

Footnotes

1. *Ancient Man: A Handbook of Puzzling Artifacts*, compiled by William R. Corliss, The Sourcebook Project, Glen Ann, Maryland, USA, 1978.
2. 'A Necklace of a Prehistoric God', *Morrisonville Times*, Illinois, June 11, 1891. Evidently, in 1889 a Mrs S.W. Culp broke a chunk of coal and found embedded therein a 10-inch, eight-carat gold chain, or so it was claimed (Wysong R.L., *The Creation/Evolution Controversy*, Inquiry Press, Midland, Michigan, 1976, p. 370).
3. Whitcomb, J.C. and Morris, H.M., *The Genesis Flood*, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1961, pp. 175-176 quote from Otto Stutzer, *Geology of Coal* (translated by A.C. Noe, University of Chicago Press, 1940), p. 271: 'In the coal collection in the Mining Academy in Freiberg [Stutzer was Professor of Geology and Mineralogy in the School of Mines at Freiberg, in Saxony], there is a puzzling human skull composed of brown coal and manganiferous and phosphatic limonite, but its source is not known. This skull was described by Karsten and Dechen in 1842.' I (the present author) have personally verified the existence of this object via correspondence with Prof. Dr R. Vulpus, Professor of Coal Geology at the Freiberg Mining Academy. He describes it as a petrified object which resembles a human skull, and indicated that wide-ranging scientific studies to elucidate its composition and origin were in progress.
4. The existence and potential significance of these skeletons were first brought to our attention by Bill Cooper, 'Human fossils from Noah's Flood', *Ex Nihilo* 5(3), January 1983, pp. 6-9. Since then debate has raged in the pages of *Ex Nihilo* (6(2), November 1983, pp. 31-35) and the *Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* (vol. 1, 1984, pp. 3051; vol. 2, 1986, pp. 119-153 and vol. b, 1990, pp. 108-137). The skeletons do exist, one being housed in the collections of the British Museum (Natural History) in London, and the report of the excavators indicate that more are in the limestone strata east of the village of Moule on the island of Guadeloupe in the Caribbean.
5. Burdick, C.L., 'Discovery of human skeletons in Cretaceous Formation', *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, 10(2), September 1973, pp. 109-110.
6. Wise, K.P., 'The Flood and the fossil record', an informal talk given at the Institute for Creation Research, San Diego (USA) on August 17, 1988.
7. Lewin, R., 1990. *New Scientist*, 128(1745), p. 30.
8. Wise, Ref. 6.
9. Dr Tim White (anthropologist at the University of California, Berkeley), as quoted by Ian Anderson, 'Hominoid collar-bone exposed as dolphin's rib', *New Scientist*, 28 April 1983, p. 199.

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December 1991

You will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
Based on Proverbs 2:3-5

Where are All the Human Fossils?

by Andrew A. Snelling

"The Face of the Earth"

"And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth" Genesis 6:7

The Hebrew word used for destroy is Machaw which means to rub off or erase. This rock is part of the "face of the earth" from Morocco. Of all the billions of fossils formed from the flood and found on the "face of the earth" no one has ever found a fossil of man whom God said He would destroy from "the face of the earth" for his wickedness

There are some claims and reports of human artifacts and remains in rock layers that are clearly part of the Flood sediments. However, many of these claims are not adequately documented in any scientific sense, while those few reports that have appeared in the scientific and related literature remain open to question or other interpretations. For example, the book *Ancient Man: A Handbook of Puzzling Artifacts*¹ looks like an impressive and voluminous collection of such evidence, but on closer examination many of the artifacts, though puzzling archaeologically, still belong to the post-Flood era, while other reports and claims are either antiquated or sketchy and amateurish.

Often lay scientists claiming to have found human artifacts or fossils have not recorded specific location details, so that professional scientists investigating the claims have had difficulty finding the location from which the sample in question came. ALSO, lay scientists have in the past not kept some of the rock which encloses the fossil or artifact as proof of its in situ occurrence. These two oversights have often made it well nigh impossible to reconstruct and/or prove where fossils or artifacts came from, thus rendering such finds virtually useless.

Fossilized hammers and supposed human footprints in ancient geological strata, regarded by evolutionists as deposited millions of years before man evolved, but regarded by creationists as Flood deposits, are extremely difficult to document scientifically above reproach and/or with any conclusive finality. (Merely finding rock around an implement does not prove it is pre-Flood.)

