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**C1014 – April 21, 2010 – Presuppositions & Basic Framework Of
Biblical Geology**

One question to close out Hosea. Israel returned to God, did Gomer return to Hosea? Answer, yes, that's a major point of Hos 3. Those five verses which require careful handling of the Hebrew text teach that Gomer was restored to Hosea and to the place of blessing just like Israel in Hos 14 is restored to the Lord and enjoys the place of blessing. So the analogy between Hosea and his wife Gomer and God and His wife Israel holds till the very end. For the exegesis of Hos 3 I refer you to that lesson. It's all in the text.

Alright, tonight we want to start a new series called A Biblical Framework of Geology. What is earth's history? How old is the earth? How have processes shaped earth into its present form? What processes have shaped the earth into its present form? And what does this have to do with spirituality, if anything?

Let me give you a little background up front. This is going to be a primer on geology. But let me say before we begin that I am not an expert on geology. I'm not a part of any geological society or organization. My background is in three other sciences: biology, chemistry and the queen of the sciences, theology. Biology is important but this course won't deal too much with biology. The chemistry we will get involved in because it relates to geological issues, namely radioisotope and the age of the earth. I'll try to make that easier to understand in coming weeks. And theology - of course we'll be involved in the Scriptures as they touch on these issues, which I think you'll find touch it more often than you might think.

I've been a Christian since I was eight years old and we went to church all the time. But the churches weren't teaching a lot of the word of God, mostly

morality - do good, obey your parents and so forth. Then I went to Texas Tech University and a lot of that was eroded. I became a theistic evolutionist, or as one person called it, a crevolutionist; I believed that God somehow used cosmic, chemical and biological evolution to bring about all that exists. That's, generally speaking, what a theistic evolutionist believes. I wasn't ready to be done with God altogether, I had thought far more about evolution than God, but I hadn't really thought through the logical consistency of my position. At the time I was going to get my biology degree and apply for medical school. So when the time came to get the recommendation letters I had one professor I really wanted a letter from. His name was Michael Dini. Dr Dini was an ex-Franciscan monk who had been at Notre Dame in the 70's and later involved in the California school system on training high school teachers how to teach evolution and religion. And at Texas Tech University he was well-known for having the highest drop out rates in his classes. So I wanted a letter from him. I went in to get one and he said, there are three things, three criteria you have to pass through to get a letter. One you've got to have the grades, and you have the grades, you've scored all A's in all my classes. Two, you've got to have good character, and I know you, you have good character. I'd served on all kinds of committees, I'd served as supplemental instructor for one of his classes, I was an undergraduate teachers' assistant in one of his laboratories, so he knew me well. He said I passed that criteria. Then he said the third thing is a question. And he said, "How did the human species originate?" And when he asked that question the temperature shot up to about 120 degrees. Remember, I was a theistic evolutionist. I wasn't ready to throw God out yet, I was convinced of evolution. So I said I believe God created man. I said that with quite a bit of confidence. And he responded, "I can't give you a recommendation letter." And of course I asked why and that's another story, but the long and the short of it is that he said, modern medical science is built on evolution and therefore you can't be a good doctor unless you are an evolutionist. I said what do you mean? And he began to give examples from adaptations in nature, things like the *biston bitularium* moths and antibiotic resistance genes and how if I didn't recognize those things then I couldn't be a good doctor. The funny thing was that I didn't disagree with those things; those were just examples of adaptation, that was observational science, I didn't even disagree with biological evolution, which is origins science, that no one observed. I just thought that God guided the process and that wasn't a problem for me. I didn't see any reason not to think that. But the fact that I

brought God into the process was sufficient in my professor's eyes to reject giving me a letter of recommendation for medical school and this changed everything; it bothered me that the medical establishment might be like this and I was concerned whether I should go to medical school or not.

