



UNTOLDSECRETS

of Planet Earth

Monumental Monsters

VANCE NELSON

UNTOLD SECRETS of Planet Earth

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my Dad and Mom. They have been the
caring parents that many children live without. In showing me the
meaning of love and acceptance, they helped me better understand
the love and acceptance of my Heavenly Father.

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Preface

While I was in elementary school, I never gave much thought to evolutionary ideas. However, by the time I was in junior high, I had already been thoroughly indoctrinated in the idea of “millions of years” through television, books, and the public school system. When I went to high school, learning evolutionary theory was a requirement for anyone taking biology. Since I took biology up to grade twelve, I was required to study evolutionary theory. Interestingly, my high school teacher pointed out that known scientific facts didn’t seem to align with evolutionary theory.

After high school, I earned both a theology degree and a biology degree. The science degree strengthened my scientific training and convinced me that evolutionary theory was not scientific. From there, I spent the next decade and a half travelling the world doing field research, discovering evidence in the real world relating to Biblical history. I worked in palaeontological excavations, did research via archaeological expeditions, and participated in geological field work worldwide.

Many see evolution as a grand theory which explains how all life began as a single-celled organism and has become everything we see today—dogs, people, horses, rhinos, and elephants. In this scenario, life started off simple, and became more complex through time. This is how Charles Darwin understood his theory, as we will see. Many see evolution as a mechanism of positive progress through time. The fossils themselves, however, show a very different record. The record is not one of upward progress through time. Palaeontologists, who know the fossils well, understand this. Things are not getting bigger and better over time. Often, they are declining. They are getting worse over time. Is this evolution?

Gigantic creatures that have lived in the past will be highlighted in this book. The reader should note, however, that there were various ecological niches which would have been filled with creatures of various sizes. The “giants” were but one of the sizes of creatures dwelling on the earth at any given time. It is true, however, that we

have lost many varieties, and most of the giants. This is the fundamental point of the book. From the beginning of the world until now, the number of varieties of a vast array of creatures has diminished, and the giants have all but vanished. Due to sin, the curse, and the Flood, things are getting worse.

In one or two cases, I have opted to use original (or older) genus and species names for creatures (based on intense research). These names (classifications) seemed less biased with evolutionary presuppositions. My choices weren’t out of ignorance.

I have been as careful as possible to reference the facts and figures I mention in the text of the book. There is much misinformation about all of these creatures. Exaggerations abound. Generally, for the living comparisons in the text of the book, I have given the largest example (rather than the average size). This is also true of the scale diagrams for the living counterparts seen there.

These creatures bring glory to God, bring recognition pertaining to His creative ability, and ultimately bring awe regarding His Power. I therefore felt compelled to write a book about them. Furthermore, they demonstrate the truthfulness of Biblical history. God’s Word is true from the beginning.

If you are a born-again Christian, it is my sincere hope that the information in this book will be an encouragement to you. It is my hope that your faith in God’s Word will be strengthened and your walk with God will grow.

If you are not a Christian, I pray that this book will encourage you to give serious thought to the God of the Bible and to the Christian faith, that you will sense the urgency of asking the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive you of your sins, and that you will make a decision to trust and follow Him.

Enjoy the visual exploration of *Monumental Monsters*! It was a joy to research, write, and design this book. God bless you as you take a journey to a fascinating world filled with curiosity and wonder.



Monumental Monsters

giants in the fossil record

Introduction

Introduction

Imagine turning back the pages of history a few hundred to a few thousand years, to a time when many creatures on this planet were of monumental size; we might call them monumental monsters. It seems strange that creatures existed in the recent past which dwarf their currently living counterparts: animals such as fallow deer about 6 ft (2 m) tall at the shoulder with antlers nearly 12 ft (3.7 m) across; rats which weighed as much as well-pampered, fat and lazy house cats; and birds which stood about 10 ft (3 m) tall and weighed over 1000 lb (450 kg), laying eggs with an internal volume equivalent to about one hundred and seventy chicken eggs.

