earth (as claimed by the Flood geology apologetic)? Clearly, Genesis 6:13 more than implies destructive changes to the surface of the Earth, favoring the destructive flood of the Flood geology apologetic over the tranquil flood of the created fossil apologetic.

In Genesis 6:13, God clearly states that He will *destroy* the earth (with the Flood). After the Flood, God makes a solemn promise to Noah and his descendants—and to all animals—that God will never again *destroy* the earth with a flood,

“I will establish my covenant with you: Never again will all living creatures be cut off by the waters of a flood. Neither will there ever again be a flood to destroy the earth” (Genesis 9:11).

The word “neither” adds the thought that there are two separate promises made: 1) To not *destroy life*, and 2) To not *destroy the earth*. The second is not a restatement of the first, but a related promise. NPH author John Jeske makes a similar point when he discusses Genesis 9:11,

[As] the LORD of creation spells out the terms of his covenant, it becomes clear that his promise is really a double one:

- Life will never again be cut off; and
- Earth will not again be destroyed by water.

God will cause his covenant to stand; he will fulfill his solemn pledge never again to destroy the human race and the earth until his purpose for creation has been fully realized.⁴³

⁴³ Carl J Lawrenz and John C. Jeske, *A Commentary on Genesis 1-11* (Milwaukee, Northwestern Publishing House, 2004), 290. Lawrenz wrote on Genesis 1-4 and Jeske on Genesis 5-11 per preface page 9.

The Flood destroying the earth is again mentioned in Scripture, this time by the Apostle Peter in his New Testament epistle,

Through these waters the former world perished, when it was flooded with water. And now, by that same word, the heavens and earth have been stored up for fire, since they are being kept until the day of judgment and the destruction of the ungodly (2 Peter 3:6-7).

This 2 Peter passage states that the pre-flood earth was destroyed [perished] by water, and at the Final Judgment, the earth will be destroyed by fire. In one case the destruction is by water, and the other case it is by fire. In both cases the earth is destroyed. NPH author David Kuske comments on 2 Peter 3:6,

The world that exists now is not the same as the one that existed then. That world, Peter says, was destroyed. ...in the sense of “being changed so much that the original is lost or spoiled.” ... The flood changed the world so much that one cannot look at the present world and say, as scoffers do, that everything has gone on the same continually.⁴⁴

Fountains of the Great Deep Burst Open

Another indication that the Flood would change the Earth’s surface is in Genesis 7:11-12,

On that very day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. The rain came down on the earth for forty days and forty nights (Genesis 7:11-12).

God tells us that the flood waters came from two sources:

- The fountains of the great deep.
- The floodgates of the sky.

⁴⁴ David P. Kuske, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Peter, Jude* (Milwaukee, Northwestern Publishing House, 2015), 384-385.

“Fountains of the great deep” seem to be water from far inside the Earth. All around the planet, the Earth split open and water gushed out from deep underground. It would be expected that such violent breaking apart of the Earth’s crust would be accompanied by massive volcanic activity and lava flows. There were probably under-sea volcanic eruptions as the under-sea “fountains of the deep” burst open. That would have quickly buried the sea-bottom-dwelling creatures like trilobites, creating the lowest layer of the geologic column (the Cambrian) at the very beginning of the Flood.

It is common for creationists to advance the thought that volcanic eruptions and earthquakes accompanied the Flood. WELS publications where the author advocates volcanic activity or earthquakes during the Flood include: *The People’s Bible Teachings—Creation*,⁴⁵ *The People’s Bible—Genesis*,⁴⁶ *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Peter, Jude*,⁴⁷ *A Commentary on Genesis 1-11*,⁴⁸ *Bible History Commentary—Old Testament*,⁴⁹ an article

45 “Who can imagine the destruction that occurred when these catastrophic powers of water and lava continued their land-mutilating work for 40 days?” Weigand, 69.

46 “Add to this the fact that the interior of the earth had been split open, perhaps by earth quakes and volcanic eruptions, totally rearranging water and land masses.”

John C. Jeske, *The People’s Bible: Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Milwaukee, Northwestern Publishing House, 1991), 85.

47 Commenting on 2 Peter 3:6, Kuske writes, “If that time was the time of the flood, the huge amounts of water vapor that poured from the volcanoes would have supplied a huge amount of water that, when condensed, would have caused widespread flooding on earth.” Kuske, 384.