Literally, a few weeks later I met Robin and her family and she challenged me on a number of issues. Here I was, a theistic evolutionist and this beautiful girl, a nice, young earth creationist girl, challenged me on a number of issues related to early Genesis. And so I started to think. It was just a few months until graduation so I didn't have much time to think. When I got out of school I worked in a lab and lab rats often get mundane tasks, especially the first few weeks on the job. I got this job of just sitting there scanning sorghum root systems into a computer to calculate surface area and the scanner was real slow. This was back in 1998 but I think the computer was 1988, so it was real slow. Robin and her father had introduced me to some pamphlets written by a pastor in the 1970's. They dealt with carbon dating and the age of the earth. Issues that for some reason are hot buttons for people and there are reasons for that I won't go into. But while I was doing these root scans, each one took about ten minutes, I'd sit over there and study these pamphlets and I started to investigate these things that I never had time to investigate in the university. In the university you're bombarded with information and you just want to make the grades so you can get on the Dean's list. Who cares whether it's right or wrong, just get the grade. But then after I came out and Robin started challenging these things I said, look, you're going to have to get me more information. So she got me more information in these pamphlets and I started studying. You might call this the evolution of a theistic evolutionist to steal a comment once made by Jobe Martin. So I set out on this journey, studying these pamphlets written by a pastor named Charles Clough. Clough had been a graduate from MIT in mathematics in the 1960's and he became a believer and then he went to Dallas Theological Seminary and during this time he came across Morris and Whitcomb's book, *The Genesis Flood*. Morris was the hydrological engineer who built the department at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Whitcomb was the Hebrew scholar and they put that monumental work together. And when Clough read that book it revolutionized his thinking and so he wrote his thesis at Dallas on all the evangelical rebuttals to Morris and Whitcomb's book. It was a very controversial issue. Morris and Whitcomb were arguing that the data that we find out in nature can be interpreted much easier in a

framework of a global catastrophic Flood and a young earth than in long ages. For them, the issue wasn't so much creation as the global Flood of Noah, that's the focus of their book. And this was getting a lot of backlash from the evangelical community because for the last 100 years the church had accommodated to secular geology without critically analyzing the underlying presuppositions. So the long ages idea was firmly entrenched in evangelical circles. So when Morris and Whitcomb came out with their book and said, look, the Bible far better explains the data than evolutionary geology the evangelicals attacked. And so Clough decided to write his thesis at Dallas to rebut these attacks. After this Clough went on to become pastor at Lubbock Bible Church and he wrote these pamphlets in the 1970's that had appendices on issues like the age of the earth and carbon dating and here I am a biologist scanning these roots into a computer. I've got all kinds of time to analyze and think, so the long and the short of it is that I came away a young earth creationist.

That's just a little bit of my story and the background of this study. It's not to put me in the spotlight; it's just to tell you where I've come from and how God's worked in my life. Alright, tonight we want to work with two issues, the basic presuppositions related to geology and the general Scriptural framework of earth's history.

I. Basic Presuppositions Related to Geology

Let's start by defining the term geology. Generally this word means "a study of the earth," but its broader definition and the one we're interested in here is this; "a science that deals with the history of the earth and its life...as recorded in rocks." That's basically what we're interested in, earth history. Can we reconstruct earth's history on the basis of the rocks? And if so, what presuppositions are involved in writing a history of the earth. And second, the record of life, as they have it. I would say death, but the life that is recorded in the rocks, that's the fossil record buried in the strata.

A. Uniformitarianism – present processes are the key to the past

Can this be done? And if it can how ought it to be done? Well, let's look at how it has been done. First, the real issue here is your basic presuppositions. This is *the* issue when interpreting. The issue is not the data, everyone

