

we observe the thick and extensive sedimentary deposits which give every evidence of having been formed slowly, we must accept them at their face value. We are here referring to types of deposits which are not producible by catastrophic events. A great flood can pile up masses of rock and debris, and even lay down some beds of sorted layers of gravel, sand, or mud; but this is very different from building a circular coral reef on top of an old volcanic cone, or forming a multitude of orderly layers of dolostone on a carbonate platform or shelf around the Bahama Islands. Floods can move great quantities of sediments, but they can not carry out the intricate chemical and physical processes necessary for the production of the many types of rock we find in the sedimentary deposits which are so widespread over North America.

If one should try to explain the complexity of the series of sedimentary layers by appealing to God's miracle working power, we must consider God's reasons for performing miracles. In the Bible we find God using miracles only for the benefit or judgment of the persons whom He has created. He opened the Red Sea, dried up the Jordan, and did other miracles for his people; but to rapidly form intricate layers of fossiliferous rock by a miraculous process would have been pointless. Furthermore, the forming of such would have been out of harmony with God's characteristic of truthfulness.¹⁷

Actually, when we look at the processes which are going on today in nature, and include such catastrophic events as have occurred within human history, we have an adequate explanation for practically all that we see in the geologic record. Even though the great majority of the sedimentary strata are of such a nature that they could not have been formed by one or even several floods, the Biblical Flood probably could have been responsible for numerous alluvial deposits which are close to the surface, major changes in climate, and the onset of the most recent period of glaciation. Almost certainly involved in the Flood were a rapid change in sea level, and some movements in the earth's crust, with consequent elevation or lowering of certain geographic areas. These are illustrative of types of actions which could be produced during such a catastrophe as the Flood seems to have been.

It is reasonable to accept certain large destructive actions as having been produced by the Flood, but we should also recognize the thick deposits which are of an entirely different nature as having resulted from the slow processes which are still producing those kinds of deposits today. This is basically the position which was taken by a large percentage of the evangelical scholars and ministers in America near the beginning of this century. They recognized the responsibility of Christians to accept the parts of the geologic record which obviously had to have been produced by slow processes in pre-Adamic times, as well as to accept the Biblical Flood which carried out great destructions in at least parts of the earth. They repudiated the tendency of some Christians to place their personal preference for a particular view above the factual data relating to the natural processes of the past.