48 “Earthquakes tore existing seabeds apart; volcanic eruptions belched fire and steam. ...Seismic activity on the ocean floor would have caused immense tidal waves.” Lawrenz and Jeske, 256.

49 “Now the text says these fountains or springs of the deep ‘burst forth.’ This suggests that the waters had been confined in their subterranean pools under terrific pressure. The ‘burst forth’ further indicates that the release of the waters from their underground prison must have brought in its wake earthquakes of the greatest magnitude and immense tidal waves. The resulting devastation must have been one that defies all imagination.”

Werner H. Franzmann, *Bible History Commentary—Old Testament* (Milwaukee, Northwestern Publishing House, 1980), 75.

in the *WLQ*,⁵⁰ and in *An EHV Study Bible*.⁵¹

Today, some scientists think that—hundreds of miles down in the Earth—there is more water trapped in rocks than there is in all the Earth’s oceans.⁵² The Earth’s oceans and this deep underground water reserve constantly exchange water in a phenomenon called “mantle rain.”⁵³ Whether or not there is water deep inside the Earth today, we know from Scripture that there was at the time of Noah—and that water “burst forth” to flood the planet.

“**The floodgates of the sky**” were opened, sending rain for forty days and nights. The normal hydrologic cycle today does not allow it to rain all over the planet for 40 continuous days. Not only that, the atmosphere today cannot hold anywhere near that much water. Either the continuous rain was miraculous, or more likely, volcanic eruptions vaporized water for the 40 days, and that water then rained back down. It seems the primary source for the Flood water was from the “fountains of the deep,” since the source of the rain was vaporizing ocean water.

A modern example of lava from a volcano vaporizing water and causing rain is the 2018 eruption of Mount Kilauea in Hawaii. Lava rolled into the ocean and created so much steam that several nearby mountains

50 “...volcanic eruptions and the earthquakes, by which the fountains of the deep had been broken up for a long period...”

Carl Lawrenz, “God’s Unique Judgment of the Flood,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, vol. 71 no. 4 (Oct 1974): 290.

51 *An EHV Study Bible* comments on Genesis 7:12, “Seismic activity was likely a major factor.” I highly recommend *An EHV Study Bible*. It is available in the Microsoft App Store and as a 2021 hardcover book from Northwestern Publishing House www.NPH.net (accessed 1-25-23).

52 Denis Andrault, Nathalie Bolfan-Casanova, “Mantle rain toward the Earth’s surface: A model for the internal cycle of water,” *Physics of the Earth and Planetary Interiors* vol. 322 (January 2022) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0031920121001734> (accessed 1-25-23).

53 Theo Nicitopoulos, “How the Ocean Inside the Mantle Affects the Habitability of the Earth” *Hakai Magazine* June 15, 2022 <https://hakaimagazine.com/news/how-the-ocean-inside-the-mantle-affects-the-habitability-of-the-earth/> (accessed 1-25-23).

were covered in freezing rain for many hours.⁵⁴ If this one volcano could do that, imagine what volcanoes all over the earth erupting at the same time would do.

Rising Flood Levels

The flood kept coming on the earth for forty days. The waters became deeper and lifted up the ark until it floated high above the earth. The water kept increasing and overwhelmed the earth, and the ark was carried along on the surface of the water. The water overwhelmed the earth. All the high mountains that were under the entire sky were covered. The waters rose more than twenty feet above the mountains and covered them. All living creatures that moved on the earth perished, including birds, livestock, wild animals, every creeping thing that crawls on the earth, and all mankind. ...The waters overwhelmed the earth for one hundred fifty days. God remembered Noah, as well as all the animals and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. So God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were also closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained (Genesis 7:17-21, 7:24-8:2).

