

C. S. LEWIS AND EVOLUTION

Dear Editor,

Some time ago in **Creation** magazine there was a reference to C. S. Lewis' view on evolution.¹ I would like to add my views on the question of whether he was on the side of creation or evolution. It seems to me that where he was touching on science, for which he was not qualified, he sided with evolution. He wrote, 'We infer evolution from fossils'.² But we need to understand what 'evolution' meant 50 years ago to someone who was removed from the scientific arena.

On the other hand, where C. S. Lewis was speaking in the area of philosophy, which was his home territory, it is clear that he argued strongly against the possibility that Man could have come about as a result of random natural processes. He wrote:—

*'The naturalists have been engaged in thinking about Nature. They have not attended to the fact that they were **thinking**. The moment one attends to this it is obvious that one's own thinking cannot be merely a natural event, and that therefore something other than Nature exists.'*³

In this chapter he reasons that a supernatural (or metaphysical) reality, identified as the mind of man, must exist. In this area then, he was certainly on the same side as creationists.

He perhaps made his views on evolution clearer in an essay entitled 'The Funeral of a Great Myth', which was published in 1967:—

*'But we must sharply distinguish between evolution as a biological theorem and population evolutionism or developmentalism which is certainly a myth.'*⁴

*'In the science, evolution is a theory about **changes**: in the myth it is a fact about **improvements**.'*⁵

*'To those brought up on the myth nothing seems more normal, more natural, more plausible, than that chaos should turn into order, death into life, ignorance into knowledge.'*⁶

The point of the essay is that he rejects this **myth** of evolutionism. His justification is simple. You need to treat reason as absolute to deduce anything about the world;

*'But at the same time the myth asks me to believe that reason is simply the unforeseen and unintended byproduct of a mindless process at one stage of its endless and aimless becoming. The content of the myth thus knocks from under me the only ground on which I could possibly believe the myth to be true.'*⁷

He concludes with the thought:

*'For my own part, though I believe it no longer, I shall always enjoy it as I enjoy other myths.'*⁸

So perhaps his views changed.

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CONTINENTAL DRIFT

Dear Editor,

In his otherwise excellent review of continental drift,¹ Snelling omits important 'minor opinions' concerning continental drift. For example, many secular (and some creationist) natural scientists believe in continental drift by earth expansion,² and many American and most European natural scientists seem to prefer a post-Flood continental drift.³

Of course, no one knows what the

inner earth really looks like, so all continental drift theories have to build on a large part of speculation compared to observation. One model of continental drift suggested by the present writer,⁴ takes into account both compressional and extensional tectonics, and magnetic reversals, and to the best of my knowledge may explain all other observations connected to continental drift. It solves the problem of why there are so little sediments on the ocean floor, and, for example, the heat problem (the whole ocean would have boiled away) in the model by Austin *et al.*,⁵ but incorporates at the same time part of the runaway subduction suggested by Baumgardner.⁶ The runaway subduction will work in lesser amounts than suggested by Baumgardner, when properly taking into account the higher density of the inner earth.

In my model it is numerically shown that the mechanism for initiating catastrophic continental drift may be the vertical rising of large diapirs, as the only needed horizontal and vertical forces. If the continents started to drift during the initiation of the Flood (as suggested by Austin *et al.*),⁷ it is hard to understand why there are so many similarities between, for example, north-eastern United States, Britain and Scandinavia. A post-Flood continental drift would explain the similarities more easily.

As a final short note, many scientists suggested continental drift before Antonio Snider-Pellegrini in 1859.⁸ For example, Sir Francis Bacon recorded the similarity of shape of opposing African and South American coasts in 1620 (even though he did not suggest continental drift), R. P. Francois Placet suggested in 1688 that America was not separated from other parts of the world before the Flood, and suggestions of continental drift were independently made by Professor Richard Owen and William Lowthian Green in 1857.⁹

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The Author Replies . . .

Plate tectonics is the reigning (almost universal) model of earth history because it powerfully explains a vast body of observational data, and not because of a large measure of speculation by the uniformitarian mindset of the evolutionary establishment. In any case, catastrophism is making a welcome comeback amongst a significant number of influential mainstream geologists.

There should likewise be no reticence towards catastrophic plate tectonics, since it is based on sound experimental studies and the same vast body of observational evidence, and it has even greater explanatory power, all within a consistently biblical framework of earth history. To be sure, the model needs further development to cope with perceived difficulties and to dovetail its explanations more closely with the actual rock record, all of which my co-

workers and I are fully aware of and are currently working on. However, this need for model refinement should never be interpreted as a sign of weakness while ever the model is so eloquently consistent with so much observational data.

Such model refinement will also include an explanation of why there are so many similarities between the geology of the north-eastern United States, Britain and Scandinavia, for example, all within the context of catastrophic plate tectonics and drifting continental crustal fragments **during** the Flood. On the other hand, those that postulate post-Flood continental drift have yet to demonstrate a viable mechanism for it, and to explain how the animals and man would have survived the devastation at the earth's surface resulting from such a sustained violent upheaval.

My colleagues and I look forward to further refining the catastrophic plate tectonics model for the Flood and earth history to make it even more comprehensive and powerful in explaining the geological record from a biblical perspective.

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A NOTE ON NEW AUSTRALOPITHECINES

Dear Editor,

Since my last note¹ on *Australopithecus ramidus*, some interesting articles have appeared in the journal **Nature** which have modified the australopithecine picture just a bit. First of all, the recently described Ethiopian species *A. ramidus* was assigned as type species in the new genus *Ardipithecus*.² In the same article notification was given of another *A. ramidus* specimen (with mandibular and some post-cranial material) which will be the subject of further study. As I

indicated in my earlier paper³ fossil series are often characterised by a rather high number of confusing species, each showing mosaic and homoplasous characters. Yet another australopithecine species has been found which deepens the truth of that claim for the australopithecine fossil series. *Australopithecus anamensis* has been described from similar-aged (3.9–4.2 radiometric years) sediments in Kenya, based upon a similar number of fragments (3 post-cranials, 1 temporal fragment, 1 maxillary fragment, 5 or so mandibular fragments and 15 or so scattered teeth) between sites scores of miles apart and in sediments separated by at least 20 m of section.⁴ This paper by Leakey and others, as well as another by Peter Andrews,⁵ point out a number of the mosaic and homoplasous characters of this new species. Examples include, but are not limited to: dental similarities with Miocene African apes, bipedalism as in other australopithecines, sexual dimorphism reminiscent of apes, serrate root pattern as in australopithecines, and a body size greater than other australopithecines and like that of humans. Such high levels of species diversity, homoplasy, and mosaic characters continue to deepen the challenge to evolutionary models and strengthen the idea of high rates of intrabaraminic, post-Flood diversification along the lines of pre-programmed, latent morphotypes.

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