

The “Desert” Problem
By Greg Neyman
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www.answersincreation.org/desertproblem.htm

Young-earth creationists have a problem. According to their creation model, all the fossil-bearing rock layers in the world need to be created during the Flood of Noah. Fossils, in ancient rock layers, imply that death occurred before the Fall of man, which is contrary to their interpretation of Scripture.

The most visible rock layers in the world are those in the Grand Canyon. For many years young-earth creation scientists have invested a lot of time and research into the Grand Canyon. They believe that if they can find a model to explain the canyon rocks, then their followers will probably accept the rest of the earth's rocks as young.

Coconino Sandstone

One of the problems that the young earth model encounters in the Grand Canyon is the Coconino Sandstone. I've already discussed this in another article (www.answersincreation.org/coconino.htm), so let me only summarize here. Geologists have stated that this formation of 315-foot thick sandstone was created by a desert environment, and is a deposition of wind-deposited sand dunes.

The problem for the young earth creationist is that this rock layer is topped by two other fossil-bearing marine rock layers, the Toroweap Limestone and the Kaibab Limestone. This presents a problem to the young-earth model because if the sandstone originated by wind, then obviously it could not have been produced by Noah's Flood. The young-earth scientist would have to explain how the water receded, then the sandstone formed, then the water came back and deposited the other layers. However, in the Biblical Flood account, the waters rose, then fell. There were no cyclic water levels, nor was there a massive amount of time during the flood for a desert environment to create a 315-foot thick rock layer. The desert formation of this sandstone would disprove its formation during the Flood, and would disprove the young age of the earth.

Several young-earth scientists have attempted to explain this away, claiming that this sandstone was created underwater, and thus is not a desert sandstone. I dispute this theory because their model does not have the necessary forces to create the Coconino Sandstone (answersingenesis.org/home/area/magazines/docs/v15n1_grandcanyon.asp). I've provided a rebuttal to this at www.answersincreation.org/coconino.htm. However, that is not the purpose of this article.

Other sandstones which are desert in origin will also disprove the young age of the earth. Therefore, the young-earth scientist must discredit every desert sandstone in the

world. If one desert sandstone exists with a fossil-bearing ocean-deposited layer on top, it discredits the entire young earth flood model, and proves the old age of the earth.

Let's look at other desert-origin sandstones. I will continually add to this article as I read through the research and discover other sandstones.

Navajo Sandstone

I'll start with the Navajo Sandstone. This sandstone is most evident in the tall cliffs of Zion Canyon National Park in Utah. The thickness of this formation varies from 1,600 to 2,200 feet. It is evident from the excellent cross-bedding in this formation and other features that this is created from a desert environment. Below the Navajo there are thousands of feet of rock layers, including the layers of the Grand Canyon. Again, please note...all the layers of the Grand Canyon are below the Navajo.

Looking at the rocks above the Navajo, the problem for the young-earth scientist gets even more complicated.. Looking at the Navajo at Arches National Park, there are at least 1,500 feet of rock layers above the Navajo at this location alone. The first is the Entrada Sandstone, which consists of three units, the Moab and Slick Rock members, (which are themselves desert dune sandstones), and the Dewey Bridge Member, which is about 200 feet of marine deposits. Above this is the thin Summerville Formation, siltstone from a lake/lagoon environment. Then comes the most serious problem for the young earth model...the Morrison Formation. This formation has yielded thousands of dinosaur fossils, supposedly killed during Noah's Flood. Above the Morrison are the Dakota Sandstone (beach environment) and the Mancoa Shale (shallow marine).

In fact, all the dinosaur fossils are far above the Grand Canyon sediments. The young earth model says the Flood killed most of the dinosaurs¹...and according to their model, all the layers of the Grand Canyon were deposited during the Flood². That is over 1 mile of sediment. The first dinosaur fossils appear in the Chinle formation, which is two formations above the Grand Canyon layers.

How did these dinosaurs survive the deposition phase of the flood, which deposited over 8,000 feet of sediment before we see the first dinosaur fossil? Young earth explanations (see sources below) fail to offer a valid explanation of this problem...they make absolutely no sense out of the solid facts of the rock layers.

Given the young earth model, the flood waters must have created all these layers. However, you can't have Flood-deposited rocks of the Grand Canyon, topped stratigraphically by a desert sandstone, the Navajo, to the north of the Canyon, and then covered by more sea-deposited layers. None of these layers above the Grand Canyon, including the layers above the Navajo, can be accounted for by the young-earth model.

Evidence From Creation Scientists!

Here is the most amazing evidence for the desert, wind-formed Navajo Sandstone. Creation scientists themselves admit it! I don't know if they are aware of this or not. I've

done a review of the cornerstone book of young-earth proof of Noah's Flood and the Grand Canyon (see www.answersincreation.org/gcbr.htm). The book is called Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe. It is published by the Institute for Creation Research. This book was put together by 14 of the pre-eminent young-earth creation scientists in the world.

On page 32 of this book, they are making a case for the Coconino Sandstone of the Grand Canyon. They claim it was deposited not in a dry, desert environment, but in a water environment. Figure 3.10 shows a plot of grain sizes for the Coconino, two modern water environments, and a "Desert Sand Dune." Through this plot, it is shown that the desert dune plots out to a straight line, whereas the Coconino, and the water environment sands, plot out as jagged, irregular lines. This is used as proof that the Coconino is not a desert sandstone.

The amazing thing is the source of the "Desert Sand Dune" grain size plots. The first paragraph in the right column, first sentence, gives the source as footnote number 44. If you turn to this footnote, the source of the desert sand grain size plot is "Stratigraphic Analysis of the Navajo Sandstone," published in the *Journal of Sedimentary Petrology*! That's right! These creation scientists are using the desert-created Navajo Sandstone to argue against the Coconino as being desert in origin.

However, the Navajo is overlaid with many fossil bearing rock layers, including the Morrison Formation, with thousands of dinosaurs supposedly killed during the Flood of Noah. This can't be! We now have proof, from young-earth creation scientists themselves, that the Navajo Sandstone formed as a dry, desert sandstone, right in the middle of Noah's Flood!!!! Without meaning to, they have proved the old age of the earth!

Conclusion

The Coconino and Navajo are only two desert-created sandstones. No doubt the desert formations in China and Mongolia would also disprove the young age of the earth. I will post others here, as I have time to research them. Unfortunately for the young-earth creationist, it only takes one example of desert sandstone to disprove the young age of the earth. As you can see, the earth is old, just like the geologists have told us, and just as God's creation testifies.

¹ The Extinction of the Dinosaurs, by Michael Oard (a meteorologist !), located at answersingenesis.org/home/area/magazines/tj/tj_v11n2.asp

² Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe, by Steven Austin (book, from the Institute for Creation Research) (see my Grand Canyon section under Articles to see my review of this book.