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Chalk And Noah's Flood

By Greg Neyman

Young earth creation science advocate Andrew Snelling proposes in his article "Can Flood Geology

Explain Thick Chalk Layers?" that it is possible to lay down massive layers of chalk in a short amount of time (Footnote 1). It is necessary for him to prove this can happen, because the chalk layers must be laid down during the Flood of Noah for him to prove that the earth is young, and that the days of creation were literal twenty-four hour days.

So, what is chalk? For that I refer you to Dr. Snelling's article, and the section so titled. Then come back here and continue reading.

The Hook, Line, & Sinker Tactic Further down in his article, he aptly describes the problems that must be solved for flood geology to account for these thick chalk layers. The key problem here is the production rate of these organisms. In order to lay down these thick chalk layers, these organisms must be very prolific. In fact, he states the deep ocean floor as the place with the purest calcareous ooze, and its reported accumulation rates range from 1-8 centimeters per 1,000 years and 2-10 centimeters per 1,000 years, depending on the origin of the ooze. At this rate, his obvious problem is to figure out a model which can produce 1,329 feet of chalk in only the time frame of the Flood of Noah (371 days).

To propose the young-earth model, Snelling relies on the research of Dr. Ariel Roth and John Woodmorappe. He does so by slowly upping the ante, by gradually leading us up and up the scale of believability. He starts by Roth's calculations that "the top 200 metres of the ocean would produce 20 grams of calcium carbonate per square centimetre per year, or at an average sediment density of 2 grams per cubic centimetre, 100 metres in 1,000 years." Okay, now we don't have millions of years as geologists propose, but if you do the math, you can create 1,329 feet of chalk (the amount in the cliffs of Dover, England) in only 4,050 years. We are closer to 371 days, but still far away.

These calculations were based on the source of the chalk being foraminifera. Now, Dr. Snelling leads us into the other source of chalk, coccolithophores. Roth, using this source, argues that these organisms can multiply at a rate of 2.25 divisions per day. Now, we are able to "produce an average 100 metre (305 feet) thickness of coccoliths as calcareous ooze on the ocean floor in less than 200

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years." Following this math out, we could produce 1,329 feet of chalk in 750 years. We have gone from millions of years, down to 4,050 years, and now to 750 years. We still have a ways to go to get to 371 days.

It is obvious at this point what tactic is being employed by Dr. Snelling. Call it the "Bait and Reel." He presents the problem, then tempts you with the bait. First, he lowers it to 4,050, then to 750 years. What he is doing is gradually reeling in the reader into believing his conclusions. Of course, the average reader with no knowledge of the subject will fall for this tactic 'hook, line, and sinker.' However, if you take the time to step back and look, you realize he has to use this tactic to convince his audience, because a straightforward approach would fall flat on its face. Anyway, let's allow him to continue.

Now we move into the "Blooms" part of his argument. The two supporting geologists "recognize" that coccolith accumulation is not a slow, steady process, but is highly episodic. In other words, they have

periods of highly increased production rates, even to the point that near Jamaica you can see "white water" conditions because of the density of these organisms. The various reasons suggested for this condition is "turbulence of the sea, wind, decaying fish, nutrients from freshwater inflow and upwelling, and temperature."

At this point, Snelling claims all of these "reasons" would be present during the catastrophic global Flood, "thus rapid production of carbonate skeletons by foraminifera and coccolithophores would be possible."

He states, "It has been reported that oceanic productivity 5-10 times greater than the present could be supported by the available sunlight." The reported 5–10 times production rate would lower the 750 years to 75 years at best...not to the 371 days required by the flood model. (Notice that although he can get us down to 75 years, the rest is speculation.)

Why Noah's Flood Can't Produce Chalk Layers Okay, even if you believe this, it is impossible to overcome the following argument.

