

CAVE FORMATION

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

The Jones family stood in awe as they entered the 'Big Room' of Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. "Oh, it is so beautiful," Mary exclaimed.

Her brother Billy burst out, "Look at all those icicles hanging down from the ceiling! And look at those upside-down icicles on the ground!"

"Those are not icicles," explained Mr. Jones. They are stalactites and stalagmites. The ones on the ceiling are stalactites, and those on the floor are stalagmites. One way to remember the difference between the two is that stalactites hang TIGHT to the ceiling' and stalagmites push up with all of their MIGHT from the floor. Sometimes, they come together to form a column from the ceiling to the floor."

"How are they made?" Mary asked.

"First, we need to understand how the cavern itself was formed. The limestone rocks in this cavern are sedimentary rocks laid down by water. Evolution teaches that caverns like this took millions or hundreds of thousands of years to form as surface water containing carbonic acid slowly dripped through the limestone, eating away at it.¹

"However, geologists found sulfur layers near and below the caverns several years ago.

Hot water rising through the sulfur would have made sulfuric acid. This acid would have eaten away at the soft limestone, rapidly

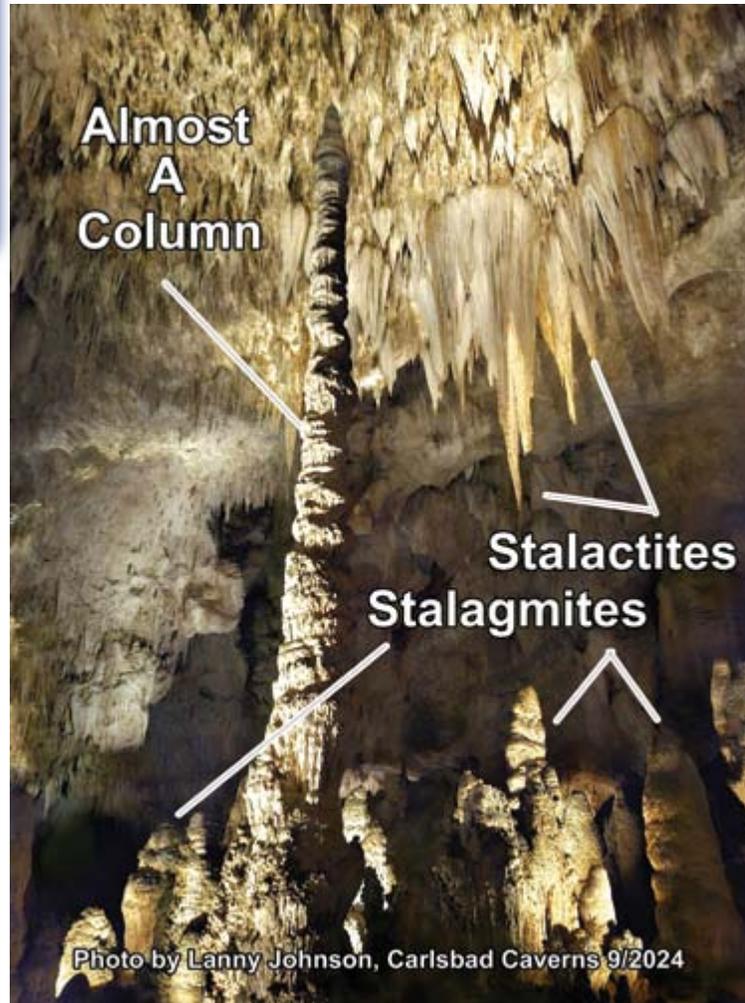
of hundreds of thousands or even millions."²

"Okay, Dad, I understand how the caverns were formed, but how are the stalactites and stalagmites made?"

"Well, Mary, after the flood, the rock layers laid down by mud and water were still very wet even after the water drained back into the oceans. As the water flowed through the cracks and pores of the rocks, it absorbed calcite and other chemicals. As this mineral-rich water drips from the ceiling, it gradually evaporates, leaving behind the milky minerals in the form of stalactites. Stalagmites are made by mineral rich water droplets that fall to the floor and evaporate"³

"Does it take a long time to make them?"

"No, Mary. Experiments show that they can be made rapidly. Stalactites and stalagmites have been seen to grow up to an inch a year, depending on how much water drips into the caverns. At the end of the flood, there would have been much more water than we see today, so they could have grown much faster, possibly in only hundreds or a few thousand years. Noah's flood, beginning about 4400 years ago, made the perfect conditions for everything we see here in Carlsbad Caverns."⁴



carving out the caverns. Dr. Andrew Snelling believes that the limestone layers were formed during Noah's Flood. He explains this is why we see billions of fossil shells and other sea creatures in the cave ceilings. The caverns were probably carved out rapidly (almost overnight) at the end of the flood. So, these caverns were likely made several thousand years ago instead

Footnotes

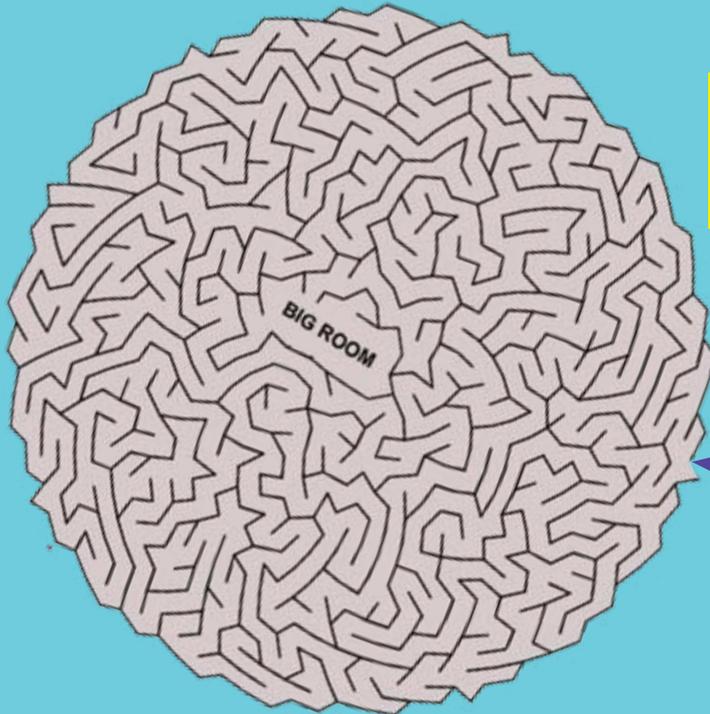
¹ <https://answersingenesis.org/geology/caves/caves-the-greatest-show-under-earth/>

² <https://answersingenesis.org/geology/caves/caves-underground-and-upside-down/>

³ <https://answersingenesis.org/geology/caves/caves-the-greatest-show-under-earth/>

⁴ Ibid

Find the 15 differences between the two cave scenes below.



Help the familys through the maze to the
BIG ROOM.
Hopefully they mark the trail so they can safely
find their way out.



FOR ANSWERS, GO TO:
www.discovercreation.org/kids/newsletteranswers.htm

Puzzles by Lanny Johnson © AOI 2024
Maze adapted from krazydad.com/puzzles

Kid's Think & Believe Too is published bi-monthly by Alpha Omega Institute, P.O. Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO, 81502. Editors: Lanny and Marilyn Johnson. Kid's Think & Believe may be freely copied and distributed in its entirety for non-commercial use. AOI is a tax-exempt non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and a member of ECFA. © 2024 Alpha Omega Institute
www.discovercreation.org