shares the same data, the issue is how to interpret the data. How do we interpret the rocks of the earth? What do we use as an interpretive principle? There are two approaches. For the first one, which we'll call uniformitarianism, turn to 2 Peter 3. 2 Peter 3 is a commentary on the last days by the apostle Peter. And Peter spells out exactly what the ultimate presupposition of pagan man is. He says in verse 3, "Know this first of all," in other words, this is of chief importance, these are Peter's last written words to the church, and his last words have to do with the ultimate commitment of paganism. He wants us to be very aware of this so that we can construct our gospel defense in such a way that it penetrates deep into the heart of pagan man that he might believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts," notice, this is a sinful presupposition; it's the product of their fleshly lusts. Verse 4, "and saying, here it is, this is the ultimate belief of paganism, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." In other words, uniformity of natural causes in a closed system. There are no major disturbances in history, all continues as natural processes direct the course of the universe. To show you this is the belief, here's Harvard paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson, fifty years ago, but his comments are still *apropos*. He says, "With the dawning realization that the earth is extremely old, in human terms of age, came the knowledge that it has changed progressively and radically but usually gradually and always in an orderly, natural way." Mark the words "always in an orderly, natural way." Doesn't that sound strikingly like 2 Pet 3:4, all continues as it were from the beginning of creation? He goes on. "the doctrine of geological uniformitarianism, finally established early in the 19th century, widened the recognized reign of natural law. The earth has changed throughout its history under the action of material forces, only, and of the *same* forces as those now visible to us and still acting on it." Notice two things about that quote, number one, "material forces, only." There's no God, no external force outside of the universe acting upon it. There is only one level of being or existence. Where have we heard that before? It's the Continuity of Being, all is one, all is material and all life arises out of non-life by spontaneous generation over vast periods of time. And the last thing, notice he does not permit any other forces to be at work in earth's past than those that are quote, "now visible to us and still acting on it." That's another expression of the ultimate commitment of paganism. And what it means is that "the present is the key

to the past.” Present processes that we can observe now, that we can go out and measure, whether they be erosion rates, half-life decay rates, etc...taken in the present can then be extrapolated back in time to reconstruct earth history. The present is the key to the past. Burn those words on your brain because that’s the game that’s being played.

Now does anyone really know that? Does anyone really know that present processes have never changed in past time? Let’s think about this question. According to evolutionary geology the earth is how old? 4.6 billion years old. How long has man been on the earth? 1 million years old. So, at best we have 1 million years of eyewitness data, at most. But in reality we have only about 4,000 years of eyewitness data in the records. So you’re telling me that if we have a line that represents 4.6 billion years, the age of the earth, that you only have eyewitness data for 4,000 years of that line and you can tell me what the line is doing way out here? You want to talk about an error of mass proportions. How can you possibly tell me what the line is doing way out here on the basis of a miniscule amount of data? See, this is the foolishness of unbelief. Just do the math, that’s one, the most fantastic extrapolations. But friend, that’s what our children are being taught, that’s what many people believe, they believe that is hard fact, that is what is on PBS and the history channel and Time Magazine and The Land Before Time and the Berenstain Bears; it’s all there, this is scientific fact, and millions and billions of dollars are poured into the production of this grand story based on 4,000 years of eyewitness data. This stuff has to be exposed for what it really is. What is it really? It’s purely a guess. It’s sheer speculation. Nobody really knows what happened out on that line. Not from a pagan perspective. It’s just a fantasy. Now there are tools they say, and oh yes, we can go back there; we have tools that can get us back there. And we’ll look at those; there are assumptions involved in the use of those tools that manipulate and distort. And we have to be very careful because this story is presented so slick, they’ve got lots of money and they can clean it all up and make it so appealing on the history channel, PBS or something. Peter says they’re “following after their own lusts,” Peter says that the doctrine of uniformity of natural causes as an explanation of all things is a sinful quest to suppress the truth that Jesus Christ will one day interfere with man’s program at His second coming. So don’t think this is light stuff, there are powerful spiritual forces at work involved in the field of geology to suppress Jesus Christ. There’s an agenda at

work. So uniformitarianism is one approach to how you can reconstruct earth's history and this is the reigning approach.