Let's back up to the beginning of the article. Remember that these chalk beds form when the organisms die, and their calcium carbonate shells start falling slowly to accumulate on the ocean floor. "It has been estimated that a large 150 micron (0.15mm or 0.006 inch) wide shell of a foraminifer may take as long as 10 days to sink to the bottom of the ocean, whereas smaller ones would probably take much longer. At the same time, many such shells may dissolve before they even reach the ocean floor."

What happens when you have a planet full of water? A study of the currents during such an event was done by young–earth creationists Baumgardner and Barnette, and young earth proponents depend heavily upon this study (Footnote 2). You get flow rates at 40 to 80 meters per second, or 131 to 262 feet per second, which equates to 89 to 179 miles per hour currents. These flow rates are located in rotational gyres over the continents. The flow rates over the shallow, continental shelves would also be close to these speeds. Unfortunately for Snelling, these organisms thrive in calm waters, not turbulent

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waters. You can imagine what would happen to an organism's production rate of 2.25 divisions per day. Division would be the last thing on its mind, it would merely be trying to survive.

The currents cause several more problems. In Jamaica, you can see these placid, calm seas, which are white with organisms. Try running a 90 mile per hour current through there, and see what happens...oops, no more white clouded water. They would be dispersed all over the ocean currents. By this model, it would be impossible to "bloom" in one place...as these blooms would be carried along on the currents, scattering their remains all over the world, instead of the one spot over England that you need for the Dover cliffs. In fact, you would get NO chalk beds anywhere in the world!

Furthermore, remember the statement two paragraphs up, "many such shells may dissolve before they even reach the ocean floor." The size of the larger shells is 150 microns. Using Stokes Law, which determines the velocity at which a particle will settle out of the water and be deposited on the bottom of a fluvial system, a particle of that size would sink to the bottom when the water velocity goes below 1.5 centimeters per second, or 1/30th of a mile per hour (Footnote 3). Please note the Flood model flow rate is at a minimum 89 miles per hour! Therefore, these particles would never fall out of the ocean currents, and would dissolve as they were carried along. Again, the Flood model would yield NO chalk beds at all.

Can you discard the current studies done by Baumgardner and Barnette? Go ahead. The problem is...if you do that, you don't have the erosional forces to supply the material to form all the other sandstones and siltstones! Either way you choose, you can't account for the layers of rock we see using the young-earth model.

Conclusion According to the Flood model, we should not have any chalk beds. However, chalk beds exist all over the world. The only possible explanation is that they formed exactly as geologists have theorized. It is obvious that the Flood of Noah could not have produced them.

Footnotes

1 "Can Flood Geology Explain Thick Chalk Layers?"
(answersingenesis.org/home/area/magazines/tj/docs/v8n1_chalk.asp)

2 Baumgardner and Barnette
(icr.org/index.php?module=research&action=index&page=researchp_jb_patternssofcirculation)

3 Depositional Systems: A Genetic Approach to Sedimentary Geology, by Richard A. Davis, Jr., Prentiss Hall Publishers, 1983. Pages 43-44.

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<http://www.answersincreation.org>

. The original location of this article is at

<http://www.answersincreation.org/nochalk.htm>

God's Broken Promise

By Greg Neyman

One of the common claims by young earth creationists is that if Noah's Flood were a local flood, then God has broken his promise many times. According to The Answers Book, chapter 10,

"If the Flood were local, God would have repeatedly broken His promise never to send such a Flood again. There have been huge 'local' floods in recent times: in Bangladesh, for example, where 80% of that country has been inundated, or Europe in 2002."(Footnote 1)

Is there any truth to this claim? Do the local floods we see today constitute a breaking of the covenant God made with Noah? First, let's read the covenant in Genesis 9:8–15.

