

labeled chapter-wise because it was thought that the "toledah" colophon was designated to appear before the body or text of the assigned chapter. The ancient Mesopotamian tablets show the opposite. The colophon statement (the Hebrew "toledah") points backward to a narrative, not forward. The "toledah" therefore ends a section or chapter. Of particular interest is Genesis 1 where that chapter should actually end with Gen. 2:4, "these are the generations of the heavens and the earth ..." Now, Fischer's argument for an old earth becomes even more effective. Fischer makes the point that Gen. 2:4 supports an old-earth view because the plural (*toledah*) generations—meaning long periods of time—fit into one (*yom*) day. The same patriarch or scribe, who wrote the inspired words of Genesis 1, also wrote the "toledah" of Gen. 2:4 to end his account. The patriarch or scribe who wrote Genesis 2 started his account with Gen. 2:5.

Text ending statements ("toledah" — these are the generations) occur in Genesis:

- 2:4 ... of the heavens and the earth
- 5:1 ... of Adam
- 6:9 ... of Noah
- 10:1 ... of the sons of Noah
- 11:10 ... of Shem
- 11:27 ... of Terah
- 25:12 ... of Ishmael
- 25:19 ... of Issac
- 36:1 ... of Essau
- 36:9 ... of Essau
- 37:2 ... of Jacob

It is my hope that Wiseman's *Ancient Records and the Structure of Genesis* would again be published, if not by Thomas Nelson Publishers, then by another publisher who would buy the publishing rights.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>P. J. Wiseman, *Ancient Records and the Structure of Genesis* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985).

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### Numbers in Genesis

I appreciated the article by Carol A. Hill in the December issue (*PSCF* 55, no. 4 [2003]: 239–51).

Another scriptural reason follows for doubting that the numbers in Genesis can be used for bookkeeping, like that Bishop James Ussher tried to do (*The Annals of the World*, 1658). Genesis 46:26 indicates that 66 people went into Egypt and lists them. However, Gen. 46:7 describes daughters and granddaughters, plural, when there is only one daughter and one granddaughter listed. Even if these plurals hadn't been used, it seems extremely unlikely that all of Jacob's descendants, save these two, were male. Not only that, no wives are mentioned by name at all, even though verse 5 and common sense tell us that wives were

included among those who went into Egypt. So 66 is not the real number, although the Bible says that it is. How can this be? Surely those who wrote down Scripture knew full well that 66 is less than 66 plus wives, daughters, and granddaughters. More important, God, the inspirer of Scripture, knew it, too. The conclusion I come to, which is the same as Hill's, is that God had other purposes than the arithmetic when these numbers were given, and, furthermore, that the arithmetic is not important.

Keep up the good work. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless" Psalm 84:11 (NIV).

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### Concordism's Illusion That It Is Upholding the Historicity of Genesis 1–11

In *PSCF* Letters (June 2003: 138), I said that neither creation science's global flood nor concordism's local flood could solve the problem of the conflict between the biblical account of the flood and the findings of modern science. Since then Carol Hill (*PSCF* 55 [Sept. 2003]: 209), John McIntyre, and Thomas Godfrey (*PSCF* 55 [Dec. 2003]: 276–8) have written resisting my answer to the problem, namely that God accommodated his theological revelation in Genesis 1–11 to the now antiquated science/ history of the times.<sup>1</sup> They say they believe the history in Genesis 1–11 is accurate history that agrees with the historical/scientific facts.

This belief, though a popular assumption, is not provable from Scripture.<sup>2</sup> There is no biblical reason why God could not or would not accommodate his revelation of theology to the science/history of the times, and all the more so if he has delegated the discovery of science/history to humankind.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Jesus showed that he believed Scripture is sometimes accommodated to ingrained cultural concepts which are not merely scientifically defective, but which are morally defective (Matt. 19:8/Mark 10:5). Divine inspiration does not exclude divine accommodation.

In addition, the writers of history in the Bible regularly imply or say that they are relying upon merely human sources and never claim to have received their history *qua* history from God by revelation. Consequently, the accuracy of the historical books in Scripture is contingent upon the quality of the sources employed. That is why the history in Genesis 1–11, which gives evidence of resting in part upon earlier Mesopotamian stories and motifs, can be considered of rather poor historical worth, while chapters 12–50 regarding the patriarchs can be esteemed more highly because they apparently rest upon traditions passed down by the patriarchs themselves. The resurrection of Christ can be esteemed yet even more highly because it rests upon eyewitness accounts from that very generation.

With regard to the historicity of Genesis 1-11, we can learn something from creation science. It also claims to believe that the history in Genesis 1-11 is accurate history that agrees with the historical/scientific facts. Most readers of this journal are well aware that the way creation science squares the biblical account with the historical/scientific facts is by rejecting the overwhelming consensus of the best-trained scientists in the relevant sciences and substituting in its place private interpretations of the scientific data. In addition it finds evidence in Scripture for items which Old Testament scholars do not find there, like multiple volcanoes exploding at the time of the flood.

