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by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

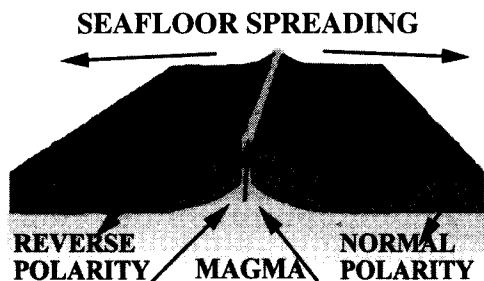
CONTINENTAL DRIFT

In 1859, a creation scientist, Antonio Snider got an idea by reading the Bible. Genesis 1:9-10 says, "And God said, let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good." Antonio felt there was only one land mass which split into separate continents and moved apart during Noah's Flood. His ideas were laughed at. Today, however, many scientists are no longer laughing. They believe the continents did float apart (continental drift) since the continents appear to fit together like a giant jigsaw puzzle. This is especially true looking at the continental shelf and ocean ridges. Fossils and rocks on one continent also match those on another continent across the ocean.

The surface of the world appears to be made of many huge sections called "plates." As these plates move, they change the look of the Earth. This movement is called "plate tectonics." Some plates move away from another plate, some grind past each other, and others move toward each other.

When plates move away from one another, it causes a pulling apart such as along the middle of the ocean where volcanic rocks ooze out (rifts). These rocks have magnetic particles which lined up as the rock cooled. Some scientists claim that when a magnetic measuring device is dragged over the top of these rocks, it maps out a zebra-striped pattern, showing that the magnetic field or pull has reversed many times. They think this pattern shows very slow and gradual formation, hinting at an old earth. But

when test holes are drilled downward next to these rifts, the neat pattern is not seen. Rather a haphazard pattern is found. Other evolutionary scientists say the



striped pattern isn't even there based upon their research. Some creation scientists say patterns could be produced

due to activity during Noah's Flood.

When plates grind past each other, faulting (breaking) can occur. Many believe that the San Andreas Fault in California is an example of this type of movement. As plates move toward one another, one plate can slide under another plate (subduction) or shove together to make mountains.

Based on very small rates of movement (less than 1 to 6 inches per year), some claim it took millions of years for continents to move apart and mountains to form. That is like watching someone inch their car over a bump in your driveway and assume at that speed, it took millions of years for them to get to your house from theirs. We don't know how fast things were moving in the past. When things break, they break quickly, not slowly. Another problem for those who hold to the slow process is what are the forces that can make it work?

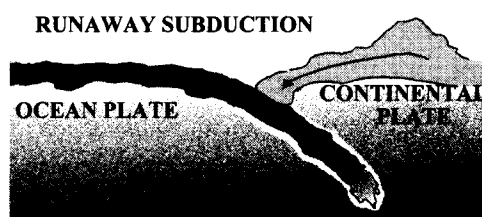
Dr. John Baumgardner, a creationist who is also recognized as one of the top geophysicists in the world, has developed a model that shows how these plate movements could have happened very fast. This idea is known as **catastrophic plate tectonics**.

Baumgardner's model starts with a super-continent (Gen. 1:9) and ocean floor rocks before the Biblical flood. The ocean floor rocks were cold and heavy (dense) and began to sink into the softer, lighter molten **mantle** (see drawing below). This sinking made friction which caused heat, especially at the edges. This heat softened the mantle even more, allowing the ocean floor to sink faster, dragging the rest of the ocean floor along with it. The faster the ocean floor sinks, the more heat is generated causing the ocean floor to sink even faster and faster. This idea is called **runaway subduction**. At the peak of this movement, the ocean floor could have been moving very rapidly (about 3 feet per second)! As the ocean floor sank beneath the land into the mantle, large movements would start through the mantle causing the continent and ocean floor to be pulled apart.

Along the splits in the ocean floor, hot mantle would be forced out as the sinking ocean floor displaced the mantle. (An

example of this: Fill a large bowl completely full of water in the bathtub or sink, then plunge your hand into it.

Something has to give! Water will overflow the bowl as your hand displaces it.) As this hot mantle is pushed out of the rifts into the ocean water, the water would vaporize, making huge amounts of steam all along the split. Could this be the "fountains of the deep" found in Gen. 7:11 and 8:2? As this steam rose into the cooler atmosphere it would condense, causing rain (Gen 7:12?). As the ocean floor



sinks, it would begin to get hotter, and lighter (less dense). This new ocean floor would then begin to rise (from 3,000 to 6,000 feet) pushing up the sea level, which would flood the continents. This flood would lay down lots of mud (sediments) on top of the continents, as we see today.

