

**The Beginnings Under Attack**  
**Chapter 7**  
**“Noah and the Flood”**



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Sheffield's discussion of the Flood begins with the flood legends argument...since there are so many flood legends around the world, they indicate a great flood from the past. As an old earth creationist, this presents no problems, since we all believe in a flood. He mentions the single land mass during the time of Peleg, an argument which the young earth ministry Answers in Genesis has on their "do not use" list ([answersingenesis.org/home/area/faq/dont\\_use.asp](http://answersingenesis.org/home/area/faq/dont_use.asp)). This division obviously refers to linguistics, not geology.

To support the young earth, he throws out several issues, all of which have been answered by old earth believers.

**Claim:** The top of Mt. Everest is sedimentary rock with fossils. True, but it does not support a young earth.

**Rebuttal:** Plate tectonics provides an excellent mechanism for this to occur. For more, see <http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CC/CC364.html>.

**Claim:** Rapidly Buried Fossils indicate a Flood did it.

**Rebuttal:** I agree...but was it Noah's Flood, or a local flood event. You cannot say which one if you did not witness the actual flood event causing the fossil. For more, see Buried Birth ([www.answersincreation.org/buriedbirth.htm](http://www.answersincreation.org/buriedbirth.htm)); Insect Fossil Bed ([www.answersincreation.org/insectbed.htm](http://www.answersincreation.org/insectbed.htm)).

Next he considers the ark, saying it was designed to float. I agree. However, tests done by young earth scientists, do not take into account the conditions of the flood. For instance, a very good study was done by young earth creationists, in which the seaworthiness of the ark was examined.<sup>1</sup> The study examined 8 factors, such as heave, pitch, roll, deckwetting (impacting waves), etc. Unfortunately, they forgot one very critical motion...forward motion! (see [www.answersincreation.org/arkstudy.htm](http://www.answersincreation.org/arkstudy.htm)). They approached their study with the assumption the ark would be floating in place. However, young earth creationists Baumgardner and Barnette worked out an excellent study of what happens to a globe full of water.<sup>2</sup> You get currents topping out at over 178 miles per hour! The Ark would have to withstand the pressures of racing around the globe at the speed of a NASCAR race car! You see, the currents are needed to erode the rocks so that the rock layers we see can be built by Noah's Flood. As you can see, these two

research articles wonderfully support young earth creationism by themselves, but when you combine them, it's a disaster for the young earth model! In a globe full of water, Noah would be circling the globe every 5.4 days! The young earth study on the Ark did not take into account his forward motion, rendering this excellent study useless.

In a local flood scenario, however, Noah's Ark would have no problems floating around in the Middle East. The young earth study on the Ark actually supports an old earth, local flood scenario!

Sheffield then goes into a discussion of how there will be scoffers in the last days. He says they ignore the literal interpretation of the promises concerning Jesus return, and they scoff at the concept of a world wide flood. Old earth believers, who are literal in their Biblical interpretations, have no issues here. We do not believe in a world wide flood, but a local flood. A local flood is supported through a literal reading of the Flood account. We do scoff at the supposed young earth evidences for a world wide flood, as they all can be shown to be false. We can make this claim, while completely agreeing with the Scripture verses that Sheffield uses. We don't deny Noah's Flood, or the promises of Jesus' return.

He then moves on to a brief discussion on the "sons of God" marrying the daughters of men. There are no issues here for the age of the earth.

### **Giants (Page 128)**

Nothing of significance here for the age of the earth debate.

### **The Ark (Page 130)**

He gives a brief discussion of the size of Noah's Ark, with no claims as to its ability to house all of the animal species.

In calculating the volume of the ark, most young earth creationist studies do the simple width times height times length to get the volume. However, they neglect to subtract the volume of that space that is taken up by the wood itself...the floors, supports, outer hull, etc. Therefore, young-earth calculations are at least 10 percent too large.

More importantly, the calculations for food for the animals is done based on a 371 day requirement (see the ICR Impact Article #273, at [icr.org/pubs/imp/imp-273.htm](http://icr.org/pubs/imp/imp-273.htm)). However, a much greater requirement existed in a young-earth, global flood model.