These facts ought to make one ask some basic questions. What in the world has happened? Why have these giant varieties disappeared from our planet? Why have they only left behind their smaller, weaker, and seemingly more pitiful counterparts? What happened in the recent past that has led to such drastic changes to the fauna of this world?

Textbooks, television, museums, magazines, parks, and public schools make sure we hear about “evolution,” what Charles Darwin called, “...the production of the higher animals...,”¹ which he believed resulted “...from the war of nature, from famine and death...”² Although real scientists and researchers know better, they seldom correct this popular misconception that Darwinian evolution produces “onward and upward” progress, changing a few simple life forms into an ever expanding variety of “bigger and better” plants and animals. This popular belief in “upward evolution,” however, is contradicted by overwhelming evidence from around the world.

Fossils are typically interpreted through an evolutionary paradigm. Yet, when one investigates the history of living organisms on this planet, it becomes conspicuously apparent (to the keen observer) that we don't actually observe "upward evolution" in organisms through time. Instead, we see decline, decimation, and, in some cases, the demise of organisms through time on a grand scale. No matter what level we explore, we typically find a dramatic decline in size and variety among members of a group—exactly the opposite of what evolutionists predicted. Decreased variability within kinds is striking, but most spectacular is the demise or disappearance of "giants" from so many groups. When one compares many fossil organisms to their living counterparts, they often provide powerful evidence that they have declined in size, variety, or both.

I was teaching at a Bible camp, and one student became very angry when I mentioned that gigantic fossil organisms demonstrated precisely what we would expect and predict from the Biblical record, that many creatures have declined in size and variety over time due to the effects of sin, the curse, and the Flood. The student claimed this was evolution, since evolution was merely "change through time." The secular school systems teach that evolution is merely "change through time," but if evolution were actually true, it would be a special and specific type of change. If you start with single-celled creatures and eventually end up with university professors who teach the theory of evolution, then somewhere along the way, new genetic information must be added into the system, since a single-celled bacterium has very little genetic information in comparison to a human being. You can think of that information as "specified complexity." The building plans for a sand box are specified complexity. Likewise, the building diagrams for a computer are specified complexity. Where does the new specified complexity come from? Secular evolutionary theorists cannot explain the origin of this type of information through natural processes. Yet obviously, it must come from an intelligent source, and cannot originate from matter itself, any more than the ink from a pen can write a book by itself.

I explained that there are many kinds of "change through time," including *upward* change based on Darwin's words and *downward* change based on God's Word. The prediction of downward change, supported as it is by enormous evidence of decline in size and variety, is based on the Biblical record of a once perfect creation by a flawless Creator, followed by the effects of sin, the curse, and the Flood leading to imperfection, decline, and the demise of so many gigantic forms. We observe *greater* variety in the past—including many *gigantic* varieties—and *fewer* varieties today—including many *smaller, weaker*, and apparently more *pitiful* counterparts. This is no surprise to a Bible-believer. Harsh environmental changes after the Flood would lead a Bible-believer to predict even further decline among creatures getting off the Ark as they went on to "multiply and fill" the post-Flood world. The Bible itself predicts change through time. Change? Yes. Evolution? No.

DNA, Genetic Entropy, and the Creator

It would take a lot of information to build a reproducing bacterium and even more to build a human being or one of the fossil giants described in this book. Where did the information to make such marvellous living things come from? For over fifty years, scientists have known the information defining each kind of life is encoded in DNA (**Fig. 1**). There is one set of DNA shared by all human beings, the famous "human genome." However, in humans, many genetic variations exist. These introduce individual variations, such as dark-to-light skin tones, short-to-tall height, variation in musical, athletic, and academic talents or interests, etc. In fact, the known variations within humans could produce more unique, individual human beings than the number of atoms in the known universe! All other created kinds share this broad, but bounded variability, enabling them to carry out God's command to "multiply and fill" ecological niches all over the world (a command given at creation is repeated after the Flood). The variability is produced by a number of complex systems. For example, the epigenome affects the protein-encoding

Fig. 1 Artist's conception of DNA



genomic DNA in multiple ways: turning genes *on* or *off*, turning gene activity *up* or *down* like a dimmer switch, or *altering* gene *expression* in response to environmental changes. It operates with complex sensor-effector systems to appropriately define and respond to an environmental stimulus. What amazing design!