For example, it has been claimed that a gold chain was found in black coal.² However, the artifact evidently was exhibited as a clean gold chain with no coal clinging to it, so we see no evidence that the chain was actually found in the coal, just the claim that it was. While one would never assume any dishonesty on the part of the people concerned, because proper scientific procedures have not been followed the exhibit has proven to be almost useless in convincing a generally skeptical scientific community and apathetic lay public.

Thus, should genuine human fossils or artifacts from the time of Noah's Flood be found, then it is mandatory that proper scientific procedures be followed to document the geological context, in order to guarantee that the scientific significance of such a find is unequivocally demonstrated. Regretfully, of course, the hardened skeptic would still remain unconvinced, but at least such a find may still awaken some in the apathetic public and a few of the more open-minded scientists.

What is needed, of course, are actual human bones fossilized in situ as an integral part of rock strata that are demonstrably ancient in evolutionary terms, and therefore are usually Flood sediments of the creationist framework for earth history. Yet here is where the real hard unequivocal evidence is lacking and why people ask the question 'Where are all the human fossils?'

We simply cannot point to the report of a human skull found in so-called Tertiary brown coal in Germany, for there is no definitive scientific report available on this object, even though its existence has been verified by the staff of the Mining Academy in Freiberg.³ If it is a coalfield human skull, how is it possible to distinguish it from a clever carving in such a way that it becomes conclusive proof? Even if it were demonstrated as genuine, are we sure that the Tertiary brown coal in question was a Flood stratum? In some parts of the world some of the isolated so-called Tertiary sedimentary basins could easily be classified, according to some creationist geological schemes, as post-Flood strata. After all, the early Flood geologists, prior to the advent of Lyellian uniformitarianism and the evolutionary geological time-scale, applied the term 'Tertiary' to those rock strata that they believed to be post-Flood.

The controversial Guadeloupe skeletons are another case in point.⁴ Without wishing to take sides in the debate, and in any case the hard data are still inconclusive either way, the fact remains that even if perchance these skeletons were so-called Miocene, that in and of itself would still not prove that the skeletons were in Flood sediments and therefore represented the remains of pre-Flood people. Being a subdivision of the so-called Tertiary, these Miocene rocks may still be post-Flood sediments and so these Guadeloupe skeletons may still not be human fossils from Noah's Flood.

Perhaps the fossilized human skeletons that come closest to having been pre-Flood humans buried in Flood strata are those skeletons found at Moab, Utah (USA).⁵ In a copper mine there, two definitely human skeletons were found in Cretaceous 'age' sandstone (supposedly more than 65 million years old), the bones

It would seem to us unloving of God to execute such relentless judgment, but such is God's abhorrence of sin that its penalty must be seen for what it is—utter destruction and removal of all trace. If God cannot tolerate sin (His holiness cannot 'look' on sin), then all trace of sin has to be removed in judgment, which necessitates utter destruction. Should human remains have been allowed to survive the Flood as fossils, then there could also have been the possibility of such remains being worshiped and revered.

However, at least some of the animals became fossilized. Though Genesis 6 implies that they were affected by the entry of sin into the world, they were not morally accountable. Also, they serve as a witness to God's judgment at the time of the Flood. In other words, when we look at the fossil record and seem not to see any human fossils, this should remind us how much God hates sin. We should see the fossils as a sober reminder of the penalty of sin and the character of God's judgment, and as a testimony to the reality of Noah's Flood and the trustworthiness of the Scriptural record.

The Apostle Peter takes up this theme in 2 Peter 3. He says that just as God created the world and judged the world the first time by the Flood, then so too He is going to keep His word and judge the world the second time by fire. Man therefore should take heed and make peace with his Creator while there is still time, before God comes again as Judge with sudden and swift judgment.

Conclusions

As far as we are aware at the present time, there are no indisputable human fossils in the fossil record that we could say belong to the pre-Flood human culture(s). When we endeavour to understand some of the processes that may have occurred during the Flood, and also the real nature of the fossil record, we are not embarrassed by the seeming lack of human fossils.

We don't have all the explanations as to how the evidence came to be that way, and it may be that in the future we will discover some human fossils. However, there is also much about the fossil record that the evolutionists have a hard time explaining. On the other hand, we should also realize that we don't have all the answers either, and we never will.

Even though God has left us with evidence for creation and the Flood, the Bible still says that without faith it is impossible to please and believe Him (Hebrews 11:6). Because we weren't there at the time of the Flood we cannot scientifically prove exactly what happened, so there will always be aspects that will involve our faith. However, it is not blind faith. As we have investigated the evidence, we have seen nothing to contradict what the Bible says about a world Flood. We can be satisfied that there are reasonable explanations, consistent with Scripture, for the seeming lack of human fossils in Flood rocks.

