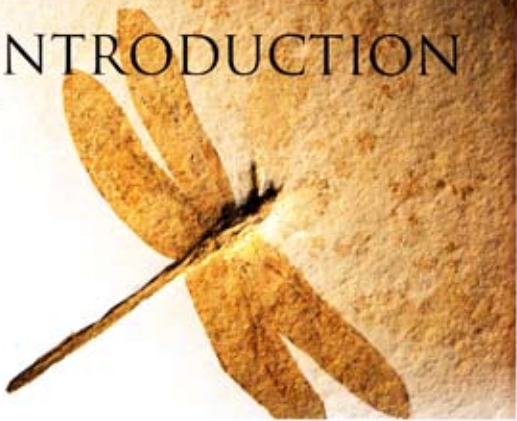




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INTRODUCTION



BOOM! Shock waves from the huge explosion knock you out of bed. Racing to your window, you see the fading trails of blazing orange flames shooting through the night sky. As chief detective with the Disaster Scene Investigators (DSI), you jump into some clothes and then your car, and race toward the scene of the catastrophe.

You find twisted pieces of wreckage scattered over a swamp, pasture, and nearby woods. "Could these be parts of an exploded airplane?" you wonder. Sadly, you also find many dead bodies. Some look like deer, birds, fish, and alligators, but

some are people. Were these people flying on the plane? Were at least some of the people killed on the ground by the falling debris? What about those strange piles of bones that look sort of like parts of people and animals mixed together? What are they?

"If it was an airplane crash," you think to yourself, "maybe I can find the black box (which is really bright orange). If I can listen to the information recorded by the pilots and protected in the black box, that should help me figure out what led up to the crash, and why and how it happened."

Would you ever want to be a detective with Disaster Scene Investigators? In a way, that's the

Creation

- 1) God's perfect creation



Corruption

- 2) Ruined by man's sin



Catastrophe

- 3) Destroyed by Noah's flood



CHRIST

- 4) Restored to life in Christ



kind of work done by paleontologists. Paleontologists study fossils — billions of dead things, buried in rock layers, laid down by water, all over the earth.

The outer layers of the earth's crust look like the scene of a horrible worldwide catastrophe. Just under the soil that supports Earth's beautiful blanket of life lays a bedrock record of death and disaster, from dinosaurs to dragonflies.

If you were a fossil detective, you would want to answer questions like these: What killed all these plants, animals, and people? How do fossils form; that is, why do some things get preserved as fossils while most dead things today just rot away? Were these fossils formed mostly in one big worldwide catastrophe, or lots of smaller disasters? How old are fossils, and how do we know?

Remember the explosion investigation? The disaster detective found some piles of bones that looked like several animals and people jumbled together. Broken fossils are often found all mixed up. Fossil detectives (paleontologists) usually sort them out into different animals and people — but some claim to find ape-men and others believe they have found aliens from another planet. How can we tell who's right?

The detective investigating the explosion also hoped to find a black box, a crashworthy device that contains a recording by qualified human observers of events leading up to the disaster, a record that might be the key to understanding all the bits and pieces of scattered evidence. Is there any reliable eyewitness record of what was happening in the world before the "fossil disaster"? Could the Bible be such a record, the key to understanding fossils and what they tell us about the history of life on Earth?

According to the Bible, God created a perfect world of peace and harmony, but mankind rebelled

against God, and that sin brought disease, death, and the disaster called Noah's flood. God saved those on the ark to give the world a fresh start, but could the fossils be the evidence of that worldwide Flood?

Most of the branches of modern science were started in the 1600s and 1700s by scientists who firmly believed in the "four Cs" of biblical history: God's perfect world (creation), ruined by man (corruption), destroyed by Noah's flood (catastrophe), to be restored to new life in Christ. But, based on the writings of Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin, a different view became popular in the 1800s, a view called evolution.