These passages imply that it took forty days and nights of rain for the ark to be lifted off the ground. It takes a lot of water to lift up a forty-five-foot-tall vessel. This rather slow buildup of water would ravage the surface of the Earth. During those forty days of world-wide rain, massive rivers of water would be rushing downhill, scouring the planet and eroding soil, rocks, hills, forests, and everything else in its path. In addition, any undersea seismic activity would have sent tsunamis far more massive than any the world has seen since. Also, in today's world, tides are caused by the gravity of the sun and moon pulling the oceans back and forth each

⁵⁴ See <https://answersingenesis.org/the-flood/june-ice-storm-hawaiian-mountains-flood-insight/> (accessed 1-25-23) and <https://strangesounds.org/2018/06/la-va-flow-sparks-winter-weather-advisory-on-big-island.html> (accessed 1-25-23).

and every day. Daily tides during the Flood would have done the same, causing even more destruction as the tidal water flowed across the land.

These passages also strongly suggest that water continued to gush from the fountains of the deep and it continued to rain for 150 days (Genesis 8:2). WELS authors Werner H. Franzmann⁵⁵ and Carl Lawrenz⁵⁶ write that the rain continued for 150 days. That's a full five months of moving water to destroy—erode and change—the Earth's surface. We previously discussed (page 26) how the rain water came from steam caused by molten lava (the alternate being miraculously sourced rain water). That means that volcanic lava flows also continued for 150 days.

It seems that the rain and volcanic eruptions lasted for 150 days, but even if the rain lasted only forty days and there were no erupting volcanoes, multiple Biblical texts which we have examined⁵⁷ are clear that the Flood *destroyed the Earth itself* (not just life on the Earth). Fast moving water over forty or more days seems to be the mechanism that God used to destroy the Earth itself.

Falling Flood Levels

In the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. The waters receded continuously until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were visible. Then at the end of forty days Noah opened

⁵⁵ “The rains thereupon fell often and hard enough for an additional 110 days [past the 40 days].” Franzmann, 76.

⁵⁶ “These two sources of the flood again receive equal attention when, after the flood had prevailed upon the earth for 150 days, God caused the waters to subside. At that time we are told: ‘The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens were closed.’ This tells us that both sources continued to be equally active throughout the 150 days of the destruction of the deluge. So far we have been dealing with clear statements of the Holy Scripture.”

Lawrenz, “God’s Unique Judgment of the Flood,” 282.

⁵⁷ Genesis 6:13, 9:11; 2 Peter 3:6-7.

the window he had made in the ark. He sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth, until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent out a dove to see if the waters had receded from the surface of the ground, but the dove found no place to rest its foot, and it returned to him in the ark, because there was water on the surface of the whole earth (Genesis 8:4-9).

Here God describes how the flood water receded. The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat at the beginning of this receding. Seventy-four days later the mountain tops first appear above water. Ninety days after that the dove does not return, as there is dry land. Altogether, Noah was in the ark for about 371 days, 150 with prevailing flood water, about 165 with receding water, and about 56 with the land drying. The Flood lasted about a full year, which could be 354, 365, or 371 days (or other?) depending on how many days are in each month. The preceding counts⁵⁸ are based on a 360-day year with twelve 30-day months.

Water drained off the land masses for about 165 days. Genesis 8:1⁵⁹ reveals that God provided a wind strong enough to drive the water levels down. That wind must have caused massive waves. Such moving water would further erode and rearrange the surface of the Earth.

Sedimentary Rock⁶⁰

The fast-moving flood water eroded rocks, soil, and most everything in its path, transporting that sediment around the globe during the 150 days of prevailing flood levels and also during the 165 days receding

⁵⁸ William D. Barrick, “Noah’s Flood and Its Geological implications,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis—Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury, 8th printing (Green Forest AR: Master Books, 2016), 251, 273, 275.

⁵⁹ God remembered Noah, as well as all the animals and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. So God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided (Genesis 8:1).

⁶⁰ Sedimentary rock is material that was laid down by water and then compressed to form rock such as limestone, sandstone, and shale.

flood levels. Eventually, as the water slowed down, that material was deposited as sedimentary rock. Today, we find massive continental-size sedimentary rock layers all over the Earth. Those rock layers make up the 12 layers of the geologic column, which contains countless fossils. Fossils are the remains or impressions of things that were once living. Most fossils are of ocean-dwelling life such as seashells, which are found all over the world and on the tallest mountains.

What We Learned from the Flood Account

- 1 Scripture (Genesis 6:13) clearly states that the Flood will “destroy” all flesh (people and land animals).
- 2 Scripture (Genesis 6:13, 9:11, 2 Peter 3:6) clearly states that the Flood will also “destroy” the earth itself (in addition to destroying all flesh).
- 3 For 150 days flood water gushed from deep underground (when the fountains of the deep “burst open”) and for those 150 days it also rained.
- 4 Water drained off the land masses for about 165 days. God provided a strong wind to move the water.