When we take all these factors into account, it would seem unlikely that many of the people present at the time the Flood waters came could have ended up being fossilized. Even if a handful, perhaps a few thousand, were preserved, when such a small number is distributed through the vast volume of Flood sediments, the chances of one being found at the surface are mathematically very, very low, let alone of being found by a professional scientist who could recognize its significance and document it properly.

Putting all these factors together and assuming that they are all realistic possibilities, then the probability of finding a human fossil in the Flood sediments today would be very, very small. To date, our investigations of the fossil record indicate that there are no human fossils in Flood strata, so perhaps the above explanations could be some of the reasons why this is so.

The Purpose of the Flood

Finally, however, we need to consider the purpose for which God sent the Flood, for this provides yet another reason, and perhaps the main reason, why we do not find any human fossils in the Flood sediments and why we should not expect to find any. In Genesis 6:7 we read that God said He would destroy man whom He had created from the face of the earth. So perhaps God deliberately made sure that the Flood waters did just that, destroying every trace of man and his artifacts from the pre-Flood world, if this is what He meant by what He had recorded in the Scriptures.

Yes, God did say that He would send a Flood to destroy the beasts of the field and every living thing in whose nostrils was the breath of life also, but yet we find fossils of all the animals, etc. How then can it be that we find animal fossils and not human fossils or artifacts, when God said that He was equally going to destroy the animals and man from the face of the earth by the Flood?

Elsewhere in Scripture we learn that as far as God's judgment of sin is concerned, when God says that He wants the offenders removed, then this means utter destruction. We see this in the case of the children of Israel moving into the Promised Land. They were told to utterly destroy the Canaanites because of their evil and evil practices. God had pronounced judgment on the Canaanites and the Israelites were but His instruments in executing judgment. The fact that they didn't utterly destroy the Canaanites ended up being a lingering malignant problem, as the Israelites repeatedly lapsed into the sinful practices of the Canaanites who had survived the conquest.

Similarly, we see that God issued the instruction to King Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites, again as a judgment on them for their evil (1 Samuel 15). Again, when God meant His judgment to be utter destruction, He meant what He said, and Saul's disobedience in not carrying through this instruction led to his own downfall.

still joined together naturally and stained green with copper carbonate. While many regard these bones as recently buried, there still remains the remote possibility that they are pre-Flood human 'fossils'.

We can only concur that there is no definite unequivocal evidence of human remains in those rock strata that can definitely be identified as Flood sediments. This realization is at first rather perplexing. But some clues to unravelling this puzzle emerge on investigation.

The Nature of the Fossil Record

Let's begin by considering the nature of the fossil record. Most people don't realize that in terms of numbers of fossils 95% of the fossil record consists of shallow marine organisms such as corals and shellfish.⁶ Within the remaining 5%, 95% are all the algae and plant/tree fossils, including the vegetation that now makes up the trillions of tonnes of coal, and all the other invertebrate fossils including the insects. Thus the vertebrates (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals) together make up very little of the fossil record—in fact, 5% of 5%, which is a mere 0.25% of the entire fossil record. So comparatively speaking there are very, very few amphibian, reptile, bird and mammal fossils, yet so much is often made of them. For example, the number of dinosaur skeletons in all the world's museums (both public and university) totals only about 2,100.⁷ Furthermore, of this 0.25% of the fossil record which is vertebrates, only 1% of that 0.25% (or 0.0025%) are vertebrate fossils that consist of more than a single bone! For example, there's only one Stegosaurus skull that has been found, and many of the horse species are each represented by only one specimen of one tooth!⁸

In any regional area where vertebrate fossils are found, there is a general tendency for these land animals to be higher up in the rock strata sequence on top of the strata containing marine organisms. This has been interpreted by evolutionists as representing the evolutionary sequence of life from marine invertebrates through fish and amphibians to the land-based vertebrates.

However, this same observation can be more reasonably explained by Flood geologists as due to the order of burial of the different ecological zones of organisms by the Flood waters. For example, shallow marine organisms/ ecological zones would be the first destroyed by the fountains of the great deep breaking open, with the erosional runoff from the land due to the torrential rainfall concurrently burying them. On this basis then we would probably not expect to find human remains in the early Flood strata, which would contain only shallow marine organisms. The fossil record as we understand it at the moment certainly fits with this.

Additionally, the majority of the few mammal fossils in the fossil record are in the so-called Tertiary strata, which most creationist geologists nowadays regard as post-Flood strata. If this is the case, then there really aren't very many mammal fossils in the late Flood sediments (there are a few mammal fossils in the so-called

Mesozoic rocks). Consequently, it's not only human fossils that are not found in the Flood sediments, but there is a relative lack of other mammal fossils also.

