

The Eurasian steppes have been a link between the sub-continent of China, India, SW Asia and Europe since the Babel migrations began. The Indo-European people impacted on them all, as did the Altaic peoples. Cultural exchanges were continuous. The use of the horse as a draught animal, then to draw a war chariot, and later for cavalry, all originated on the steppe and was adopted in the sub-continent. Attila's invasion of Europe (5th century AD) can ultimately be traced to the expansion of the Han Empire. Nor was trade absent or neglected; the early Han and Roman Empires were trading partners. Maritime trade also flourished. Chinese artifacts found in southern Africa predate European 'discovery' by centuries. Madagascar was settled by Austronesians. The apostle Thomas may well have evangelised in India.

It is true, of course, that the Reformation made western Europe the focus of world evangelism, although the contribution of the Roman and Eastern churches can not be entirely discounted.

'It may be that God's intention was to link Babel only with the world as it was in Moses' day,' (again, see quote from reviewer above).

Maybe but why? Surely Babel, like the Flood, was an event that affected all mankind, and how was the world in Moses' day?

In the time of Sargon of Akkad (RCD 2350 BC, ND 2150 BC) trade was carried on from the Indus to Crete and surely involved Egypt. I doubt that neither the Harrapans of the Indus or the Egyptians were entirely ignorant of their neighbours further out.

Nor is it necessary to assume that the Genesis record originated with Moses. Luke drew on the accounts 'handed down' and we accept his gospel as inspired. Similarly, Genesis 5:1 refers to *'the written account of Adam's line'* (NIV). Refer to Harrison for the theory that this and similar statements mark out original sources.¹ While Harrison sees the 'colophon' as concluding the previous tablet, Kline

interprets it as a title for the following section and this is the way it is translated in the NIV (I have referred to this in my comment on the Sumerian language appended to Table 4²). Thus, Genesis 10:1-11:9 is *'The Account of Noah's Sons'*, which along with Genesis 11:10-26 *'The Generations of Shem'* and the earlier tablets probably passed into the keeping of Terah, and probably with the later tablets, parchment or papyri, into the keeping of Joseph's heir Ephraim and his heirs. This does not exclude editorial comment or updating by Moses.³ However, the Amorites were already in Canaan in Abraham's time, so no updating would have been necessary there. Terah living in Ur would have been well acquainted with the maritime trade in the Persian Gulf that extended at least as far as the Indus River in his time, and could well have been responsible for the comment on the maritime peoples descended from Javan (Genesis 10:5).

Mr MacDonald accuses me of wishful thinking. I might make the same charge of his comment, *'The Cimmerians — descendants of Gomer, as the name so clearly implies'*. I do not know how carefully he has read my paper, as he seems to find it necessary to convince me that Hittite is an Indo-European language, a fact I have dealt with at some length on page 333.

He uses the term Indo-European, but seems to ignore the evidence for a common origin of all Indo-European languages. He says that I have: *'offered no evidence whatsoever to support [my] claim that Neolithic Europe was peopled by the descendants of Ham.'* I dealt with Neolithic Europe on pages 328-330 and show evidence for two streams of settlement: the sea-going people (p. 329) including the Caphtorites of Kapturu (Crete) and

'The early mainland settlers [who] almost certainly came from Anatolia with a strong Mesopotamian heritage. Candidates would be the Hatti (Hittite) descendants of Canaan, or the

Ludim, either from the son of Shem, or from the son of Mizraim or both. In any case these settlers did not speak an Indo-European language.'

Javan is also a candidate whom I have not considered for reasons given above but the argument for the identification of Javan with Ionian is similar to the identification of Kapturu with Caphtor, which implies that the sea-going people were Hamitic.

Thomas C. Curtis
Chapel Hill, Queensland
AUSTRALIA

References

1. Harrison, R.K., *Introduction to the Old Testament*, IVP p. 543-553, 1970.
2. Kline, M.G., *Genesis, New Bible Commentary*, IVP, p. 81, 1970.
3. Harrison, Ref. 1, p. 522.

Did creation mountains referred to in Psalm 104:8 really rise from below the Noachian flood waters?