B. Biblical Catastrophism – divine revelation is the key to past

Now we come to the other approach - what I call Biblical Catastrophism. This is the other strategy for interpreting. Turn to John 3:12. There are only two approaches and John 3:12 is sort of a theme verse for this course. This from the famous discourse Jesus had with Nicodemus. Nicodemus had certain questions for Jesus about spiritual matters and Nicodemus was the teacher of Israel, meaning that he was the top professor. Nicodemus was responsible for training the entire nation in the word of God. So Nicodemus had a very important job in the nation and Jesus is chiding him. If you're supposed to train the nation in the word of God, how is it that you don't know the word of God? That's pretty rough coming from Jesus. And so Jesus was using earthly things to teach Nicodemus about spiritual things. Jesus was a master and He picks up nature over and over to teach spiritual truths and when Nicodemus still isn't getting it He says this in verse 12, "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" In other words, if I tell you of earthly things that you can go out and empirically investigate, you can go out and measure these things, you can taste these things, you can quantify the data, you can check it out for yourself and you don't even believe that, how can you believe Me when I tell you about heavenly things, things that you can't go out and empirically investigate, things you can't go out and measure, things like regeneration, things you can't see? You can't believe that. And this is where the spiritual import of this class is. Are we believing what Jesus believed about the earth? If we can't believe Him when His words touch on issues of the earth then how can we believe Him when He talks about our spiritual life; when He talks about regeneration, when He talks about justification, when He talks about faith, when He talks about the Spirit? Can you believe Him about these things you can't see if you can't even believe Him when He tells you about things you can see, things you can go out and touch, taste, feel, measure, quantify, etc...? It's impossible. And if we're struggling to believe Jesus on these things then inevitably it erodes our faith. What happens is we begin to doubt the Bible is really true when it talks about earthly things and when you do that then it's a short step to doubting whether we can trust the Bible when it talks about spiritual things. And when we do that we're doing the same thing Eve did,

that woman in the Garden, what couldn't she believe? God's word about a tree, a tree that she could empirically observe, a tree that she could touch, that she could taste, and her failure to believe what God said about that tree led to what? Spiritual disaster. So what we want to do is show that yes, you can trust everything the Scriptures teach and when you do it builds your faith. So, our strategy is going to begin up front with the authority of Scripture. So revelation in the Scriptures is the key to the past, not present processes. We have eyewitness data, who was the eyewitness? God. He's been there from before the creation and He's revealed and carefully preserved the true history of the earth. So the challenge for us as Christians is can we take the data of historical geology and interpret it in terms of the framework given in His word?

II. Four Historic Periods of Geological Work

That's the challenge - so what is the framework given in God's word? There are four major periods of geological work. Two are high-energy events. What do I mean by a "high energy event?" I mean an event that involves a lot of energy. Energy is work, it's the work that is done and in a high energy event a lot of work can be done in a short amount of time. I suppose engineers would support me in saying basically we're talking about **power** here, work over time.ⁱ And there are two high energy events that happened in the biblical history; the Creation event and the Flood event, those are high-energy events. The two other periods are low-energy periods and that means less work is being done per unit of time and there are principles for interpreting rocks in those periods of time. Those two periods are the pre-Flood world and the post-Flood world. So the biblical framework for interpreting the rocks is that every geological formation must be interpreted within these four events and primarily the Creation and the Flood, the high energy events when lots of work was being done in a very short period of time.

A. The Creation

So let's look at the first high-energy event, the Creation, Gen 1. There were events of profound geological significance during this week. What days in creation week have particular geological significance? Let's start with the first use of the word "earth."

1. Day 1 (Gen 1:1-5)

Gen 1:1, for now we'll take Gen 1:1 as part of the first day, later we'll talk about various Gap Theories. But for now just follow me and consider Gen 1:1-5 as the first day. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." There's the first reference to the earth. It's the word *eretz*, it's the fourth most common noun in the OT. It's used 2,504 times in the Hebrew and 22 times in the Aramaic for a total of 2,526 times. It means "earth, land." And then in verse 2 we have the first description of the appearance of the earth. "The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters." Now, just thinking about the earth there are two possibilities from this verse. Either the earth at this point is the watery mass, in other words it's not land at all, it's a water-earth enshrouded in darkness or the earth is inside the watery mass. That the earth is the watery mass doesn't fit because "earth" and "water" are both used in this verse but not as synonyms. So the earth is covered by water, the earth is not the water. So we have a rocky earth covered completely by water which is enshrouded in darkness and the Holy Spirit is moving over the surface of these waters. You say what support can you give me for that idea? Look at verse 9, the third day of creation week. "Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; the verb "appear" is the Hebrew "to see, to become visible." In other words it seems that on day one, verse 2, is saying the earth was not visible, the reason being because it was covered with water, but now on day three, God said, let the dry land appear and it appeared. So it was already there on day one but it became visible on day three.