Is concordism any different? Despite the honesty of the concordists with regard to the relevant sciences, concordism squares the biblical account with the historical/scientific facts primarily by rejecting the overwhelming consensus of the best-trained Old Testament scholars and substituting in its place private interpretations of the biblical data. With regard to pre-Adamites, it finds evidence for them in Scripture in places where Old Testament scholars do not find them.

As for a local flood, which has become a standard staple of concordism, the overwhelming consensus of Old Testament biblical scholars is that the Bible is saying that the Flood was anthropologically universal and that during the Flood the entire earth was virtually returned to its pre-creation state described in Gen. 1:2.

One need not take my word for it. Go to a good theological library and find twenty commentaries on Genesis by qualified Old Testament scholars. Carefully read the sections supposedly supporting pre-Adamites and the section on the flood. You will be lucky to find even two Old Testament scholars who think Scripture is speaking of pre-Adamites or a local flood. Concordism is not resting upon any firmer a foundation than is creation science. It simply prefers a private interpretation of the Bible to a private interpretation of science.

Despite its sincerity, effort, and hopeful thinking, concordism's Day-age, pre-Adamites, local flood, and local language at the Tower of Babel are rejections of the historical accuracy of Genesis 1-11. Concordism replaces the history offered in Genesis 1-11 with a different history based on private interpretations which are determined not by the context of Scripture, but by the findings of modern science.

This does not mean that creation science gets off scot-free with reference to its interpretation of Scripture. For one thing, as Dick Fischer pointed out in his paper (*PSCF* 55 [Dec. 2003]: 222-31), the "fountains of the great Deep" (Gen. 7:11) are fresh water terrestrial fountains; and it is they along with rain that supplied the water for the flood.<sup>4</sup> The ocean, which is not fresh water, cannot be employed as a means of flooding the globe (or half the globe à la Godfrey/Aardsma) without doing the same thing that concordists are doing: replacing the history in Genesis 1-11 with a private interpretation.

Calvin's doctrine of accommodation, which I believe should be followed in principle, has a great advantage over creation science and concordism in that it allows both the Bible and the scientific data to freely say what they say. Concordism and creation science with their private interpretations have replaced the reality of Scripture and science with an illusion.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>It would be just as misleading to say Genesis 1-11 is either "fiction" or "myth" as to say that the early geology books which explain the results of the Missoula floods as being due to glaciers were either fiction or myth. Genesis 1-11, like those early geology books, is the outmoded history/science of those times.

<sup>2</sup>The fact that New Testament writers accept Genesis 1-11 as historical only proves that modern history/science was not revealed to them any more than to the Old Testament writers.

<sup>3</sup>My book, *Inerrant Wisdom*, develops this thesis.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Fountains of the Great Deep," *Origins* 1, no. 2 (1974): 67-72.

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## Do Ice Cores Disprove Aardsma's Flood Theory?

In a recent *PSCF* article, Paul Seely pointed to recent Greenland ice core data as "ultimate proof that Noah's Flood was not global," concluding "that on any possible scenario ... the 110,000 regular annual layers of fresh-water ice in the GISP2 ice core falsify the theory of a global Flood in the time of Noah."<sup>1</sup> The scope of this claim clearly extends to Aardsma's flood theory, which was introduced in my letter in the same issue that carried Seely's article.<sup>2</sup> The clear, well-written case may have persuaded many *PSCF* readers to rule out even this promising theory immediately, so my purpose here is to argue that no such hasty rejection is warranted.

Seely's case is indeed impressive. What may actually prove fatal to any theory that leaves no ice sheet on Greenland at the conclusion of the flood is his positive evidence for far too many years of history in the one resting there now. Nevertheless, Michael Oard, Larry Vardiman, and other proponents may yet discover new ways to defend such a theory. Time will tell.

But what about other global flood theories, like Aardsma's, where the ice sheet forms before the flood yet is not destroyed by it? Seely devoted only two paragraphs to refuting these,<sup>3</sup> arguing that the flood must have affected both top and bottom sides of the ice sheet if it floated, or else at least its top side. He wrote: "Gen 7:19-8:4 virtually demands that it was covered by the ocean," but even if it never was submerged, certain evidence he believes should be found is missing. Seely therefore extended his "ultimate proof" claim to cover even Aardsma's flood theory using an entirely different line of reasoning, where positive evidence from the ice core data has little or nothing to do with his case against it.

Although he concluded that a pre-flood ice sheet should have been flooded, since Gen 7:19 says "all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered," Seely also discussed the "rather unbiblical scenario" where it was not under water. He reasoned that "the extraordinary amounts of precipitation at the time of the Flood (Gen. 7:4, 12) would cause the ice core to have either an extra-large melt layer from rain as well as ice pipes, lenses, glands, and such in the snow above or an extra-large annual layer of snow sometime in the past, probably in the last 8,000