Apologetic Application of Genesis 6-9

1 Genesis 6:13, 9:11, and 2 Peter 3:6 state that the Flood will (and did) “destroy” the earth itself. The tranquil flood proposed by the *created fossil apologetic* goes against this clear Scripture, while the landscape changing flood proposed by the *Flood geology apologetic* follows these passages.

2 Genesis 6-9 describes a devastating Flood that did destroy the earth as God said it would. Forty days of world-wide rain would cause massive rivers of water to rush downhill, scouring the planet and eroding soil, rocks, hills, forests, and everything else in its path. Fast moving water over forty or more days seems to be the mechanism that God used to destroy the Earth itself. The Flood probably included 150 days of volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tsunamis—but even if did not—we know from clear Scripture that the Earth itself was destroyed.

3 The Flood described in Scripture would have eroded and destroyed any preflood sedimentary rock layers and the fossils they contained. Sedimentary rock is easily eroded and destroyed by moving water. For this reason, the fossils we find today cannot be fossils that God placed in the ground during creation week.

4 The fast-moving water of the Flood eroded rocks, soil, and most everything in its path. That material was then deposited, and it buried many of the plants and animals that died in the Flood—producing what we find today—continental size sedimentary rock layers filled with fossils.

Biblical Support for Created Fossils

We previously saw that Job 40-41 (Behemoth and Leviathan) and Genesis 6-9 (Flood account) present very strong support for the *Flood geology apologetic* with its claim that Noah's Flood produced fossil remains of real animals that lived and died in the past.

Are there any passages that support the *created fossil apologetic* with its claim that God placed fossils of imaginary creatures (that never lived) in the ground? Let's take a look.

The following passages are used by WELS authors to defend the created fossil apologetic and to denounce the Flood geology apologetic. Some of these passages are from their books and articles, while others are from conversations I have had with WELS advocates of created fossils. We will find that none of these passages actually support the created fossil apologetic.

By Faith

Faith is being sure about what we hope for, being convinced about things we do not see. ...By faith we know that the universe was created by God's word, so that what is seen did not come from visible things (Hebrews 11:1,3).

For we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Hebrews 11:1,3 and 2 Corinthians 5:7 are the primary passages used to defend the created fossil apologetic. They are used in books and articles, presenting created fossils as the *one and only correct* (and *only biblically acceptable*) explanation for the existence of fossils. For example, Hebrews 11:3 and 2 Corinthians 5:7 are both quoted at the start of an

article defending created fossils.⁶¹ Hebrews 11:3 is cited in the conclusion of the book, *Creation—In the Beginning and Afterward*,⁶² and in a *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (WLQ)* article.⁶³ The introduction of another book that defends created fossils, *Clearing A Path for The Gospel*, quotes Hebrews 11:1,

Even more than 1 Peter 3:15, the key passage for all apologetic work is Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.” Notice that faith focuses on what we cannot see. It focuses on what we hope for, and as St. Paul tells us, hope that is seen is “not hope at all” [Romans 8:24]. If we could prove the things that we trust in, that we hope for, we wouldn’t need faith to believe them.⁶⁴

Now it is great that we confessional Lutherans correctly point out that belief in articles of faith (such as creation) *is by faith*. I stress that often in my apologetic writings. Those using the created fossil apologetic go further. They misuse both Scripture and logic when they insist that:

- Proposing that God created fossils and placed them in the ground is a faith-based claim, while,
- Proposing that fossils might be a result of the Flood is logic-based and therefore contrary to faith.

There are multiple problems with this. Firstly: God says absolutely nothing about fossils. Proposing *any* origin for fossils is primarily based on logic and reason, not on Scripture. Secondly: In what possible way is a logic-based origin claim for fossils *necessarily* contrary to faith? Proposing that the Flood may be the best explanation for fossils, while

61 Gerhold L. Lemke, “Lutheran Recreationism—Not A Way to Go,” *Christian News*, March 3, 2020. <https://christiannewsmissouri.com/2020/03/03/lutheran-recreationism-not-a-way-to-go/> (accessed 1-25-23).