So what can we conclude just as some generalities on day one? That there is a rocky earth encased in water. Then it is possible for it to already be organized into the three major divisions of the earth, the core, which is innermost, the mantle, and the crust. And if that is the case then at the instant of creation there are two possible events of geological significance. First, if God created radioisotope elements in the earth then nuclear decay of those elements could initiate which would release heat. Dr Robert Gentry's discovery of Polonium radiohalos captured in rock. Polonium has a half life of less than one second, so you'd have to have rapid cooling to capture that. If these are in creation rocks then they could be evidence of the creation of the earth on the first day.

For evolutionists, this is a major problem, they've called this "a tiny mystery," and we'll talk more about the significance of these radiohalos later. Second, the waters that covered the surface of the earth and ran across it would also have profound geological significance.

2. Day 2 (Gen 1:6-8)

Alright, let's go to day two. Day two begins in verse 6, "Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters. ⁷God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so." Here God takes this watery mass of waters that covers the earth and separates them, taking some of the water and separating it from the other water so that you have waters below, which still cover the earth, and waters above. We'll discuss where they might have been or still are later. But in between these two waters we have verse 8, an expanse called "heaven." And so surely when God reached into this tremendous mass of water and separated some of the waters out then turbulence would be generated and that turbulence could have geological significance for the waters that are in contact with the earth beneath.

3. Day 3 (Gen 1:9-13; 2 Pet 3:5)

Now, day three, probably of all the days of creation day three has the greatest geological significance. Day three begins in verse 9. "Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so." What we would have here is the rocky earth inside rising up out of the waters, so it could now be seen. This would be a great day of mountain-building as the earth rose above the water level. As it went above the water level the waters would run off the earth and cause great soil erosion which would modify the emerging land surface. The water run off would transport sediments and deposit those sediments in the great ocean basins forming sedimentary layers.

It's even possible from later descriptions of the earth that a lot of that water went into the earth in subterranean basins so that before the Flood you had a greater land surface area than after the Flood. Probably the mountains were not very tall and they certainly, as we will see later in the course, were not

near as tall as mountains that we observe today such as Mt Everest or even Mt Ararat. Those mountains were not built on day three; they were built in the later portions of the Flood

And in verse 11 we have the finished product of God's mountain-building activity on day three. "The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good." So the crust of the earth was covered from the very start with fertile soil containing all the elements necessary for providing nutrients and moisture to the vast array of vegetative kinds. In other words it did not take millions of years for soil to form from the rock as it was gradually broken down. God created nutritive-moisture rich soil instantly by the word of His power. Also, observe that the plants and the trees were bearing seed "in them," meaning, they were created with maturity, they already had seed hanging on them. God can and does create some things with apparent age, another critical point.

4. Day 4 (Gen 1:14-19)

Last we'll look at day four. Day four God creates the sun, moon and stars. The sun provides heat that energizes surface geological activity and processes today and it could have done that in the original creation week. The moon affects tide and that causes erosion. Whether the moon rotated around the earth then as it does now is speculation as far as I know. But day four has geological implications.

So some of the things we find in the rocks, I'm jumping ahead here, but primarily I'm talking about Precambrian rocks, some of the things we find there could be attributed to things that God did during creation week as the earth took its original shape.

B. Pre-Flood

Now we come to the second period of earth history that is important for geological formations. This is the Pre-Flood period. It begins with the Fall of man and ends with the Flood, a period, biblically speaking, of 1656 years. There's no question there's a major shift at the Fall. Death entered at the Fall and so now we have the issue of fossils. So any fossil that exists cannot

be dated before the Fall of man, biblically speaking. That's a truth we'll have to work with next week.

1. The Ground Cursed for Man's Sake (Gen 3:17; 5:29; Rom 8:21)

Look at Gen 3:17, "Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life." What this shows is not that man had to work because of the Fall. Man already had to work before the Fall. What this means is that now work is going to be frustrated, there's inefficiency to our labor now that sin has entered. And what this shows is that man's sin affects more than his spiritual relationship with God. It also disrupts the earth from which man was taken. There's a very close association between man and the earth. We're taken from the earth and we return to the earth. Notice he says, "because of you." The earth is screwed up because of man.