In the paper, *Did mountains really rise according to Psalm 104:8?*¹ Charles Taylor writes: *'Actually much of Psalm 104 seems to refer to creation itself and then, 'However, verse 9 appears to be a reference to God's promise never to send a worldwide flood again.'*

I must confess to being at variance with those who, when quoting Psalm 104, give inviolable status to the bounds set in verse 9, while accepting as a non-violation the earth's **eternal foundation**, verse 5, **being removed** in 2 Peter 3:10! There is certainly nothing extravagant in stating that the bounds referred to in verse 9 are the

valleys (*ocean basins*) that sank down under the burden of the waters gathered on the third day of the Creation!

Were those valleys (*set as bounds*) the essence or heart of the promise given (*over 1600 years later*) to the survivors of the Great Flood? **Surely not!** The promise of God, given to the survivors of the Great Flood, rested entirely on the immutability of the promise of God (*Genesis 9:8-17*), witnessed to by the bow in the cloud. It is no more justifiable to give inviolability to the earth's foundation, verse 5, or the setting of the bounds, in verse 9, than to sanctify as inviolable the dykes around the polders of the Netherlands. In any case, narratively, the waters of the sea never covered the earth again; the water that covered the earth in the Noachian Flood came from the windows of heaven and the fountains of the great deep. Psalm 104:8 then, is a divine construct achieved by the gathering together of the water and verse 9 is self-explanatory, not to be confused with a divine post-Flood covenant.

In the abstract to his paper, Charles Taylor makes this statement:

'... Psalm 104:8, and the context, confirm that this key verse is referring to earth movements (tectonic activity) at the close of and soon after, the Flood when the mountains rose and the waters retreated.' (Emphasis mine).

He then buttresses this statement by quoting J.C. Whitcomb:

'Psalm 104, verse 8, is actually saying that God supernaturally pushed up great mountain ranges to balance the new depths in ocean basins,'

and H.M. Morris, as saying:

'Mountains must rise and new basins must form to receive the great overburden of water imposed upon the earth. This process is described in Psalm 104:5-9.'

But let's do some matter-of-fact scrutinizing.

Mr Taylor's *Psalm 104:8, and the*

context, confirm', used in his initial paragraph, is later downplayed by his statement:

'... whether or not this verse is meant to give a hint about tectonic events at the close of the Flood, it seems that some such activity must have taken place ...' (Emphasis mine).

It is rather **anomalous** concerning the phrase, *'when the mountains rose and the waters retreated,'* that mountains rising (though undoubtedly they did) are not mentioned in the Flood account. Vagrant Floodwaters being destructive and retreating (Hebrew) is foreign to Psalm 104:7, while the waters in Psalm 104:7 that 'fled' (Hebrew) and 'hastened away' (Hebrew), being expelled as from an *in situ* category, are conspicuously absent from the Flood account.

J.C. Whitcomb's: *Psalm 104:8 is actually saying that God supernaturally pushed up great mountain ranges ...'* (emphasis mine), if granted credence, would render a scientific cause/effect investigation pointless. **Actually**, Psalm 104:8 is saying *'The mountains rose'*, and *'the valleys sank down'*, and what God did supernaturally was to charge the waters (verse 7) to flee by His 'rebuke' (corresponding to *'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together,'* Genesis 1:9, and *'He gathered the waters of the sea together as an heap,'* Psalm 33:7). Valleys sinking and mountains rising (verse 8), were typical isostatic effects ('tectonic activity'), hydrodynamically depressing oceanic basins; setting bounds for the gathered waters; and elevating mountains by virtue of mantle displacement below the crust.

The lineal order, according to Psalm 104:8, is mountains first, valleys second. However, I listed them in reverse order in the closing statement of the above paragraph. The following is an attempt at justifying that order. Though the lineal order of elements in God's Word is not arbitrary, to impose a

strict lineal order in verse 8, with no regard to the overall context of the narrative (what has gone before or what immediately follows), is exegetically unjustifiable. The order of elements is not without a degree of flexibility, to render those relative elements comprehensible.