Of course, in the post-Flood era humans would have been able to make the necessary decisions to get away from the local residual catastrophes responsible for the post-Flood (Tertiary) strata, so we wouldn't expect to find humans fossilized in post-Flood sediments like we find other mammals.

Another problem in the fossil record is, as we have already seen, the fragmentary nature of what is often found, which makes identification difficult. For example, 'a five million year-old piece of bone that was thought to be the collarbone of a human like creature is actually part of a dolphin rib. . .'.⁹ Such genuine mistakes are inevitable when only fragments of bone are recovered from the rocks. We can't even be sure that some bone fragments already found in Flood sediments aren't in fact human remains, having been labelled something else by evolutionists. After all, because of their evolutionary molecules-to-man belief (bias) they don't expect to find human remains in lower (older) strata.

Differential Mobility

Another factor to be considered is the differential mobility of humans and many land-dwelling animals compared to much of the abundant marine life, such as corals, barnacles and shellfish. When the Flood began, the rising Flood waters would probably have encouraged humans and mobile land animals to preferentially move away from low lying areas to higher ground. Thus their being swept away by the Flood waters would probably have been postponed (perhaps for weeks) until all the high ground also was covered.

Consequently, we would predict that it would be highly unlikely for us to find human fossils now in sediments that were deposited early in the Flood year. Indeed, when we look at the fossil record, as we have already seen, we find that in the so-called Paleozoic strata there is a preponderance of marine creatures, beginning with trilobites, corals, sea anemones, shellfish of all types, etc. This is what we would predict, given that the Flood waters carried sediments from the land out to the sea where they would then be deposited, burying many of the relatively immobile seafloor-dwelling creatures, followed later by destruction and burial of fish. Thus it is not surprising that we see the land-dwelling animals being preserved later in the fossil record, where they would have been buried later in the Flood year as the rising Flood waters finally covered the land surface completely.

Destruction of Skeletons

The next question to ask is: Would all the people still be alive when the Flood waters finally covered all the land and swept them away to be buried and preserved as fossils in the later Flood sediments? Can we assume that there was no destruction of the people's bodies in the Flood waters and by other processes operating during

the Flood and subsequently? Probably not!

The turbulence of the water, even in a local flood, can be horrific, particularly when the fast-moving current picks up not only sand and mud, but large boulders. Under such conditions, human bodies would probably be thrown around like flotsam and would tend to be destroyed by the agitation and abrasion.

But even if human bodies were buried in the later Flood sediments, destruction could still occur subsequently (that is, post-deposition). For example, if ground waters permeating through the sediments (such as sandstone) contain sufficient oxygen, then the oxygen would probably oxidize the organic molecules in the buried bodies and so destroy them. (This could be regarded as a type of weathering.) Likewise, chemically active ground waters could also be capable of dissolving human bones, removing all trace of buried people.

Many Flood sediments have also undergone chemical and mineralogical changes due to the temperatures and pressures of burial, plus the presence of the water trapped in between the sediment grains. This process of change, known technically as metamorphism, eventually obliterates many fossils in the original sediments, whether they be fossils of shellfish, corals or mammals, particularly with increasing depth of burial, and higher temperatures and pressures.

Yet another process that could destroy buried human bodies would be the intrusion of molten (igneous) rock into the Flood sediments, and through them to the surface to form volcanoes and lava flows. Such processes involve heat intense enough to melt rocks and recrystallize them. As the hot molten rock rises through the sediments, the sediments are often baked by the heat, and again chemical and mineralogical changes occur that obliterate many contained fossils. All of these factors greatly lengthen the odds of finding a human fossil today.

Differential Suspension

Not only would the turbulence of the sediment-laden Flood waters probably destroy some of the human bodies swept away, but differential suspension in the waters could have made it hard to bury those bodies that survived the turbulence. This is because human bodies when immersed in water tend to bloat, and therefore become lighter and float to the surface. This is what is meant by differential suspension. The human bodies floating on the water surface could therefore for some time be carrion for whatever birds were still flying around seeking places to land and food to eat. Likewise, marine carnivores still alive in their watery habitat would also devour corpses.

Furthermore, if the bodies floated long enough and were not eaten as carrion, then they would still have tended to either decompose or be battered to destruction on and in the waters before any burial could take place. This could explain why we still don't find human fossils higher up in the fossil record/geological column, that is, the later Flood sediments.