



Think & Believe

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Different Colored Glasses

By Dave & Mary Jo Nutting

We recently had the opportunity to lead a field excursion to the bottom of the Grand Canyon (and back up!). The trip was sponsored by the Institute for Creation Research. Our mission was to present the biology and the geologic history of the canyon from a creationist perspective. We believe that we learned as much as those we were teaching!

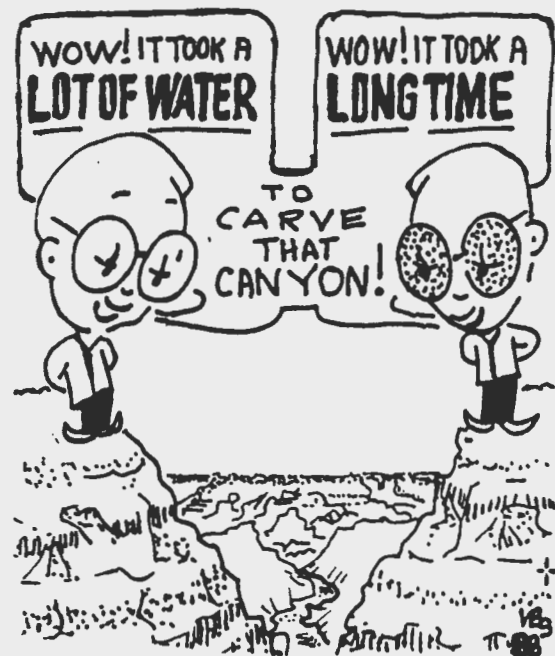
As we talked to visitors on the rim and listened to ranger talks, we realized again that we were looking through "different colored glasses" than most of them. For most, the canyon represents millions of years of slow, gradual deposition, uplift, and final erosion by the Colorado River. This is the standard model taught by the National Park Service and boldly displayed in the visitor's center and on interpretive signs. We might call it the "little water, lots of time" model.

As we looked at the canyon through our "different colored glasses," however, we were able to see evidence for a different scenario entirely — one which involved lots of water and very little time. We found ample evidence for rapid deposition of the layers of sediment and later fast erosion of the canyon by tremendous amounts of water (see Spotlight on Science). Even though this is a plausible interpretation, it is not even mentioned by Park officials.

Did our "different colored glasses" have anything to do with the differences in interpretation? These "glasses" are the inherent biases and underlying assumptions which everyone "wears" all the time. We all look at the same basic facts, but our interpretations differ according to the color of our "glasses." Our bias affects everything we do — every question we ask, every explanation

we are willing to consider. Since we are fallible human beings who can never know everything, we can never "prove" scientifically which is the correct interpretation. The best we can do after much study is to arrive at tentative solutions based on the available facts.

However, the One Who claims to know everything has given us His explanation in the Bible. The biblical account of creation, the fall and the flood makes sense. It is consistent with the observable facts of nature. It has never been disproven — only rejected by those whom Peter calls "willfully ignorant." In the end, the question is, whose words are you willing to accept — the words of fallible men who were not there and who can never know everything or the Word of God Who claims He was there and Who claims He knows everything?



*The Grand Canyon—
A Lot of Time or A Lot of Water?*

NOTES & QUOTES

■ As you travel this summer, keep your eyes and ears open for evolutionary beliefs presented as proven facts in our nation's parks and monuments. Publications, displays, and interpretive programs are usually heavily spiced with evolution. So too are the guide books sold in the visitor's centers. Note the long-age, evolutionary bias in the following quotes:

- The rock strata in this mile-deep chasm carries you back two billion years in time Somewhere between six and 25 million years were needed to carve Grand Canyon. (Berkowitz, Alan, *Grand Canyon Trail Guide*, Bright Angel Trail, Grand Canyon Natural History Association)
- As you proceed down into the canyon, you are actually regressing in time about 20,000 years with each step To walk through the Grand Canyon is to walk through a living museum and an actual display of the earth's history. By the time you reach the bottom, standing beside the swirling waters of the Colorado River, you'll be standing on rocks that are nearly two billion years old. (Brøed, William, et al., 1986, *Geologic Guide to the Bright Angel Trail*, American Association of Petroleum Geology)
- These formations accumulated layer upon layer during successive advances and retreats of the sea that occurred between 570 million and 225 million years ago. (Whitney, Stephen, 1982. *A Field Guide to the Grand Canyon*, p. 239)
- The canyon itself may be anywhere from 2.6 million to ten million years old. No one knows exactly. Whatever its age, it is the merest infant compared even to the youngest rocks exposed in its walls. (*Ibid.*, p. 242)
- The forces that produced the Grand Canyon operate at an exceedingly slow pace. But by any measure they have had millions of years in which to work. (*Ibid.*, p. 267)
- Just as the rocks from the bottom of the canyon to the top record the passage of time, the fossils they contain record the appearance on earth of increasingly complex forms of life. (Reader's Digest, 1980, *Natural Wonders of the World*, p. 163)