Notice I indicated DNA *stores* information. Just as information in a book comes from the author and not from the ink and paper, so the information in DNA must come from an author. The DNA itself is not the author, but only the material used by the Creator to store the information. Just like the information on silicon chips in a computer points to ingenious acts of “human creation,” so the far greater and more ingenious information in DNA points to plan, purpose, and special acts of a transcendent Creator. The greater size and variety seen within groups of past living things (including giants) both point to and confirm the transcendent Creator (Romans 1:18-32).

When Charles Darwin (Fig. 2) wrote the *Origin of Species*, he knew nothing of DNA, nothing of cellular complexity, and nothing of the laws of heredity we teach in middle schools today. If he had, we probably wouldn’t even be discussing evolution right now. Why? Because his theory of evolution would have never left the ground, figuratively speaking. When evolutionists in the early 1900s learned that random changes in genes called mutations could produce short-legged sheep and fruit flies with oddly-shaped wings, they dropped Darwin’s idea that the environment conferred new traits on an organism (Lamarckian evolution) and added mutations as the “raw material for evolutionary progress.” Scientists discovered, however, that mutations only make changes in *already existing* DNA. So, in reality, they are like *typographic errors* in the genetic script and nothing at all like scriptwriters producing new genetic information. Furthermore, mutations are usually recognized by the defects, disease, and diseased organisms they produce, making them agents of *downward* change through time, consistent with the Biblical record.