62 Arthur A. Eggert, *Creation—In the Beginning and Afterward* (Sun Prairie WI: In Terra Pax Lutheran Publishing, 2022), 161.

63 Arthur A. Eggert, “Genesis 1 and Science,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* vol. 117, no. 4 (fall 2020): 266.

64 Arthur A. Eggert and Geoffrey A. Kieta, *Clearing a Path for the Gospel—A Lutheran Approach to Apologetics* (Sun Prairie WI: In Terra Pax Lutheran Publishing, 2019), 3.

clearly pointing out that we still believe creation based on faith, is being faithful to Scripture and to the means of grace. Now some Christians do indeed make logic and reason into a means of grace, and that is contrary to Scripture, but that is not the case for all Christians who attribute fossils to the Flood, nor the case for all Christians who attribute fossils to special creation by God.

Hope

The *Clearing A Path for The Gospel* quote above also misuses Romans 8:24, which, with verse 23 added, reads,

We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we eagerly await our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. Indeed, it was for this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he already sees?" (Romans 8:23-24).

In verse 23 we see the hope Paul is talking about: the hope of bodily entering heaven. We have not yet seen the fulfillment of that hope, because we are still here in a sin-damaged world of suffering. We cannot take Romans 8:24 to mean that nature does not show us God's attributes, since Romans 1:20 clearly reveals that God's "invisible characteristics—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, because they are understood from the things he made." If nature reminds us of our powerful God, cannot nature (fossils) remind us of God's Flood?

A Matter of Faith

The *WLQ* article previously referenced alludes to 2 Corinthians 5:7 when it claims that we "need" to "acknowledge" that God created fossils and that this is a matter of faith, not sight,

God clearly did not consider it important for us to know about them [fossils] because he did not bother telling us about them. All we need to do is acknowledge that the almighty God created them [fossils] and scattered them as he saw fit because he had the power to do so and had a reason to do so which he chose not to share with us. This is a matter of faith, not sight.⁶⁵

Why is this a matter of faith? The article correctly points out (in the same paragraph), “Genesis 1 mentions nothing concerning fossils. Neither does any other part of Scripture.”⁶⁶ Since God tells us nothing about fossils, why do we “need” to “acknowledge” that God created fossils and placed them in the ground, and why is that acknowledgment a “matter of faith”? The whole idea that God created fossils of imaginary creatures is based on human reason, not on Scripture, and it is not a matter of Christian faith.

It is clear that none of these passages (Hebrews 11:1,3; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 8:24) support the created fossil apologetic.

Creation From Nothing

One created fossil advocate with whom I regularly converse, often points to the second part of Hebrews 11:3, “*What is seen did not come from visible things.*” The thought is that the Earth’s landscape we see today (mountains, rivers, islands, continents, etc.) was created by God *directly* out of nothing. The landscape we see today did not result from the Flood changing the preflood landscape, because (it is claimed that) Hebrews 11:3 says that today’s landscape was created from nothing.

The problem with this logic is that Hebrews 11:3 is talking about the *original* origin of the world. This passage does not tell us that the world has stayed the way God created it during creation week. For instance, the island of Surtsey did not exist until 1964 when a one square

⁶⁵ Eggert, “Genesis 1 and Science,” 264.

⁶⁶ Eggert, “Genesis 1 and Science,” 263.

mile island was made from a volcano erupting 430 feet below sea level. Now Surtsey is home to 89 species of birds and 335 species of invertebrates.⁶⁷ So we again see that Hebrews 11:3 does not support the created fossil apologetic.

God's Ways

Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my plans are higher than your plans (Isaiah 55:9).

When asked why God would place the remains of dead creatures (fossils) in a sinless world, created fossil apologists generally quote Isaiah 55:9 or a similar passage. Now this is an answer to the question, but this answer does not in any way support the idea of created fossils. I could claim that God provided Adam and Eve with a 2,000 square foot brick house, and I could quote Isaiah 55:9 to those who question my claim. Isaiah 55:9 tells us something about God, but it does not support extra-biblical claims such as created fossils or a brick house for Adam.

Conclusion

Created fossil apologists marshal Scripture to defend their apologetic. We have seen that none of those Scripture passages actually support created fossils.