Considering the order of the elements in Psalm 104:8, as they relate to verse 9, did the mountains rise to set bounds for the waters or did the valleys sink down relative to those bounds? For purpose of chronological coherence then, the transposition was made inevitable, and the correct lineal order becomes: the valleys sank down setting bounds, and the mountains rose to isostatically accommodate the displaced mantle material. This postulate biblically, I feel, is not only grammatically tenable but isostatically tenable, scientifically.

H. Morris' statement: *'This process is described in Psalm 104:5-9'*, seemingly confirms the process but **not necessarily the 'Flood'**. This is tantamount to saying the recipe describes the process but not the resulting cake — as many a housewife can testify. The process described in Psalm 104:5-9 produced features consonant with the rest of Psalm 104 — describing the inauguration of the physical features ornamenting the antediluvian world!

The logic: *'that some such (tectonic) activity must have taken place, or else the Earth would still be covered with the water of the flood'* (page 313, parenthesis mine), is obvious but why in particular 'with the water of the Flood'? Can it not as easily be said that **some such activity must have taken place on the third day of creation** or else the dry land would not have appeared and the purpose of a flood rendered superfluous? Consider the account of the Creation given in Psalm 33:6-7:

'By the Word of the LORD the heavens were made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together as a heap: He

layeth up the depth in storehouses.'

The global water cover, gathered together 'as a heap' on the third day, surely mandated tectonic activity involving valleys sinking (to form oceanic basins), and (from the resulting mantle displacement) mountains rising,¹ or else (consonant with Taylor's logic) the water would never have ceased to cover the globe. Diastrophism then, was initiated by the gathering together of the water on the third day to accommodate a biological Creation. It was repeated '*at the close of, and soon after the Flood*' to accommodate the survivors in the Ark and the added water burden — precipitated as rain from the windows of heaven.

Earth on the first day of Creation superficially consisted of a spherical body of water. Let's try to imagine from that point a sequence of events that would accomplish the fourth day terrestrial and hydrologic regimens, incorporating their respective physical features: oceans with marginal trenches; central ridges; and coastal confines; and continents displaying mountains, hills, plains and concealing latent sub-crustal water reservoirs (*'He layeth up the depth in store-houses'*). Could we describe it better than Psalm 104:5-9 and Psalm 33:6-9?

Now here is where we arrive at the crux of the matter: God makes no covenants in Psalm 104, but the Psalmist declares the glory of God witnessed to in His work of Creation. Every covenant that God makes is accompanied with the personal pronoun I and Psalm 104 is conspicuously deficient in that area. It is rather inconsistent to equate verse 9 with God's promise to Noah and his sons.

William Tompkins
Toronto, Ontario
CANADA

Reference

1. Taylor, C.V., Did mountains really rise according to Psalm 104:8? *CEN Tech. J.* 12(3):312-313, 1998.

Did mountains really rise?

In regard to the grammatical function of *orè* (mountains) and *pedia* (valleys) in the LXX of Psalm 104:8, I find myself agreeing with Pete Williams.¹ Although it is grammatically possible that *ore* and *pedia* are in the nominative case, the immediate context clearly rules this possibility out.

The subject of verse 7a is clearly '*the waters*', which is also the antecedent to '*they*' in verse 7b. The antecedent of '*they*' in verse 9 is also a clear reference to '*the waters*'. Thus, it is far more likely that '*the waters*' is also the subject of verse 8.

Taylor objects by appealing to the subject changes found in Psalm 114:3—6. However, each verse in this Psalm is a synonymous parallelism and the Psalm as a whole is a chiasmus (i.e. an inverted parallelism):

- A The covenant people (vv. 1-2)
- B Fleeing of the seas and turning back of the Jordan (v. 3)
- C Skipping of the mountains and hills (v.4)
- B' Interrogation of the seas and the Jordan (v. 5)
- C' Interrogation of the mountains and hills
- A' The covenant God (vv. 7-8)

Therefore, the subject changes are expected and quite necessary. Psalm 104, on the other hand, has none of these features.

