

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Readers are invited to submit reviews of current literature relating to origins. Mailing address: ORIGINS, Geoscience Research Institute, 11060 Campus St., Loma Linda, California 92350 USA. The Institute does not distribute the publications reviewed; please contact the publisher directly.

WORKING ON THE FLOOD

THE GEOLOGY OF THE FLOOD. 1987. G.R. Morton. Dallas TX: DMD Publishing Co. 176 p.

Reviewed by R.H. Brown, Geoscience Research Institute

This is not a book for the individual who is looking for an effective scientific defense of the flood, chronology, or creation as presented in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. But without hesitation I classify it as an essential addition to the library of everyone who is seeking to *develop* explanations for scientific data that are pertinent to the testimony of these chapters. The massive bibliography alone justifies such classification. Of equal value are the author's critiques of the various attempts that have been made to develop a biblically supportive model for the pertinent scientific data. Since he makes his analyses from the viewpoint of sympathetic biblical literalism combined with scientific competence, some readers who have derived great comfort from a particularly narrow model of scientific creationism or flood geology will be deeply disturbed by Morton's revelations.

Not all of Morton's critiques are as thorough or as favorable as their target deserves, but in every case they contribute to the development of a more credible treatment of scientific data from a biblical perspective. In my judgment, Morton can be faulted for excessive insistence on rationalistic explanation. For example, he says that "there can be no worldwide flood" (p 83) if we cannot satisfactorily account for the source and the disposition of the water! Is our available data *that* complete, and our ability to understand *that* good?

Morton is convinced that all the pertinent scientific data from geomorphology to radioisotope age, fossil evidence for evolution of species, and astrophysics can be explained on the basis of a universal increase in permittivity (the dielectric constant of free space) during and since the year of the Noachian flood. This increase in permittivity has presumably caused the Earth to expand to double the diameter it had before the flood. The

reader who does not accept this all-encompassing explanation will nevertheless gain fresh and beneficial insights from Morton's various detailed attempts to justify it.

Morton's handling of biblical sources is questionable when he rejects a chronology based on Genesis 5 and 11 on the basis that the Gospel of Luke (ch 3, v 36) lists a Cainan who is not included in Genesis 11 (p 125). Luke merely quotes from the Septuagint, a source which was prepared over 1100 years closer to Moses than was the Masoretic text on which our English translations are primarily based and which *does* give chronologic data for the extra Cainan. It is quite probable that both the Septuagint and the Masoretic give abbreviated name lists in Genesis 5 and 11. Omission of the names of some intervening individuals in no way renders meaningless the time intervals specified between those who are listed.

In order to make his increasing permittivity model consistent and reasonable, Morton places creation not less than about 125,000 years ago, and not more than about 14 million years ago (p 126). If one abandons the less-than-10,000-years constraint from Genesis 5 and 11, why not accept the conclusions of the overwhelming majority of scientists that the universe as presently observed is the product of processes that have been in operation for probably in the order of 15 billion years, and that the Solar System has been in existence for about 4.56 billion years?

The Geology of the Flood is spiralbound and printed at 17 characters per inch with a dot-matrix printer. It contains frequent typographical errors, a few of which impede the reader's comprehension of the author's thought. The most notable example is on page 144, paragraph 2, line 1, in which "was deposited rapidly, the shell" evidently has been omitted following "If the sand" and preceding "would not have time to wear away...." There is a good index of topics and proper names that appear in the text, along with a helpful index of the 51 figures and 21 tabulations it contains.

In conclusion I wish to reemphasize the first four sentences of this review.