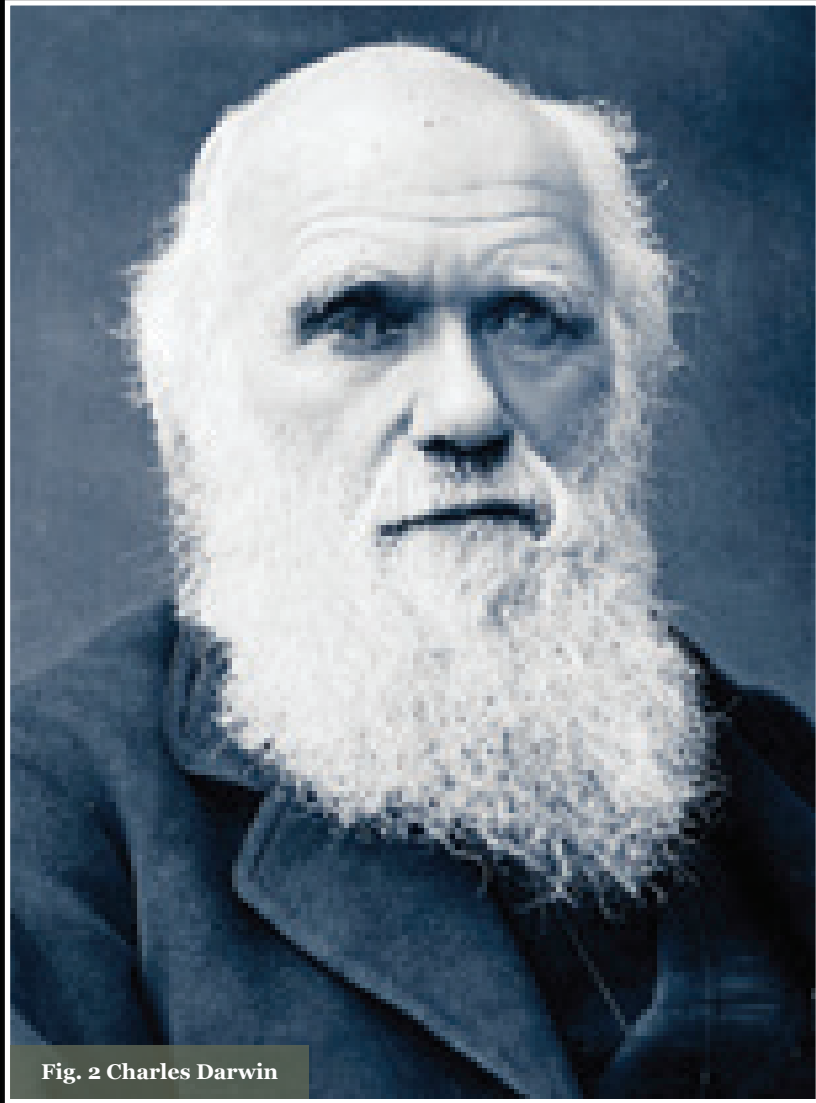


Fig. 2 Charles Darwin

A revolutionary book by Dr. John Sanford, respected geneticist and co-inventor of the “gene gun” has demonstrated what he calls *genetic entropy*. Extinction, not evolution, is the expected outcome of accumulating mutations. The information in the DNA is continuously breaking down, getting worse, as would be expected by natural processes. In the end, this deterioration of the information found in the DNA will ultimately lead to the

extinction of every single living species of organism on this planet (if no one were to intervene). To give an analogy, it is like having a boat with holes in it. Mutations (errors in the DNA) cause more and more holes to form, causing the boat to sink faster and faster as it deteriorates more and more. The evolutionary naturalists cannot even *stop* the boat from sinking. However, they actually wish to explain the *origin* of the boat by the very process that is causing its *demise*, but they have absolutely no hope of accomplishing the task. Natural processes operating today can simply account for the degradation and demise of the boat, not for its origin. This is the identical predicament they are in regarding an explanation for the origin of the genome, the complete set of DNA found in every living creature. Natural processes operating *today* are leading to *degradation* and *destruction* of the genome’s information. Natural processes can in no way explain its *origin*. Based on what we do know, not on what we don’t know, information only comes from an earlier source of information. Furthermore, information always comes from an *intelligent* source. What form of tortured and twisted logic does it take to assume that the very processes leading to the extinction of every species today were also responsible for their origin in the first place?³

If natural processes observed today are destroying the genetic information in organisms and not improving it, there must have been an Intelligent Creator responsible for its origin in the first place, and thus the origin of the organisms themselves. The Bible has always declared, “In the beginning God...” (Genesis 1:1). The Bible’s very first verse remains the most scientific statement regarding the origin of the wonderful organisms we see on this planet.

Fossil Giants Point to the Power of the Creator

Job chapters 40 and 41 describe two great beasts “...far exceeding man in bulk and strength...,”⁴ created by God. They are used by God to remind Job of God’s awesome power. The first of these animals is called Behemoth. Mankind is nothing

in comparison to this daunting animal. This monumental creature offers but a glimmer of the power of God. It cannot be pierced through its nose (Job 40:24). Mankind can do nothing to capture or control this mighty animal. Nevertheless, the all-powerful God, who made it, can not only approach it but can subdue it if necessary. In verse 19 we read that “...he that made him can make his sword to approach *unto him*.” God’s power is shown through the huge creatures He has made, but His power is exceedingly more immense than these creatures.

In Job 41, we see another example, Leviathan. Here again, Job is presented with a monumental beast against which he is seemingly powerless. We see an animal that clearly brings substantial dread to his mind. What an awe-inspiring beast! Job is asked a series of rhetorical questions in Job 41:1-5:

Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn? Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee? Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

The answers are clear, needing no clarifications. Obviously Job can do no such things with such a powerful and uncontrollable entity. Job is being reminded of how much more infinitely powerful the Creator is than this creature, and that in like manner Job also has no power over God.

As you read through this book and investigate one gigantic creature after another, don’t forget the lessons Job learned on that day. Just like Behemoth and Leviathan, the monumental monsters in this book ought to make you think about the incredible power God Himself possesses, the One who made these creatures. These creatures are but a faint reflection of *His* power and majesty, who is the very Creator of the entire cosmos itself.