As the cooler ocean floor sank into the mantle, it would have also caused the molten material in the mantle to circulate faster. As the mantle was stirred, the cooler mantle material that was near the surface could be pushed down to the hotter core of the earth. The core would lose heat very rapidly, causing magnetic reversal, which would be recorded in the rocks being pushed out along the rifts. As this rock rapidly cooled on the surface of the ocean plate, the magnetic particles would lock in, being seen as a zebra pattern of stripes.

Using seismic equipment, what seem to be huge pieces of old ocean floor have been recorded **under** the continents. According to Dr. Baumgardner, this subducted ocean floor would not have had time to absorb (or melt) into the mantle in the short time since the flood (about 5,000 years ago).

This subduction model would explain Psalms 104:8; "The mountains rose up; the valleys sank down." As plates collided, mountains would be pushed up. At the end of the flood the new ocean floor would begin to cool, getting heavier, and sink, making deeper ocean basins to receive the water as it ran off of the rising land.

While this model of catastrophic plate tectonics is just a theory, it explains very well what we see today. Although the Bible does not talk about continental drift, this model fits with many of the ideas of the Bible. There are many other theories on continental drift. Another idea is called the Hydroplate Theory. To learn more about this idea, visit Dr. Walter Brown, at The Center for Scientific Creation (www.creationscience.com). As with any theory, ideas can change as more evidence is revealed. So what we believe in science today, can change tomorrow. Thank the Lord that the Bible doesn't need to change!

[Information used in this article was derived from Catastrophic Plate Tectonics: A Global Flood Model Of Earth History by Austin, Baumgardner, Humphreys, Snelling, Vardiman, and Wise as presented at the Third International Conference on Creationism (1994) and The Revised & Expanded Answers Book by Ham, Sarafati, and Wieland published by Master Books (August 2000)]

ASK EUGENE

Wow, I got a really long letter from Sharon asking about Genesis 10:25, talking about the earth being divided. Was this continental drift? I don't have enough room in this issue to answer Sharon....so look for it next time.

Here is a **riddle** for you.....Can you figure out a word? The word has seven letters....came before God..... is greater than Godis more evil than

the devil....all poor people have it....rich people don't need it...if you eat it, you will die. Give up.....See answers!!!!



EUGENE, c/o Alpha Omega Institute, P.O.Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO 81502 (eugeneiam@juno.com)

WORD SEARCH

Look for the words hidden in the puzzle below from words in the word list. The hidden words might be up and down, sideways, or slanted (not backwards).

H C S P H O N M A N T L E B A L N N
E I A B A U M G A R D N E R O Y O T
C O N T I N E N T A L G C T R I S E
U M O U N T A I N S N E N O T S U L
N U E E A I R O R I L A E A M E B O
Y R R I D G E S T B T H M E I S D H
C R K C S A T L I P T R I G M O U S
B A A R I S U B S R O R N I O N C G
D S T E L A E K T F E I O L P D T S
N E N A F P C S E E D V F C N L I P
C R E T S O O D N A C E E H E A O L
N I N I R T A L E I S T D R E A N A
A F O O H E R R A O D C O R S E N T
R T H N D I P O Z R U E I N I A O E
C S S I R S O F P E I O R E I F L S
H U M P H R E Y S H B T T N N C T T
Y E R U N A W A Y O I R Y E Y C S D
F N O N M A G N E T I C A E P O E O

WORD LIST

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|--------------|-----------|------------|
| BAUMGARDNER | IDEA | ROCKS |
| BIBLE | MAGNETIC | RUNAWAY |
| CATASTROPHIC | MANTLE | SCIENCE |
| CONTINENTAL | MOUNTAINS | SNIDER |
| CREATION | OCEAN | SPREADING |
| DEFORMATION | PLATES | SUBDUCTION |
| DRIFT | POLARITY | TECTONICS |
| FAULTING | REVERSAL | THEORY |
| FLOOD | RIDGES | ZEBRA |
| HUMPHREYS | RIFTS | |

Answers

Nothing! Nothing has 7 letters, nothing came before God, nothing is greater than God, nothing is more evil than the devil, poor people have nothing, rich people need nothing, and if you eat it, you will die!

A grid of letters with several words highlighted in a slanted pattern. The words are: IDEA, MAGNETIC, MANTLE, MOUNTAINS, OCEAN, PLATES, POLARITY, REVERSAL, RIDGES, RIFTS, ROCKS, RUNAWAY, SCIENCE, SNIDER, SPREADING, SUBDUCTION, TECTONICS, THEORY, ZEBRA.

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