Then if you look at Gen 5:29. This is the chronology of death if you want to call it that. Death, death, death, everyone is dying, they live a long time and we'll explain that later, but they don't live forever. Look at verse 29, "Now he called his name Noah," Noah is the son of Lamech, "Noah, saying, "This one shall give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the Lord has cursed." Question? Did Lamech think his son Noah was the Messiah? Possibly, since it's the Messiah who is going to remove the curse on the earth.

Now turn to Rom 8:20. Paul comments on the effects of the Fall on the earth. Ask yourself as we read this, "Did Paul believe in a literal Genesis?" Here's Paul commenting on Gen 3, He's giving a historical analysis under divine inspiration. He says, "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it," who subjected it? God. When did He subject it? Gen 3. God cursed the ground. He says, "in hope," verse 21 "that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." So obviously the cursing of the ground in Gen 3 has geological implications.

2. Relative Tranquility (Gen 2:10; 7:20)

But generally speaking this period was a period of relative tranquility; for 1656 years geological processes were uniform. However, there may have been some differences in the geological processes themselves. But with respect to those processes, whatever they were, and we'll make some suggestions in the course as to what the Pre-Flood world was like, but whatever it was like every indication is that it was a relatively tranquil period and you could apply uniformitarian principles of that period to interpret the earth.

3. Super-Continent (Gen 1:9-10; Ps 95:5; 104:5)

The third major issue with geology implications is found in Gen 1:9-10. It's possible; indeed likely, that this text indicates a super-continent, something like what you might have heard of as Pangaea, but not necessarily with that configuration. Remember, it's likely that the land surface area was much greater than what we observe in the post-Flood world. So it's not that the present continents are like puzzle pieces that you can put together into a single continent. In fact there's a lot of missing pieces if you try to do that. The Pre-Flood earth would have been much larger and a different shape. Here's where the idea of a super-continent comes from. "Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear;" Notice the waters below are collected into "one place." If that's the case it suggests that the dry land might have also been in one place, meaning that there would be a single super-continent in the Pre-Flood world. If this is the case, then this would have affected land climates and geological activity.

4. Rainfall (Gen 2:5)

Was there rain in the Pre-Flood world? If there was it can cause erosion and other geological activity. Gen 2:5, "Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground." This is probably not describing the Garden, inside the Garden plants were created mature for Adam's arrival, but outside the Garden there were no plants yet apparently, that would be part of Adam's dominion, but in any case he says the reason no plant of the field had yet sprouted outside of the Garden was

because God had not sent rain upon the earth. Now sometimes it is argued that this means that the Pre-Flood world didn't have rain. But all it says is that there was no rain up to the sixth day in creation week. The Bible never says there was no rain until the Flood. If there was rain that would cause erosion. Another implication, for your interest, is that if it did rain then rainbows probably formed before the Flood and that would mean that God invested the rainbow with meaning after the Flood. He imputed meaning to it such that now it is His sign of the Noahic Covenant, that He'll never send a mountain-covering Flood to destroy all flesh on the earth.

C. The Flood

Now we come to the third critical period in the formation of earth's geological features. The first is creation week, then the Pre-Flood world, now we come to the Flood. The Flood is the most important event for interpreting present rocks in the earth. It was a global catastrophe of proportions so great they are only rivaled by the time of the future Tribulation. This period of 371 days is the greatest period of earth's activity since the creation. During this time we have four key notices in the Scripture that relate to major geological activity.

1. The Fountains of the Deep (Gen 7:11-12)

The first is Gen 7:11. The text says, "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened." The fountains of the deep burst open. This is the earth's crust literally splitting apart and water contained inside the crust that was deposited there on the third day of creation, is being released. Notice it's the fountains of the great deep, the great deep is the *tehom*, the oceans, so what it's saying is that these fountains that burst open were underneath the oceans, so it's not the land surface breaking up at this point, its ocean basins bursting open. This had dramatic geological implications for sea-floor spreading, probably the mid-Atlantic ridge was formed at this point, and it probably caused the splitting of the super-continent, initiating the re-shaping of the earth's land surface.ⁱⁱ

2. 40 Days of Torrential Rain (Gen 7:4, 11-12, 17)

The second is the end of verse 11 and verse 12. Gen 7:11, end of the verse, “and the floodgates of the sky were opened. The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.” Forty days and forty nights of continual torrential rainfall which many think were triggered by the fountains of the deep bursting open. This kind of sustained torrential rain would have major geological repercussions.