Island Gigantism and Giants in the Created World

Island gigantism, known technically as “insular gigantism,” is a phenomenon where many gigantic creatures on islands are a result of certain special conditions on islands which are different from mainland environments. Though some of these conditions may not be directly testable, the inferences are logical, and are *likely* correct. It is possible that one of the reasons animals, which are typically smaller on the mainland, became gigantic on islands, is the *elimination* of predators. This is interesting indeed, since when predators were later introduced to many of these islands, many of these giant creatures perished. An example of island gigantism is the giant parrot known as the Kakapo from New Zealand (**Fig. 3**). It is the largest parrot in the world, and has only recently become endangered after mankind arrived in New Zealand, bringing mammalian predators.⁵

What is intriguing, however, is that the book of Genesis records a time in history when God created the world perfect, a time when there were no predator-prey relationships. Genesis 1:29-30 indicates that everything was originally created to be vegetarian, where animals were never to eat one another, and that in this state, “...God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, *it was* very good...” (Genesis 1:31). Would this have affected the size of the creatures before sin entered that perfect world? It is an interesting thing upon which to ponder. Just as one of the components suggested for island gigantism has been a lack of large predators, could a lack of predators in the perfect creation have also led to extremely large and more robust versions of the normally small and diminutive animals we see today? Though Scripture does not explicitly state the point, and therefore we cannot, nor should we, dogmatically assert this point, it would be no surprise to a Bible-believer if many creatures in the original creation were markedly larger, more robust, and stronger than their living counterparts. One thing Scripture does make clear is that the creation was without

the effects of sin, the curse, or the Flood, and therefore was perfect. A perfect creation undoubtedly had creatures that reflected a perfect environment in some substantive way.



Fig. 3 Kakapo: giant parrot

Many Animals Grow Throughout Their Lives

It is interesting that there are certain reptiles such as crocodiles, turtles, and snakes that grow as long as they are alive. *Sarcosuchus imperator* is an awe-inspiring fossil “crocodile” we will look at in detail later. Along with this monumental monster, we will also look at *Archelon ischyros*, a giant sea turtle which dwarfs any of its living counterparts. It is the largest known turtle to have ever existed. Its genus name, *Archelon*, means king of turtles.⁶ Besides these two fossil reptiles, there is *Titanoboa cerrejonensis*, the giant fossil snake, estimated to be about 48 ft (14.6 m) in length. It was a monstrous snake, the longest and heaviest ever discovered. If certain reptiles, such as these three basic groups mentioned, keep growing as long as they live, then why don’t today’s counterparts get as large as their fossil counterparts? There are at least two possibilities. Conditions for growth (food supply and climate) were better when the fossil varieties existed, or the fossil varieties lived longer, or a combination of both. Whatever the answer, one thing is for sure, this planet is not getting better.

Indiana University illuminates us with the following comments on the growing patterns of various creatures:

[M]any animals, including some mammals, keep growing throughout their lives. Kangaroos, for example, just keep growing and growing until they die. Most fish, amphibians, lizards, and snakes are also indeterminate growers. Until something, disease, a predator, or old age—takes them down, these animals know no bounds when it comes to size.

Why don’t you regularly see dinosaur-sized lizards, fish and snakes? Part of it has to do with the law of the jungle, so to speak. Simply put, most animals are eaten or killed before they get really big. Also, the longer an animal lives the greater the chance it might catch some deadly disease. In short, most animals die or are killed before they reach truly gargantuan proportions.⁷

In a world without disease, without accidental death, without carnivorous behaviour, without predators, without the effects of “old age,” what would creatures look like? Interesting to ponder, isn’t it? It seems many animals would become monumental monsters. The world just described above is the world the Bible describes before sin—interesting to ponder indeed. The three gigantic fossil reptiles with which we began this discussion clearly lived after sin, but before Noah’s Flood. Even for a time after sin entered the world, these reptiles attained monumental proportions!

Remnants of Gigantic Potential in Today’s World

Plants especially seem to maintain potential for monstrous growth within their genetics. Under ideal conditions, many plants can attain incredible proportions even today, after sin, the curse, and the Flood. Numbers 13:23 states that “...they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff...” (**Fig. 4**). One cluster of grapes which required two men to carry it, is impressive indeed.