Taylor also appeals to the intervening subject in Daniel 9:26-27. The problem here is that *He*' in verse 27 can *only* refer to the same subject as verse 26a. Unlike Psalm 104, there is no ambiguity about the antecedent of the pronoun, so these verses are not comparable. If the subject did switch to the mountains and valleys in verse 8 and then back to the waters in verse 9, then we would expect the writer to explicitly state the subject of verse 9 rather than simply using the ambiguous pronoun '*they*'. Indeed, this is what happens in Psalm 114, which Taylor cites.

Furthermore, verse 8c of Psalm 104 says: ... *to the place you assigned for them.*' The word translated '*place*' is *maqom* (LXX, *topos*), which refers to a geographical position. It would make sense if the mountain was to rise up to a new height, but it is difficult to understand how a mountain could rise up to a new geographical position! Also, the word translated '*assigned*' is a qal perfect which denotes a completed action in past time (the LXX has an aorist active indicative, which communicates the same idea). Therefore, the assigning of the places had already been done prior to the events described in this verse (most likely an allusion to Genesis 1:9). If the mountains and valleys were the subjects of verse 8, then the implication of this verse is that they were ascending/descending to the position in which they had previously been.

In addition, counting the versions which support a particular interpretation carries little weight. *Argumentum ad numerum* is a logical fallacy.

I have no doubt that a global flood would have greatly reformed the surface of the earth, and it is highly likely that it produced much tectonic and volcanic activity which caused the mountains to rise and the valleys to sink. However, in light of my analysis above, I do not believe that Psalm 104:8 can legitimately be used to confirm this. The context strongly suggests that it was the waters which flowed up over the mountains and down into the valleys. Note also that the rising of the mountains and the sinking of the valleys may have been the mechanism which caused the waters to '*flow over the mountains*' and '*go down into the valleys.*'

Reference

1. Williams, P., Did mountains really rise? *CEN Tech. J.* 13:(1):68-69, 1999.

Andrew Kulikovsky
Salisbury East, South Australia
AUSTRALIA

More on mountains

I was disappointed that Dr Taylor's reply to my letter failed to address its fundamental objections to post-Flood mountain uplift.¹ These are, in summary:

1. Why does Moses speak of 'high mountains' *before* the Flood (Genesis 7:19 NIV)?
2. If mountains rose from beneath the sea, how is it that *both land and sea fossils* are indiscriminately mixed in their strata?
3. How could such strata have survived, in anything like their present general evenness (witness Grand Canyon), if widespread uplift *followed* their deposition?
4. Why, if mountains only arose after the Flood, did it take *more than ten weeks* between when the ark first rested on Ararat, and when *the tops of the [surrounding] mountains became visible*' (Genesis 8:4, 5)?

Though ignored by Dr Taylor, this last point alone is worthy of a closer look. In modern terms, three observations can be made of Ararat. First, it is the dominant mountain in the region — at 5123 m (just under 17,000 ft.) more than a kilometre higher than its nearest 'rivals' of Aragats, at 4090 m, and Tenduruk at 3533 m.² Secondly, the surrounding mountains are each impressive peaks in their own right — the six or seven within a 140 km radius of Ararat all being over 2750 m, or some 9000 ft., dwarfing, for perspective, Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis, at 1344 m.³ Thirdly, Ararat itself is not just one peak, but two — Greater Ararat, at more than five kilometres' elevation, and Lesser Ararat at 3896 m.

Significantly, each of these three observations corresponds precisely with what we find in the Genesis record concerning Ararat and its environs in the year of the Flood.

- Ararat was the *dominant mountain* in the region (Genesis 8:4-5);
- Yet the surrounding mountains themselves required a further water

run-off of nearly two months, before the dove could find a resting place, showing them to have been *very substantial peaks in their own right* (Genesis 8:5-6, 10, 12);

- Mt Ararat itself was a *plurality of peaks* (Hebrew 'the mountains of Ararat', Genesis 8:4).

Given this remarkable correlation between what we know of the Ararat region today, and how Moses describes it in the year of the Flood, one is constrained to ask why Dr Taylor would have any problem accepting that the 'mountains' of then were essentially as the 'mountains' of now, save, of course, for those sedimentary deposits clearly left from the Flood.

