

Evolution vs. Creation

Lesson Six

Geology: On Shaky Ground

April 9, 2006

- One of the most important fundamental questions of science is, “How did things get to be the way they are today?”
- A belief in evolution is grounded in a belief that the earth is very old
- Geology: study of the earth
- Uniformitarianism: the basis for modern geology
- belief that the earth’s surface was shaped by slow, steady processes acting over long ages
- first proposed by James Hutton in the 18th century
- popularized by Charles Lyell in the 19th century
- uniformitarianism laid the ground work for evolution, which was a natural fit for the belief in an old earth
- Catastrophism: the prevailing belief up until a couple hundred years ago
- belief that the earth’s surface was shaped by sudden, cataclysmic events
- the scientific paradigm of uniformitarianism has been used as the grid for interpreting geological data for the last two centuries
- the “geological column” – a belief that sedimentary strata were deposited slowly and sequentially over millions of years – should provide a chronological “history” of life on the earth
- rock strata are identified and dated based on the fossils found in them – the age of the layers is *assumed*
- the theory suggests that rock layers would exist in the same “order” throughout the world, but exceptions are the rule
- how do you explain a mountain that is 100 million years older than the rock layers underneath it? If you’re a uniformitarian geologist, something must have pushed the “old” mountain over these “newer” strata – except there is no evidence to explain or support the theory
- Paleontology: study of ancient life
- Darwin’s tree of life – shows the progression of life from simple to complex, with branches for the major species; the most recent forms of life are the most complex

- Cambrian explosion – the “Big Bang” that paleontologists don’t want to talk about
- sudden appearance of every major animal group in the fossil record with no ancestral links
- the tree of life would require billions of transitional forms – but there are none
- shatters the idea that life formed gradually from simple to complex forms
- polystrate fossils – cut across numerous layers of the geological record, but how?
- fossils believed to be formed by slow processes over millions of years, but how can you fossilize a dead critter?
- one fossil deposition in the U.S. contains large reptiles that would have required 5000 years to bury by uniformitarian mechanics
- some fossil beds (e.g., Siberia) contain billions of animals
- Malta – lions, tigers, mammoths, birds, beavers, hippopotamuses, foxes in one cave (too many animals to live on Malta for a week)
- Maryland – Cumberland Bone Cave contains mammals, reptiles, and birds from all types of habitats – dry, wet, arctic, tropical – all buried together
- the fossil record must have been formed by sudden, catastrophic burial – all over the world
- contrary to popular opinion, coal and oil don’t require long ages to form – all that’s required is pressure and heat
- radiometric dating has been proven totally inaccurate for rocks of known age, and doesn’t work at all for sedimentary rocks
- the reason radiometric dating doesn’t work is because it is based on a set of assumptions that cannot be known – e.g., the initial composition of the rock and a constant radioactive decay rate over “millions” of years
- 2 Peter 3:3-7 – everything goes on as it has in the past – they deliberately forget