Fig. 4 Canaan, engraved in 1780

A cabbage was grown in Alaska in 2012 which weighed 138.25 lb (62.71 kg).⁸ A lemon was grown in Israel in 2003 which weighed 11 lb, 9.7 oz (5.27 kg).⁹ A pumpkin grown in Germany in 2014 weighed 2323.7 lb (1054.01 kg), about as much as a small car.^{10,11} This is just a sampling of what is possible under ideal conditions with plants. Imagine what the plants must have been like in the perfect world which God originally created. In Fig. 5, you can see a giant horsetail from the pre-Flood world, with a substantially smaller living variety for comparison.¹²

Although this planet has declined, it still shows glimmers of the Creator's fingerprints within the few quasi-giants that remain. When the true giants died off, much of the genetic potential was possibly lost in the populations as a whole. Therefore, to regain the gigantic varieties of animals would be difficult if not impossible (even through specialized breeding).

We will here discuss one quasi-giant species that is still living today, the Ankole-Watusi cattle. These are cattle which are originally from Africa, and possess tremendous horns. In fact, they have been known to grow horns up to 10.5 ft (3.2 m) across.¹³ You can see two of these cattle on the facing page (Fig. 6). I call this a quasi-giant since the body size of these cattle can only reach up to about 1500 lb (680 kg), which is not nearly as large as the fossil bovine of Africa or North America. However, its horns rival any fossil bovine in size.

Conditions directly after Noah's Flood mimicked the quintessential pre-Flood conditions for a brief time in certain areas of the earth. As a result many animals grew to enormous sizes. Though nearly all of the true giants have disappeared off the face of the earth, remnants still appear here and there to remind us of the perfect world that once was. Throughout this book, especially from the fossils themselves, greater reminders will be brought to light of the world that God originally made. We will be reminded of how sin, the curse, and the Flood have ruined the world. This history, of a world ruined by sin, ought to further remind each one of us that we have a need. Each one of us needs to be re-united with the Creator of the universe through his son Jesus Christ.



Fig. 5 Fossil horsetail beside living counterpart

Fig. 6 Ankole-Watusi cattle



Created Kinds, Varieties, and Classification

The Bible indicates ten times in Genesis chapter 1 that God created creatures to reproduce “after their own kinds.” In the Hebrew text, the word for kind is *min*. These *min* are distinct groupings of creatures and plants that would have had vast built-in genetic potential, and were thus capable of filling the earth’s various ecological niches as they multiplied. Inferred from the Bible, each kind of creature and plant would be expected to produce impressive variability, but one kind would not change into another kind. Roses would stay roses, people would stay people, camels would stay camels, walruses would stay walruses, and penguins would stay penguins; nonetheless, varieties would abound within each created kind.

In the 18th century, Carolus Linnaeus (**Fig. 7**), building on the work of previous scientists, developed a scientific system to classify the plants and organisms created by God. Linnaeus felt he was led of God to classify God’s organisms. As one historian put it, to Linnaeus his early taxonomic work, *Systema Naturae*, was “the workingplan underlying creation.”¹⁴ Linnaeus used the word *genus* to designate the created kinds,¹⁵ since *genus* is the Latin word meaning kind. There is little doubt the word *genus* was extracted directly from the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible and imported into the scientific classification system.¹⁶ Therefore, when Linnaeus was classifying creatures according to their genus, he was actually attempting to classify the creatures God made according to the created kinds. These created kinds would have diversified due to the built-in genetic potential within their genomes, causing much variety to be present (within each created kind). These “varieties” were classified under each genus as “species.”

However, things have changed since the development of this early classification system. This is due in part to the fact that evolutionary theorists have taken over. In the modern classification system, the created kinds can be more closely aligned with the family level.

We must always remember that the current human classification of God’s created organisms is flawed. Creation scientists are working hard to fix this problem with a new system known as baraminology,¹⁷ a classification system of the created kinds founded upon Scripture in conjunction with science.