By the young-earth model, all animals before the flood were plant eaters. After the flood, they were allowed to eat meat. Also, by the young-earth model, all the fossil bearing sedimentary rocks were deposited during the flood. In order to erode rock to deposit these sedimentary layers, much water force was needed. Recall the ocean pattern article we talked about above? Young-earth creation theorists Baumgardner and Barnette worked out an excellent model of what happens when you have a globe full of water.<sup>2</sup> They were able to show that you would get ocean currents of greater than 178 miles per hour. Therefore, underwater during a worldwide flood, all existing vegetation would have been stripped from the land and killed. Those that were not would have been buried by the massive amounts of sediment being deposited.

What was the land like that Noah found after the flood? By the young-earth model, it would have been a desert wasteland, with no plants growing anywhere on the planet.

Provided the seeds floated, it would take many years for plants to repopulate the globe. You may ask what this has to do with Noah's ark. Well, if there were no plants, then the animals that were on the ark would need Noah to feed them for a few more years. However, ark studies do not account for this extra volume of food!

Two more points. After the flood, according to young-earth theory animals became carnivorous. Also, they claim that there were dinosaurs on the ark. With no food, and hungry T-rex's and raptors prowling around, all animal life, including man, would probably be extinct within a few months after the ark landed!

He again makes the statement that rain had never fallen. However, when God told Noah it was going to rain, Noah did not ask God, "What is rain?" Also, the rock record is full of raindrop impressions from millions of years ago.

Sheffield mentions the standard claim that the animals on the ark were young, thus they would require more sleep, and less food. In my experience, young animals require more food, as they are growing, but this is a minor point. In reality, the Bible does not give us the ages of the animals, however, it is interesting to note that in order to fit the animals on the ark, young earth creationists specify that they are young and take up less space. Thus, the "young earth" theory is what is driving the claim that the animals were young, and not actual evidence from God's Word.

Also driven by young earth theory is the claim that Noah took "kinds" and not "species." As Hovind points out, there are over 130 varieties of dogs...but they are all dogs (actually, there are only 34 species of dogs, so Hovind must be looking at "breeds"). Using this simplistic approach, young earth creationists claim you would only have about 300 distinct pairs of "kinds" on the Ark.

That means that these 300 pairs "evolved" into what we have today. In fact, young earth creationists admit this, and say that this rapid evolution is "microevolution." Here is what must evolve, for several of the more common animals:<sup>3</sup>

- Dogs - 1 pair on ark to 34 species today
- Rabbits - 1 to 80
- Even-Toed Ungulates (deer-type) - 1 to 220
- Marsupials - 1 to 272
- Shrews & Moles - 1 to 375+
- Bats From - 1 to 925
- Rodents - 1 to 2000+
- Frogs & Toads - 1 to 4,000+

As you can see, we should be seeing quite a few new species evolving every year...in fact, we could probably sit and watch rodents and frogs evolve with our naked eye!

Old earth theory does not require such fanciful imagination. Noah only needed species living in the Middle East. There would have been no need for koalas and other animals to be on the ark. And, you would not need such hyper-microevolution to account for today's species.

Next, he addresses dinosaurs, saying they were on the Ark. He mentions "absolute scientific proof" that dinosaurs were alive with man (footprints, tools, utensils). He previously mentioned the footprint issue, and that has been thoroughly rebutted. In the case of the Burdick print, it is even shown that this was carved from the rock (the rock

was even upside down!). For more, see <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/paluxy.html>. I'm not sure what he means by the tools and utensils claim. This is the first time he has mentioned it, and there are no dinosaur claims I know of related to tools and utensils. Next, he uses Job 40-41 as evidence that dinosaurs are mentioned in the Bible. To read more about this erroneous claim, read Job 40-41.

Next, he mentions modern sightings of dinosaurs, referring to hundreds of sightings of sea monsters. Young earth creationists claim these are plesiosaurs, and show that dinosaurs are still alive. However, plesiosaurs are not dinosaurs. All dinosaurs are land-dwelling. Even if a plesiosaur is found alive today, it does not prove the earth is young. For more on this, see Plesiosaurs: What If? ([www.answersincreation.org/plesiosaur.htm](http://www.answersincreation.org/plesiosaur.htm)).