⁶⁷ UNESCO World Heritage Convention, Surtsey, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1267/> (accessed 1-25-23).

Biblical Problems for Created Fossils

We previously saw that Job 40-41 (Behemoth and Leviathan) and Genesis 6-9 (Flood account) present very strong *support for* the Flood geology apologetic and at the same time present *opposition to* (or at least problems for) the created fossil apologetic.

The created fossil apologetic claims that dinosaurs never lived as real creatures (they are imaginary creatures). Yet the only animal that fits the Job 40 description of Behemoth is a dinosaur—and Behemoth was living at the time of Job, centuries after the Flood.

The created fossil apologetic claims that the Flood was tranquil so as not to disturb the existing fossil-bearing sedimentary rock layers. It also claims that the pre-flood landscape (mountains, islands, continents, etc.) were essentially the same as those in our modern world. Yet God says that the Flood would “destroy” the earth itself. Genesis 6-9 describes that violent flood that completely changed the landscape.

There are additional Scripture passages that oppose (or at least present problems for) the created fossil apologetic. These passages bring up the question: **Would God include symbols of death and suffering in the world He declared to be “very good”—symbols of the cursed world that would later result from Adam’s sin?**

Sickness and Death Before Sin?

So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned (Romans 5:12).

In fact, creation is waiting with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. For creation was subjected to futility, not

by its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope that even creation itself will be set free from slavery to corruption, in order to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God (Romans 8:19-21).

Advocates of created fossils commonly claim that God placed fossils in the ground during creation week. Fossils are, by definition, the remains of things that lived and died in the past. Some fossils even show signs of cancer. This means there would have been uncountable trillions of symbols of death and suffering in the earth when God said creation was “very good.”

We know that sickness and death are a result of the fall and curse (Romans 5:12). All of creation, animals included, is suffering under the curse and its “slavery to corruption” (Romans 8:19-21). Would God place fossils in the ground—giving the appearance that the curse had been in effect before sin?

Thorns Before Sin?

...The soil is cursed on account of you. You will eat from it with painful labor all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles will spring up from the ground for you, but you will eat the crops of the field (Genesis 3:17-18).

There are fossils of thorns. Could these have been in the ground when God declared everything “very good”? Thorns are a result of the fall and curse. Would God place thorns in the ground—giving the appearance that the curse had been in effect before sin?

Eating Meat Before Sin?

To every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the sky, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so (Genesis 1:30).

Fossils show tooth marks, indicating that animals ate each other. People and animals were vegetarians before the fall. Could bones with tooth marks have been in the ground when God declared everything “very good”? Would God place evidence of animals killing and eating each other in the ground—giving the appearance that the curse had been in effect before sin?

For Further Study

For a lengthier discussion of the problems faced by created fossil apologists—both Scriptural and logical problems—see the article, “Did Dinosaurs Roam the Earth?” on pages 24-35 in the winter 2020 *LSI Journal* at www.LutheranScience.org/2020winter. That issue of the *LSI Journal* also has a 9-page review of the 2019 book, *Clearing a Path for the Gospel—A Lutheran Approach to Apologetics*, a book which advocates created fossils.

Final Thoughts

Scripture does not force us to embrace or to reject either apologetic (created fossil or Flood geology). Scripture does though, help us evaluate these two apologetic views. As this article has shown, Scripture leads us away from the created fossil apologetic and toward the Flood geology apologetic. My personal view is that the created fossil apologetic is the least likely explanation for fossils. Nevertheless, if someone finds that believing in created fossils blunts the temptation of evolution for them, then let them believe in created fossils, but they should become acquainted with the contents of this article.

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“Learn to Critique Evolution Textbooks,” pages 30–38 at www.LutheranScience.org/2021summer.

“What Evidence Do Evolutionists Give for Common Descent?” p. 5–22 at www.LutheranScience.org/2022summer.

“Biology Textbook,” p. 21–31 at www.LutheranScience.org/2020summer.

“Logical Fallacies,” p. 6–20 at www.LutheranScience.org/2020summer.

“Teaching Discernment Using Evolution Videos,” p. 18–29 at www.LutheranScience.org/2019fall.

“Evolutionists and Creationists Often Agree,” p. 17–32 at www.LutheranScience.org/2019spring.

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