We would be perfectly at liberty to speculate about when the mountains arose, were it not for the fact that Scripture clearly and repeatedly ascribes their formation to Creation week itself! Thus the Psalmist, generally held in this instance to have been Moses, exults:

'Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God' (Psalm 90:2 NKJV, emphasis added).

In typical Hebrew parallelism, here we have the '*mountains ... brought forth*' at the same time as God *formed the earth and the world*'. Nothing could be plainer than that this is a Creation reference. Likewise Solomon, who speaks of wisdom as existing '*before there was ever an earth ... before the mountains were settled ... when He marked out the foundations of the earth*' (Proverbs 8:23, 25, 29). Again, a manifest Creation reference. Even Psalm 104, which Dr Taylor seeks to invoke in support of 'mountain uplift', speaks of *already existing mountains* as being covered by the waters (v. 6)!

Thus when we come to the Flood, we find that '*all the high mountains were covered*' (Genesis 7:19 NIV). That is, they **already were there, they existed!** And not just 'mountains' as such (hariym), but *high mountains*

(hariym *gebohiym*). The identical expression, in the singular, is found in the modern Hebrew New Testament,⁴ where Jesus took Peter, James and John to a '*high mountain*' for a preview of His future glory (Matthew 17:1). This 'high mountain' is traditionally identified as Mount Hermon,⁵ the 2800 m (9,200 ft.) peak in the Golan just north of Caesarea Philippi where, as we know from the context, Jesus had been ministering (Matthew 16:13 ff.). Interestingly, this is the very height (2,800 m) of last year's celebrated dinosaur find in the Andes mountains, where thousands of dinosaur footprints, at upward inclines of up to seventy degrees, were found in limestone,⁶ showing the creatures to have been both **alive** and **fleeing uphill** when overtaken by the waters.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that if 'high mountain' in Matthew 17:1 denotes a mountain of at least several thousand metres, so, for consistency, should the identical expression in Genesis 7:19! This goes far beyond the bland 'rolling plains' for which Dr Taylor argues, in his reply to me, as characterizing the pre-Flood world. Such a description emasculates the meaning of 'high mountains'. And how could mere undulations have required an abatement of **months** before the dry land appeared?

Nor has the Bible any problem with accommodating the extra run-off time required by a covering of mountains even higher than Ararat, such as the upper Andes or Himalayas. Moses records that

'The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, and ... the ark came to rest...' (Genesis 8:3, 4 NIV).

This is a highly significant statement. By the '*end of the hundred and fifty days*' from the Flood's commencement, Moses says, '*the water had gone down*' — not absolutely, but progressively to the point where, on the same day, the ark was able to rest on Ararat (v. 4, cf. 7:11). That is, 'the waters had

diminished, as the Palestinian Targum translates it,⁷ or *'abated'* (KJV). Moses' comment of the next verse, that *'the waters continued to recede'* after that day puts the seal on this, showing they had *already been receding prior to the 150th day*. With this the Septuagint agrees:

'And the water subsided, and went off the earth, and after an hundred and fifty days the water was diminished' (Genesis 8:3)

Indeed Jamieson, Fausset and Brown argue in their commentary that no less than this — the reading followed also by the RSV, the NRSV, and the Hebrew Bible of Alexander Harkavy⁹ — is the required understanding of the original:

*'The clause should be rendered, "The waters continually subsided from off the earth; and at the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were very much abated".'*¹⁰

The alternative is to posit that *on the same day* as the waters started to subside, the ark berthed, or rather bogged, in the mud of the still sodden mountain! Or else that the 150 days of 8:3 represents a *second period*, subsequent to the identical figure of 7:24, leading to a terminus not only unsupported by any reference points within the text, but actually at odds with the chronological data as it subsequently unfolds in the chapter (vv4,5,6,10,12,13,14). The earlier, normal reading must therefore be the preferred, namely, as Wenham notes, that