3. 150 Days of Prevailing Waters (Gen 7:17-24)

The third is in Gen 7:17, this is the prevailing of the waters for 150 days, the 150 days include the 40 days of rain, so 40 days plus 110 days = the prevailing period. Starting in verse 17, “Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. ¹⁸The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. ¹⁹The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered.” By the way, it’s impossible to get around that verse on the global dimensions of the Flood. It’s a double *kol* which emphatically proves that the entire earth was covered with a blanket of water. Verse 20, if that’s not enough, there’s more here, “The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered.” According to the principle that water seeks its level and it does it so quickly the entire earth was covered. Notice verse 18, 19, 20, “the water prevailed...the water prevailed...the water prevailed.” That prevailing of the waters destroyed massive amounts of life and rapidly buried hundreds of billions of creatures as an eternal testimony to the great Flood, the great judgment of God. Verse 21, “All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind ²²of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. ²³Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth, and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. ²⁴The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.” That’s pretty definitive, 150 days of fantastic geological activity; massive destruction of life, formation of superimposed sedimentary layers containing creatures that were buried rapidly, providing conditions for fossilization.

4. 221 Days of Assuaging and Abating (Gen 8:1-13; Ps 104:7-9)

The fourth major period in the Flood is the 221 days of assuaging and abating. And that period is described in Gen 8:1-13 and if you want to read that you can do the math and come up with the 221 days, but let's turn to Ps 104:7-8 to see what characterized the last half of the Flood. On the 150th day the waters had prevailed to their highest point and the windows of heaven were closed, which means that it rained for 150 days, not just 40, but the first 40 days were the torrential rainfall. There's a difference. The windows of heaven were not closed until the 150th day, on that same day the waters began to recede and the ark came to rest on Mt Ararat, which was not as high as it is today. Mt Ararat today is over 17,000 feet, but when the ark came to rest it was not that tall. Here's Ps 104, look at verse 6. In verse 6 He's talking about the great *mabul*, the great Flood of Noah, "You covered it with the deep as with a garment; The waters were standing above the mountains. ⁷At Your rebuke they fled, At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away." Think of all the water runoff during this period and what it must have done to the surface of the earth. Water is powerful stuff; it can do a lot of damage very quickly. And I'll show you certain processes, things like cavitation that can tear through solid steel like a hot knife through butter. Look at the tectonic activity in verse 8, "The mountains rose;" this is after the ark rested on Mt Ararat, so the ark actually rose as the mountain rose, and we know it rose because there are sedimentary deposits and fossils on top of Mt Ararat. "The mountains rose; the valleys sank down To the place which You established for them." So again you have mountain-building activity. We saw it in creation week. We see it again during the second half of the Flood. This is happening very rapidly, there is a lot of tectonic activity and this set off thousands of superquakes and supervolcanoes, things totally unheard of in our world today, quakes and volcanoes unimaginable in scale. There's evidence of this throughout earth's oceans of volcanoes the size of more than half the United States of America. Massive, massive amounts of geological activity is occurring in these chapters. And these chapters, Gen 6, 7 and 8 are so important for earth history and for man that God wrote more about the Flood than he did about the Creation of the Universe. Think of how critical this must be. Jesus cites the Flood more than He does the Creation. Peter mentions it as having first place among the doctrines to remember. The Flood, he says, don't forget God's judgment for sin.

And so any model of earth history that has any hope of building a consistent model of earth's geological history has got to include the global Flood of Noah. That's the third period of importance; it's a high energy period like the Creation event. And now we come to the fourth period, the present era.

D. Post-Flood

The Post-Flood era. This is from the Flood in 2346BC till AD2010. This covers over 4000 years of earth history and I want to say two things about this period that I think are important.

1. Relative Tranquility (2 Pet 3:1-7)

First, this is a relatively tranquil period. For the most part its low-energy gradualistic processes and this period can be studied according to the uniformitarian principles of geology. However, the Bible teaches two things that have to qualify the relative tranquility.

