

Caves and Noah's Flood?
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First Published 31 Jan 2003
Answers In Creation Website
www.answersincreation.org/caves.htm

Dr. Andrew Snelling and several other young earth authors wrote an article in 1987 about Limestone Caves (answersingenesis.org/docs/1150.asp), arguing that they were formed during Noah's Flood.

Dr. Snelling is a skilled writer. He starts off by giving the story of the discovery of Carlsbad Caverns by a cowboy. What does this add to the story...it creates an emotional appeal from the reader, and captures their attention for the rest of the article (this is needed due to the weakness of science in the article).

Carlsbad Caverns is said to have begun forming some 60 million years ago. Snelling's section, "In the Beginning," gives a good description of the accepted model for cave formation. However, then the "story" goes sadly wrong. Geologist Steve Austin is said to have studied caves in central Kentucky, and he "*concluded that a cave 59 meters long and one meter square*" could form in one year. Okay, Mr. Austin proved it on paper, did he do the next logical step...conduct an experiment? Buy one acre of land, run water through it for one year, and see if you have a cave? I've seen no proof of this. That's because true scientific research includes formulating a hypothesis, and then testing it through experimentation. Is his model for cave formation true science...no. Proof on paper is worthless...I could come up with a theory on paper that proves the dinosaurs went extinct because they were abducted by aliens! Can I prove it scientifically...of course not.

Also, even if he can do this, you must assume that this "perfect" environment exists. Yes, we can produce models that explain things in the natural world, but the forces at work in the natural world most of the time are not the "perfect" conditions that exist in a laboratory.

Next, "*Dr Austin proposes that the high rate of solution of limestone in that area should cause concern to geologists who believe that slow, uniform processes have brought about formation of such caves.*" Actually, the people who would be concerned would be the residents of Kentucky, since according to this model, Kentucky would be so full of holes as to be unlivable.

The article then proceeds to give a model for cave origin during the Flood. The author states that Dr. Austin's studies, plus their own, have convinced them that their limestone cave model is workable during the short duration of the Flood. We see here the extent of their work. Any scientific work should be peer-reviewed. However, as with most young-earth scientific works, they are not...the only people accepting them are the

young-earth creationists. See my article on Publications (www.answersincreation.org/publish.htm).

In their model, they state that limestone layers have to be laid down during the Flood, because most major limestone layers contain large numbers of catastrophically buried fossils, or are in a sequence of rocks containing them. Bad assumption. You don't have to catastrophically lay down fossil remains for it to be buried in limestone. The bigger assumption is that he believes this was the Flood. Unless he was there to witness it, he can't be sure which catastrophic event caused which fossils to be buried. However, if you accept the young-earth model, he is correct in stating that the limestone strata had to accumulate during the flood (see this article to show that it is impossible! www.answersincreation.org/stratigraphy.htm).

"As a layer of lime sediment was deposited, it would have been buried rapidly under huge amounts of other sediments." Yes, some fossils are buried catastrophically, but there is no way to determine if it was Noah's Flood, unless you make a large assumption.

Then the authors appeal to a passage of Scripture to prove their point. *"Second, as the Flood waters receded, uplift and other earth movements would have occurred as implied by the statements in Psalm 104:6-9."* So, does this passage of scripture support them? Let's see, read it here...but I'll include verse 5. I'll comment on each verse.

⁵ *Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.*

Here, you have to take into account Genesis 2:1-2, which states *"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all his work which He had made."* God has rested from his creation, after he laid the foundations during the creation events of Genesis 1.

⁶ *Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.*

Okay here's the Flood of Noah.

⁷ *At Thy rebuke they fled; At the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away.*

Okay, now God rebukes the water and it recedes.

⁸ *They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.*

Here, the water went up over the mountains?, and the water went down into the valleys, to the place that God appointed for them (oceans and underground).

⁹ *Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over, That they turn not again to cover the earth.*

Here, a boundary has been set for the water.

The authors' claim this passage implies uplift and other earth movements...exactly where does it imply this? The only thing moving in these verses is the water! You can see in verse 5, and from Genesis 2:1-2, creation is complete...the mountains are in place. Unless the movement occurred from natural processes, any movement during the Flood of Noah would equate to a second creation event, but that can't be, since its clear from Genesis 2:1-2 that creation is complete! However, their model requires *"Thus such earth movements would fold and tilt the sediment layers all over the earth so that concurrent and subsequent erosion would have worn the upper layers down to a new level"*. Their model falls apart here, since creation is already completed...but we are not done yet!

A final blow to the author using Psalm 104 is this...every commentary concludes that this "creation psalm" refers to Genesis chapter 1. The waters it refers to is the waters covering the face of the deep in Genesis 1:2, 9. Psalm 104 is not referring to Noah's Flood, but to Creation!

"The layers of lime sediments would now again be near the surface. Continuing earth movements would cause movement on the joints and build up fluid pressure" (no...already disproved these continuing earth movements); *"the removal of the overlying sediment layers would probably"* (another way of saying, "we are guessing") *"have speeded up both compaction and fluid outflow from the partly hardened sediments. Pressure would be highest near the surface."* I haven't studied fluid dynamics recently, but, the deeper you go in the earth's crust, the greater the pressure...how could the highest pressure be near the surface? The rocks on top have the least pressure. Try this, get five buddies, and lay one on top of the other, with you on the bottom. Who is experiencing the most pressure? You are, not the guy on top.

Conclusion

The authors conclude *"In this model of cave origin, there seems to be no major obstacle to a short time period for the solution of limestone caves."* Yes, only if you accept the article at face value without any critique of its content.

Actually, given the right conditions, you could probably prove that caves form faster than 60 million years. I believe that many do. But, just because they can, does not mean that all caves did form quickly. You can't "assume" too much when it comes to science.