

SCIENCE, SCRIPTURE, AND THE YOUNG EARTH

An Answer to Current Attacks
on the Biblical Doctrines of
Recent Creation and the Global Flood

Henry M. Morris
John D. Morris

1989

Institute for Creation Research
El Cajon, California

through the pores of the rock into the atmosphere. The rate of addition of helium into the atmosphere is well established at about 13 million atoms per second being exuded from each square inch of the earth's crust! The amount of helium in the atmosphere is also well established, and simple division shows that all the helium now in the atmosphere would have been placed there in only 1.8 million years.

This method assumes, just as for radioactive dating, (1) a constant rate of helium addition to the atmosphere; (2) a closed system (or open to a known extent), with no helium being added to or taken from the atmosphere without being accounted for, and (3) no helium in the primitive atmosphere.

In all reality, however, the rate of helium production in the past should have been greater, particularly if the earth were billions of years old, since much radioactive material would now have decayed to stable elements, thereby reducing the calculated age of the atmosphere. Likewise, no presently known mechanism is capable of removing sufficient quantities of helium from the atmosphere. The comparatively small number of helium atoms which escape by thermal effects have been included in the calculation above. In an attempt to avoid the obvious young-earth implications, some uniformitarians have argued for the feasibility of several other speculative mechanisms for helium escape into space from the upper atmosphere. None of these mechanisms have been generally accepted by the scientific community, nor have they solved the age problem. Furthermore, helium present in an original created atmosphere would be likely, thereby further reducing the estimated age.

This process, while governed by uniformitarian assumptions, applies on a worldwide basis, with a long history of measurement and observation. With sound physical theory behind it, it surely places a maximum age on the earth, far too young to allow for evolution or the uniformitarian world view held so dear by advocates of an old earth.

A similar young earth argument has been developed by Dr. Austin and Dr. Russell Humphreys.¹ Using similar assumptions to those

¹ Austin, Steven A., and D. Russell Humphreys, "The Sea's Missing Salt: A Dilemma for Evolutionists." Paper accepted for *II International Conference on Creationism*, 1990, 14 pp.

above, it can be shown that all the sodium in the ocean can be accounted for in only 62 million years, even if none was there at the beginning. This figure is far too small, assuming life evolved in the ocean over three billion years ago.

But this calculation is far from simple. Every conceivable factor has been considered. Furthermore, to be on the conservative side, every possible input process has been minimized, while every possible removal process has been maximized, and still an enormous imbalance remains. There is no way known to science to account for the missing sodium. This is a worldwide phenomenon with a long record of accurate measurements behind it. Uniformitarians usually dismiss such arguments with sweeping denunciations, but the onus is on Dr. Young and others to present a scientifically plausible reason why the oceans should not be poisoned with excessive sodium, if they are indeed billions of years old.

Drs. Young, Menninga, and Van Till, in *Science Held Hostage*, have pointed out various problems with earlier measurements and conclusions regarding the amount of dust on the moon. ICR graduate student, Dave Rush, has extensively reviewed this possible young-moon argument, and has concluded that recent measurements on the amount of interplanetary dust are so varied that some measurements imply a young moon, while others are compatible with an old moon. More research is needed before this question can be settled.

Several geologic studies are likewise underway which point to a young earth. Many of the leading geologists now insist that most, if not all, of the individual geologic deposits were laid down rapidly by intermittent catastrophes separated by long ages of inactivity. Formerly, the job of the creationist geologist was to promote global catastrophism over uniformitarianism, but now the job is to tie the various stratigraphic units into one continuous catastrophe. The geologic record contains such evidence in abundance, as will be seen in the following two categories of argument.

According to the young-earth view, the year-long flood of Noah and its after effects were responsible for the deposition of the majority of the geologic column. Toward the later stages of that flood, the continents must have been uplifted while the ocean basins were deepened and/or widened, allowing the waters to drain into them. This implies