Evolution is the belief that life started by chance, and millions of years of struggle and death slowly changed a few simple living things into many complex and varied forms through stages (e.g., fish, frogs, lizards, apes, man). According to evolution, there never was a perfect world without death; there never was a worldwide flood; and struggle and death will go on for millions of years until death finally wins. If we abbreviate the Bible's account of Earth's history as four Cs, we can abbreviate evolution as TCSD — time,



CHAPTER ONE

FOSSILS, FLOODING, AND SEDIMENTARY ROCK



Sedimentary strata

Finding fossils is fabulous fun (and a terrific career or hobby). Curious young people have probably been digging up and wondering about fossils for centuries, but scientists have been studying them for only about 200 years.

When 4C creationists and TCSD evolutionists began to debate the scientific evidence in the 1800s, paleontology (fossil study) was a young science. Creationists predicted that fossils would show complex and separate beginnings, followed by death, disease, decline, and worldwide disaster. Evolutionists predicted that layers of rock would contain only a few simple forms at the bottom and more complex and varied forms further up, and that scientists would find the missing links required to show how one kind of life evolved into others.

Who is right — creationists or evolutionists? Before that big question can be answered, lots of little questions need answers: How did fossils form?

What kinds of life are found as fossils? Where are they found?

Creationists and evolutionists usually agree on the answers to these smaller questions. Creationists

can work on a “dig” side by side with evolutionists, agreeing on the little questions; then, around the campfire at night, they can discuss their different views about what these fossils tell us about the past, present, and future of life on Earth.

What Is a Fossil?

Our word *fossil* comes from a word that means “something dug up.” The term was originally applied to arrowheads, pottery fragments, Egyptian mummies, gems, and mineral ores. Today, however, products crafted by humans are called artifacts. The science that deals with human artifacts, and with things deliberately buried by humans, is called archeology, not paleontology. Similarly, gems and minerals dug from the earth are studied by geologists, not paleontologists.

As paleontologists define it today, a fossil is the remains or trace of a once-living thing preserved by natural processes.

Sedimentary Rock

The vast majority of fossils are preserved in sedimentary rocks, such as chalky limestones (abbreviated ls), flaky shales (sh), or gritty sandstones (ss). Particles that settle out of air or water are called sediments. Dust on furniture and desert dunes are sediments transported (eroded) and dumped (deposited) by wind. Water is a much more powerful agent for sediment erosion and deposition. Water can break off, transport, and deposit sedimentary particles from clay size to silt, fine sand, coarse sand. The same processes that erode and deposit sediment can also pick up, transport, and bury plants, animals, microbes, and people. As the sediment layers turn into sedimentary rock, at least some of the sedimentary remains of living things, especially the hard parts, can turn into fossils.

How do soft, loose sediments and the



Digging fossils in sandy sediment

dead things, or "future fossils" buried in them turn into solid rock? Does it take heat and pressure for millions of years? Absolutely not! Sedimentary rocks form the same way concrete hardens. After all, concrete is just artificial rock. A concrete company breaks big rocks into sediment size and sells them in a bag with rock cement. The buyer adds water to the sediment/cement mix until just the right amount is present to make the cement mineral crystals grow around the bigger rock particles. Too much water will cause the "rock soup" to stay soft and squishy. Too little water leaves rock powder, instead of solid rock.

Pressure may help rocks to grow by squeezing out excess water, and the right amount of heat helps cement crystals to grow, but time never made a single rock. Under the right conditions, rocks form in



Fossil hunting among layers of hard, white limestone (ls) and gray, crumbly shale (sh)

Fossils have fascinated humans for centuries. From the smallest diatoms to the largest dinosaurs, finding a fossil is an exciting and rewarding experience. But where did they come from, and how long have they been around? These and many other questions are answered in this remarkable book.



The Fossil Book will teach you about:

- The origin of fossils.
- How to start your own fossil collection.
- What kinds of fossils can be commonly found.
- The age of fossils.
- How scientists find and preserve fossils.
- How to identify kinds of fossils.
- How the Flood affected fossil formation.
- The Geologic Column Diagram.
- The difference between evolutionists' and creationists' views on fossils.
- The "four Cs" of biblical creation.
- The different kinds of rocks fossils are found in.
- Coal and oil formation.

Learning about fossils, their origins, and how to collect them can be both fun and educational. The abundance of both marine and land fossils and the locations they are found in is a fascinating subject for students of all ages and has been studied by scientists and laypersons alike for many years. Learn what all the excitement is about!

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