8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, 9 "Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. 11 And I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be shut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; 13 I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. 14 And it shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, 15 and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh." To answer this question, one must look at exactly what the covenant says. First, who is the covenant with? This is contained in verses 9–10. Clearly, it was made with Noah and his sons, and their descendents. It was also made with every living creature that is with Noah. At the end of verse 10, God extends it to "even every beast of the earth." There is no question who the covenant is with, however it is interesting that God makes a distinction between the living creatures with Noah (with every living creature that is with you), and the rest of the creatures (even every beast of the earth). Why would God make this distinction? If all the animals were killed, and Noah had all the survivors on the ark, then it was useless to extend the covenant beyond the ark's inhabitants. This indicates that the flood was local, and there were animal populations outside of the inhabitants of the ark. If every living thing were on the ark, the term "even every beast of the earth" gives no additional meaning to the text.

But what is the exact covenant? This is in verses 11 and 15.

11 "And I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be shut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth." 15 "and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water

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become a flood to destroy all flesh."

The key term to examine is "all flesh." What is the meaning of this term? This is tied to the beginning of the ark story, where God stated the purpose of the Flood.

Morris and Whitcomb in their book, *The Genesis Flood*, (Footnote 2) say the purpose of the flood was to destroy both man, beast, creeping things, and birds. The key is in Genesis 6:12:

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. (KJV)

The purpose of the flood was to wipe out this corruption. The main meaning for the Hebrew word for flesh in the Flood chapters, *bâsâr*, is person or man. The Hebrew dictionary doesn't even make it possible to extend this to animal flesh. God is not talking about the corruption of the animal kingdom, but about man's corruption. This is corrected in some other translations (NIV="people"; Amplified="humanity"). The purpose of the flood was to wipe out man, not animals. Yes, animals in the flooded locations would be killed, but they are not the target of God.

The main point of the covenant is that man shall never again be wiped from the face of the earth. Local floods since the time of Noah have never wiped man from the face of the earth. Yes, many have been killed, but never to the scale of Noah's Flood, where only eight people were left alive.

When local floods occur today, they come nowhere close to wiping out humanity. The Answers Book lists the Bangladesh floods, where thousands have died. Yet there are billions of people still on planet earth after those floods. Clearly this does not compare with Noah's Flood, where more than 99 percent of mankind was wiped out. Even the Tsunami of 2004, which killed hundreds of thousands, cannot compare to Noah's Flood.

In local floods today, less than 1/100th of one percent of the world's populations are killed. In Noah's flood, almost 100 percent of mankind was killed. There is no comparison.

God extends his covenant to the creatures of the earth as well, saying that they would also be spared from floods of the magnitude of Noah's Flood. Yes, animals are killed when local floods occur, but they do not come close to the magnitude of Noah's Flood, where an entire species was almost wiped out (humankind, except for Noah's family).

The only other term to consider is "neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth." We cannot know the extent of Noah's Flood geographically...we can only assume that it covered all the lands inhabited by humans at the time. Although local floods do harm the earth, it is a safe assumption that the extent of Noah's Flood has not been repeated. It may also be important to note that the Hebrew word for earth, *'erets*, also means land in general, such as a field, or nations, or even "ground".

Conclusion

Clearly, God has not flooded the earth in the same way he did during Noah's time, with the same

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impact. God has not broken His promise. Mankind has never been wiped from the face of the earth again. This claim made by young earth creationists has no basis in fact.

1 Was the Flood global?, The Answers Book (web version),
answersingenesis.org/Home/Area/AnswersBook/global10.asp

2 Henry Morris, John Whitcomb, The Genesis Flood. Baker Book House, 1961. pp. 11–14

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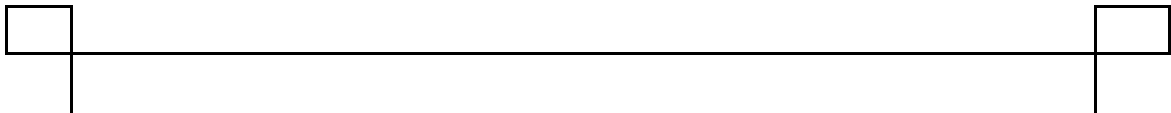
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