2. Exponential Decay (Rom 8:21-22; Job 14:19; Ps 102:26; Isa 51:6) Local High-Energy Catastrophes (hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, etc...) Decreasing

The first is that exponential decay occurred after the Flood. And what we mean by this is that convulsions of the earth gradually decrease after the Flood along an exponential decay curve just as human longevity decreases. On the large scale time lines there is a gradual decrease.

Turn to Job 14:18. The earth is in a period of settling down and Job comments on this. Job lived right after the Flood, about 2200BC. He says, "But the falling mountain crumbles away, and the rock moves from its place; 19Water wears away stones, its torrents wash away the dust of the earth; so you destroy man's hope." And what he's commenting on is that the world after the Flood was very difficult world to live in, it was difficult to make progress because you had all these after shocks coming and once you get your house built a torrent of water comes and washes it away. It was frustrating, but these people had to trust God. God said, go ahead, scatter, I'll take care of

you, and we know how that turned out. But in any case that's the world after the Flood, it's in an exponential decline.

Turn to Ps 102:25. There were a number of things that happened after the Flood that we'll get into as those aftershocks decreased. It was a very harsh place to live. And here's the Psalmist, "Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. ²⁶Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment," It's a contrast between the everlasting nature of God and the temporal creation. The heavens and earth are wearing out. That's what I want to point out, there's a theological structure to the history of the heavens and earth, and they're wearing out like a garment. Garments don't wear out suddenly, they wear out over time, it's a gradual process, so what he's talking about is this exponential decay curve. He's saying gradually the earth is wearing out. So actually the convulsions of the earth in this period, the hurricanes, the floods, the earthquakes, the volcanoes, are decreasing. And I'll show you the data for the 20th century in a few weeks so you can see it for yourself, there was actually a slight decrease in earthquake magnitude and intensity in the 20th century. That may shock you but that's what the data is saying and that's what the Bible is saying, we're almost at equilibrium today, but still there's a gradual decrease and there won't be a significant increase until the Tribulation, then there's going to be a sudden spike of intensity and magnitude, earthquakes unrivaled even by the Flood. But I wanted to show you this verse, the earth is wearing out. Rom 8:21-22 supports the same conclusion, the earth is gradually decaying.

So the Post-Flood period is relatively tranquil but there are also high energy catastrophes like local hurricanes, local floods, local earthquakes, local volcanoes, etc...that need to be taken into consideration when interpreting geological formations.

In conclusion, a biblical geologist must interpret all of the earth's geological features inside one of these four periods. This, of course, will take many years which is why I encourage younger believers who are interested in the sciences to consider going to the Institute for Creation Research graduate school and start re-interpreting the data in the Biblical model, the catastrophist framework.

Let me conclude with two applications of what we've seen tonight. First, there's an oscillation between High and Low energy periods. The low energy periods are God's gracious offers to mankind to repent. He gives man time and opportunity, there's always grace before judgment and the low-energy, relatively tranquil periods are those times. But most men forget and continue in sinful rebellion. That's the story of the human race. And then there are high energy periods that come suddenly and these are associated with judgment/salvation. Man has been given every opportunity and then God says that's it, I've given you grace, grace, grace, and you've spurned My grace, so it's time for judgment. So if you haven't believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and you're putting it off, I'll do it later in life or some excuse like that, don't put it off because God runs history with these oscillations and tomorrow may be too late.

A second thing for those of you who are saved. We said when these intense judgment/salvation periods come; there's a lot of geological work done in a very short period of time. And we'll talk about the implications for radioisotope decay, but aren't there also implications for salvation? If when God judges and saves it effects the rocks of the earth then obviously our salvation is not just an interior experience. This has implications for why we get a resurrection body. This has implications for how we share the gospel with the lost. Are we just presenting the gospel as a fix for mere spiritual anemia? Or does it have cosmic implications?

ⁱ <http://www.glenbrook.k12.il.us/gbssci/phys/Class/energy/u511e.html>

ⁱⁱ So much for finding the Garden of Eden. Though scholars have spent a lot of money searching for it and some people even think they've found it, a local flood is required for Eden to even be remotely findable. Since a local flood is by so many arguments impossible, it is 100% certain that the Garden of Eden could never be found. The earth's surface has changed radically. What remains of that world is but a dim shadow in ours.

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