He makes the claim that sea creatures did not have to be on the ark. However, remember the study which showed ocean currents of 178 miles per hour? These conditions would have likely killed all the sea life.

On page 139, he says the Canopy, which they had known all their lives, began to collapse. Again, the Canopy theory has some *extreme problems*. To understand why, see <http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CH/CH310.html>.

Next he argues against a local flood theory, which most old earth creationists believe. Here are his claims:

**Claim:** It does not explain how fossils are on mountaintops and all over the world.

**Rebuttal:** Plate tectonics explains how fossil-bearing strata end up at elevation. And of course, there are animals all over the world, contributing to the fossil record in every locale.

**Claim:** All the high hills were covered (Gen. 7:19-20). That would mean mountains in the region, over two miles high, would be covered.

**Rebuttal:** In other words, water could not be two miles high in this area, without gravity causing it to run to other parts of the globe. You would need an invisible wall to hold the water in place. However, looking at a map of modern day Iraq, it would be no great problem to flood the Tigris/Euphrates river valleys, to the point where Noah, on the Ark, would not be able to see dry land in any direction. You would not need to flood to the tops of the mountains of Ararat. The tops of the mountains where mankind had inhabited would be covered, and that is the key.

Although Mount Ararat is in Turkey, the mountain range containing Ararat extends into Northern Iraq. Thus, Noah could have drifted north until he came to rest against these mountains in northern Iraq. Of course, this does not take into account God's supernatural power. If you want to believe an invisible wall held the water in...go right ahead...God could have done it. However, it is not necessary given the circumstances.

**Claim:** All the animals, all over the entire globe, died.

**Rebuttal:** The Flood account is written from the perspective of mankind (Noah). On the Ark, with no land in sight, he would no doubt claim this were true...even though beyond the horizon, there was dry land and living animals. All of the land that mankind had lived in, and all the animals in those locales, were destroyed. Thus, God destroyed everything known to mankind. There would have been no need for God to destroy animals outside of man's influence, because man's corruption had not reached those localities.

**Claim:** "God could have just told Noah to move!"

**Rebuttal:** And all of the people would have followed him to safety!

**Claim:** If it were local, then God's promise never to flood the earth again is empty.

**Rebuttal:** God promised never to never again flood the earth. There are two ways to look at it. First, God lets nature run its course. In the case of the Flood, he intervened. God would never again intervene in the natural laws he set in motion and cause a Flood. Second, there never has been another flood of this magnitude. Sure, there have been other local floods, but they are smaller in comparison with the Flood of Noah.

Sheffield mentions that these attacks are coming from within the church, weakening the faith of young believers (page 141). Actually, the opposite is occurring. As old earth creationism takes over, people are realizing you can accept science and the Bible, and their faith is being strengthened. What Sheffield is alluding to is that young earth creationist's faith is being weakened. As they learn the truth, they are leaving the church. This is because the church is presenting this as an either/or scenario. Either you accept the young earth as fact, or you reject the Bible. Thus, young earth creationists, by their false interpretations of science and the Bible, are bringing this demise upon themselves. It need not be this way! You can believe in an inerrant, literal Genesis, and believe that the earth is old. If young earth creationists would recognize this, they could save themselves many problems, and they would stop driving people away from Christ.

On page 142, he alludes to the claim that the ark gently floated, and did not undergo hurricane force conditions. In an old earth, local flood scenario, this works. Given a globe full of water traveling at 178 miles per hour, it does not fit the young earth description (for more, reference the articles previously cited on this page).

Sheffield continues with some general descriptions with no bearing on the age of the earth issue. Overall, this chapter contains no barriers to old earth belief. You can still believe in a literal Flood without any issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Safety investigation of Noah's Ark in a seaway  
[http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/Magazines/tj/docs/v8n1\\_ArkSafety.asp](http://www.answersingenesis.org/home/area/Magazines/tj/docs/v8n1_ArkSafety.asp)

<sup>2</sup> Patterns of Ocean Circulation Over the Continents During Noah's Flood  
[http://www.icr.org/index.php?module=research&action=index&page=researchp\\_jb\\_patternsofcirculation](http://www.icr.org/index.php?module=research&action=index&page=researchp_jb_patternsofcirculation)

<sup>3</sup> All numbers from <http://www.biokids.umich.edu/>