*'... the 150 days mentioned in both [Genesis 7:24; 8:3] fall between the 17.2.600th day of Noah's life, and 17.7.600th day, i.e. a period of about five months'.*¹¹

Thus there is ample time for the waters, having peaked **during** the 150 day period, to then have receded to the point where, five months on from the Flood's commencement (Genesis 7:11; 8:4), upper Ararat was both visible, and dry enough to receive the ark. In fact, if the combined NIV, RSV, KJV, LXX, JFB etc. reading is correct — there being, as we have seen, sound internal reasons for

accepting that it *is* — then it is not merely optional, but **required** that there must have been higher mountains than Ararat during the Flood, since the waters, having covered them to *'more than twenty feet'* (Gen 7:19), then *'continually subsided'* down to Ararat's level by the 150th day. They *'were actually falling well before the period elapsed, or else the ark would not have grounded on 17.7.600th. The waters appeared to be triumphing through this time. In reality, however, the stormy wind was bringing Noah's salvation'.*¹¹

Consistent with this, we find earth's highest peak, Mount Everest, to this day not only exhibiting marine fossils *at every level*,¹¹ but also with spectacular evidence of *parallel sedimentary strata*, especially from an elevation of 8,300 m upwards to the summit.¹³ Likewise its Himalayan neighbour, Lhotse (8,501 m), with its myriad sedimentary upper level layers, all so horizontal that one could be excused for thinking they were looking at a cross-section of Grand Canyon!¹⁴

The obvious question that arises is this. If Everest and the other Himalayas were the result of post-Flood *'mountain uplift'*, **how is it that their unmistakable sedimentary strata are still so parallel, almost like tram tracks, at the very 'roof of the world'**? On the other hand, if it was not the *'waters of Noah'* that covered them, **how else did their marine fossils get there — more than eight kilometres above sea level?** What is more, if mountains are really on the move today, as uniformitarianism is so desperate to believe (to avoid the full force of Flood evidences), would modern engineering projects like the eleven kilometre Mont Blanc tunnel even have been contemplated, let alone carried through to completion?

It is time for us creationists — and this is no reflection whatever on Dr Taylor — to stop grovelling to *'tectonic uplift'*. Before the sixties the very term was scarcely even heard of. So why should it now make such inordinate claims on our credulity? In

my view (and I write purely as a layman who tries to do his homework, with no scientific pretensions), it heads a trio of unproven assumptions — *'ice age'* theory and *'global warming'*¹⁵ comprising the motley crew — which many of us have carried over as baggage from the world. At the very least, a reappraisal would seem called for. The evolutionary mindset has a vested ego interest in not doing this, so let creationist scholarship lead the way, as it already has on Flood research and Design evidence.

Not that those who accept post-Flood uplift are *'uniformitarians and anti-miracle'*, as Dr Taylor makes me out as saying. But rather, as I actually wrote, that the uplift view represents a *'partial meeting of ways — however unintended (sic) — with the staple evolutionary explanation for Flood evidences'*. It is a Trojan horse in our midst, bearing the gifts of scientific respectability, but in the process ceding too much ground, literally, with no biblical or evidential compulsion to do so. Perhaps Dr Taylor feels comfortable with this. But I'd rather a plain reading of Moses' words, where *'high mountains'*, before the Flood, mean exactly that - **high mountains'**.

Brenton Minge
Brisbane, Queensland
AUSTRALIA

References

1. Taylor, C.V., Charles Taylor replies, *CEN Tech. J.* 13(1):70-71, 1999.
2. *The Time Atlas of the World, Comprehensive Edition*, Times Books/Harper Collins, plate 44, 1993.
3. The peaks proximate to Ararat, within a radius of some 140 or so km, are Aragats, Balikugol, Tenduruk, Kagizman, Ahta, and of course Lesser Ararat, with the 3550 m Hirabit and 3197 m Kisir not far beyond, Ref. 2, plate 44.
4. *Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament*, Matthew 17:1, Bible Society edition, London, 1960.
5. *The Land of Galilee That Jesus Walked: A historical map*, Corazin, Rosh Pina, Israel, 1985.
6. Footprints mark rare dinosaur find, *The Courier-Mail*, Brisbane, 3 August, 1998.