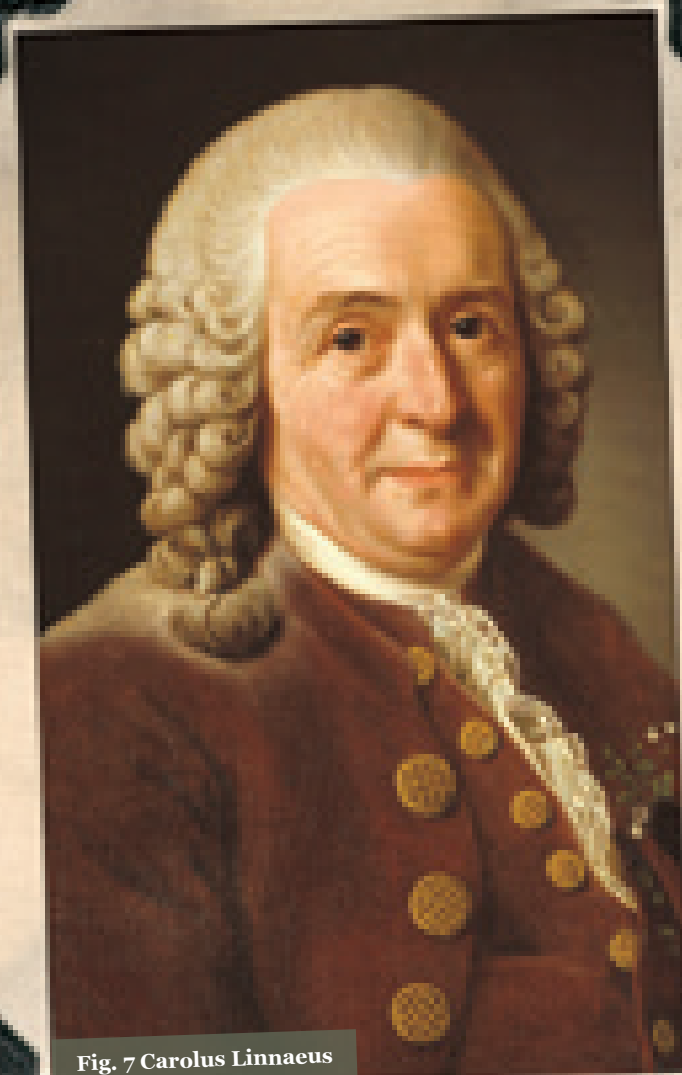


Fig. 7 Carolus Linnaeus

Fossil Giants: pre-Flood or post-Flood?

There are a number of pre-Flood creatures that attained massive sizes preserved in the fossil record, having been buried in sediment which was laid down in the worldwide Flood of Noah’s time. However, many of the giant fossil remains which are preserved all over planet Earth today are much more recent, and are the remains of creatures that lived after the great Flood. In fact, some of these giants have died only in the last few hundred years.

As we will see, the history of this planet is one of perfect Design followed by Decline due to sin, then massive Decimation at the Flood of Noah. Further Decline, Decimation, and even Demise of certain varieties occurred after the Flood down to our very own time. These giants point to one clear and simple fact: things are running down, they are not getting better.

Gigantism and the History of the World

First of all, we have read in this introductory section that there is undeniable evidence of Design based on the remarkable complexity seen in each organism’s DNA. The giant organisms which we will look at in greater detail clearly had a transcendent Designer. Secondly, due to sin, the curse, the Flood, and post-Flood conditions, we will see evidence of how groups Decline in size and variety; this often reaches an extreme point that we can call Decimation. In fact, the accumulation of the above mentioned conditions can take their toll on a population until a particular kind of organism vanishes; we can call this Demise. This all sounds like exceedingly bad news, and in a sense it is. But we will also be discussing Deliverance through Jesus Christ. This is less about the *history* of the world as it relates to the organisms, and more about the *future* of the world and how it relates to you, the reader. We will discuss this in more detail as we progress through the evidence of gigantism. Here is a way to remember the history of the world, as it relates to gigantism: Design, Decline, Decimation, Demise, and Deliverance.