■ Notice the certainty? Long ages are needed for the assumed processes of evolution to take place. Since evolution is "known" to be "true," the earth is assumed to be very old. The many evidences for a young earth (hence a young Grand Canyon) are usually totally ignored. [For some of the evidences of a young earth see *Think and Believe* Vol. 1(2), 1(3), 1(4), 2(1), 3(5), 4(3). See also: *It's A Young World After All*, by Paul Ackerman, 1986, Baker Book House.]

■ The certainty with which evolution is presented in our tax-supported parks, monuments, museums, and schools is a disgrace. Our founding fathers did not believe in evolution. For the most part, they accepted the biblical account of creation. Modern science has not proven the earth to be billions of years old, nor has it proven evolution to be true. It is nothing more than a belief about the past, and yet it has permeated our society.

■ Evolutionary teaching is everywhere. What can we do? The following excerpt shows how one creationist zoologist recently dealt with it:

- We went to Fort Pickens — an old, pre-Civil War fort, for a tour. Right at the very beginning [of the tour], our young park ranger hit us with . . . evolution. I bit my tongue (off) and calmly waited for an opportunity. At one point I asked him his area of study (oceanography grad student — fair enough) and then melted back into the crowd. My moment came when he spoke those magic words that all tour guides inevitably say at the close of a tour, "If you folks have any questions, I'd be glad . . . etc." I made sure I was the last — and asked him about his evolutionary statements. My question was, "What kind of evolutionist are you?" He didn't know what I meant — so I went through the 6 kinds of evolutionists and calmly/gently asked him again. No real answer. He wanted to know my area, schooling, etc. I told him — he was really taken back. I then asked him to give me his "best shot" for evolution, so that I may, in turn, tell my biology students. I kid you not, this guy was really shook. No one had ever asked him to cogently state his best reason(s) for evolution. I received none. (Frank Sherwin, personal communication)

■ The reactions to Frank's questions were really quite common. Many, many people (including grad students in the sciences) accept evolution as a "fact" but are unable to tell you exactly why. It is just part and parcel of the body of information they have stored away in their brains, but have never really evaluated. Let's all encourage them to objectively evaluate the evidence and not just accept it by "blind faith."



Lots of Time or Lots of Water?

What caused the Grand Canyon? Is it the result of a lot of time with a little water, or a lot of water over a short period of time? For those willing to consider an alternative to the standard long age, evolutionary model, there is ample evidence. Two aspects of the question must be considered: first, the deposition of the rock layers themselves and, second, the actual carving of the canyon. What is the evidence?

Deposition:

All of the sedimentary layers of the Grand Canyon seem to be of the type laid down by the action of moving water. Many of them contain fossils of marine organisms, such as trilobites, brachiopods, clams, sponges, etc. along with other evidences of water deposition. Even the Coconino Sandstone, which has frequently been interpreted as a wind deposit, seems, under careful scrutiny, to indicate water deposition. Evidence for this includes high-angle cross-bedding and fossilized amphibian or reptile tracks.

Cross-bedding is quite characteristic of the Coconino Sandstone. This cross-bedding looks in many places similar to the cross-bedding which occurs in the formation of wind-blown sand dunes. However, in some places, the angle of the cross-bedding is too steep for wind deposits, but it is consistent with deposition by fast-moving currents.

The fossilized footprints have been studied by Dr. Leonard Brand. He found, in experiments with modern day amphibians and reptiles, that the tracks in the Coconino Sandstone more resemble those made under water than those on dry or moist sand. It is hard to even imagine how these types of tracks could be preserved sufficiently in a sand dune!

We do recognize that, even though there is good evidence that all of the layers were water deposited, this is not sufficient proof of flood origin. It is, however, a viable interpretation which "holds a lot of water." In our slide presentations, we do give evidence of layers throughout the country which even more clearly indicate flood origin.

Erosion:

There are two main theories for the carving of the canyon. One is the antecedent-river theory and the other, the stream-capture theory. The first supposes that the Colorado River was in place before the uplift of the Grand Canyon area occurred. According to this theory, the river cut down as the plateau rose, eventually carving the Canyon. If this is true, there should be an enormous amount of mud, silt, sand and gravel deposited near the western end of the Canyon. This

is not the case. Instead there is a relatively pure thick bed of limestone.

The other commonly held view involves the idea of stream capture. This view states that the ancestral Colorado River had a different course. A gully cut eastward until it "captured" the Colorado River, and the Grand Canyon was cut. However, there is not good evidence of the "old" channel of the ancestral Colorado River. This, plus other problems, indicates that neither of the two "usual" explanations for the carving of the canyon are very good. (More information is available in ICR's upcoming publication, *Field Guide to the Grand Canyon*.)

There is an alternative theory for the cutting of the Grand Canyon that has received little attention. This is the idea of catastrophic or sudden carving of the Canyon over very little time as a great body of water was suddenly released. There is evidence that at one time there was a great body of water impounded to the east of the Grand Canyon. If this body of water broke through a weak spot and emptied quickly, the force would have been sufficient to carve the Canyon, especially if the sedimentary layers were not completely lithified (turned to stone) yet. A similar scenario actually occurred on the Toutle River after the eruption of Mount St. Helen's, and formed a miniature "Grand Canyon" in a very short time. Other major canyons are also now recognized to be the result of this type of catastrophic process. This explanation seems to fit the facts and is consistent with the idea of a global catastrophic flood and subsequent collapse of impounded inland seas.

Meaning of the Grand Canyon:

What can we learn from the Grand Canyon? If the canyon is really the result of a major, catastrophic flood, it is good evidence for the accuracy of the Scriptures. The Bible teaches us that the Flood was sent upon the earth as judgment on sin. Noah and his family were saved by God's grace through Noah's obedient faith.

God still hates sin and will bring judgment. However, just as He provided a way of safety in Noah's day, He has provided a way to escape the coming judgment. That way is Jesus Christ. Through accepting His sacrifice on our behalf as payment for our sin and coming to God in repentance and faith, we will be saved.

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Many people don't realize the importance of the creation/evolution issue. In his book, *The Lie*, Ken Ham (1987, Master Books) clearly and concisely discusses bias, the limitations of science, and the foundational nature of the Book of Genesis. The many helpful diagrams and cartoon type illustrations help to crystallize the message in an unforgettable way. Here are some classic quotes from *The Lie*:

It is not a matter of whether one is biased or not. It is really a question of which bias is the best bias with which to be biased. (p. 9)

The whole issue revolves around whether we believe the words of God who was there, or the words of fallible humans (no matter how qualified) who were not there. (p. 8)

The controversy is not religion versus science, as the evolutionists try to make out. It is religion versus religion, the science of one religion versus the science of the other (p. 12)

This book is excellent for people who are caught in the middle and say they believe in both creation and evolution. It clearly delineates the issue and encourages Christians to take a bold stand for the truth of the Scriptures. We highly recommend it! Order your copy today! (Available from Alpha Omega Institute for \$14.00 which includes shipping. Hardback.)

God's Beautiful World

As you marvel at the beauty of our wonderful world, have you ever stopped to think that this is really the destroyed earth? It's what's left after the judgment of the Flood. The beauty we see here can never compare to the beauty of the originally created earth, nor to the splendor of the "new heavens" and "new earth" He is preparing for those who love Him.

**Alpha Omega
Institute**

P.O. Box 4343
Grand Junction, CO 81502
(303) 245-5906

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Last Call for Family Camp!

There are still a few openings for this year's Creation Family Camp. Besides all of the usual fun, we will be having a full creationism conference. Joining us this year will be Chuck Roessger with his furry friends for live animal talks. We really believe all participants will be blessed. If you're undecided, listen to what one of last year's participants wrote:

Thank you very much for the wonderful week at Camp Redcloud this last summer. It was much more than I and my family expected. We made many new friends there and got better acquainted with the both of you. Both the Creationism program and the recreational activities were outstanding and rejuvenating. It was a once in a lifetime experience none of us will ever forget. We remain much indebted to you and the staff at Camp Redcloud for all that you both did to make this grand experience of a lifetime available to us. (F.H., Oregon)

This year's camp will be at Meadowdale Ranch in the beautiful mountains near Rocky Mountain National Park. The cost for a family of 4 is less than \$400. Don't miss out on a wonderful family vacation. Call NOW to reserve your spot!



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