7. McNamara, M., *The Aramaic Bible — Rargum Neofiti 1: Genesis 1(A): 77* (emphasis supplied), Edinburgh, T. and Clark, T., 1992.
8. The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, with English translation by Brenton, L.L, Samuel Bagster & Sons, London.
9. Harkarvy, A., *The Holy Scriptures*, Genesis 8:3, The Hebrew Bible reads: 'And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.' Hebrew Publishing Company, New York, 1951.
10. Jamieson, R., Fausset, A.R. and Brown, D., *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments 1:101*, Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1982.
11. Wenham, G.J., *Word Bible Commentary 1:184*, Word Publishing, Texas, 1987.
12. Shirakawa, Y., *Himalayas*, essay by Fukuda, K., Abradale/Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1986.
13. Who got there first? George Mallory's last stand, *Time*, May 17, pp. 58, 59, doublespread Everest photograph, 1999.
14. Shirakawa, Y., Ref. 12, 'red' plate of Lhotse mountain in chapter 'Nepal Himalayas'.
15. See Ray, D.L. and Guzzo, L., *Environmental Overkill*, Regency Gateway, Washington DC, pp. 12-19, 1993.



Charles Taylor replies:

Mr Tompkins seems to overlook the fact that my article is not a scientific argument but a linguistic one. It sets out to ask what the original Bible says in view of conflicting translations. The 'confirmation' I ventured in my abstract was based on the context in Psalm 104: 9.

The question is, when did God set a boundary the water could not cross? Not at Creation, because the boundary was subsequently crossed at the Flood. So I figured it must refer to the Flood, since before then the water had not exceeded its bounds. Also, my title contains a question mark and nothing is said to be 'inviolable', as Tompkins

suggests. These statements in the Psalms are of a general nature and mean simply that there is a brake on the water levels. There's no guarantee that the littoral communities won't suffer minor flooding here and there or now and then. I just don't see what all the fuss is about, expressed in such an elaborate way.

My article arose from viewing the movie *'The World that Perished'*. I just wonder how many readers have seen it and compared the Scripture quoted there with what they find in their favourite versions? That's where the real controversy lies and it is, I repeat, a linguistic argument.

I do not wish to refute in detail the linguistic points made in the **Kulikovsky** letter, not that I have no answers but because (a) the semantics of Hebrew words are subject to disagreement among scholars, and (b) Kulikovsky's use of Latinate categories ('nominative', 'accusative' and such) for Hebrew is naive and inappropriate.

I would also point out that what he calls '*argumentum ad numerum*' does not concern numbers of versions but numbers of reputable scholars. There's no logical fallacy but rather a warning to tread carefully in the light of considerable scholastic support for the view I have suggested.

I have no need to reply to any scientific points raised by **Brenton Minge** because my article was intended to be expository and linguistic. My unfortunate expression '*rolling plains*' was intended to indicate undulating country without many rugged crags and cliffs, such as you find in Siberia today. I remember flying over those smooth and rounded mountains years ago.

I have no objection to a mountainous earth before the flood. However, the verse in Psalm 104:8 '*appears*' to suggest tectonic change. Note my question mark in the title, which my critics continually overlook, as if I am somehow laying down geologic laws. My prime purpose was to arrive at a correct translation of the verse and then see any possible implications for geology, in which I am no expert. I could not overlook the quote from *The World that Perished* and

the fact that many Bible scholars translate '*mountains rose, valleys sank*'. Evolutionists don't want to believe that our earth could be radically different before and after the flood. My earliest creationist book, *The Oldest Book in the World* (especially page 56) goes into this, so my article should not surprise those who read my books. I believe God did a radical thing at the Flood. I would therefore expect mountains to rise and valleys to sink, to prepare for God's second world order.

Brenton Minge says I ignored his four points, but No.1 is only a relative matter. Mountains are always higher than plains. No.2 is geological and I am not equipped to comment. In No.3 I ask, who ever claimed uplift (or dropdown) was '*widespread*' or whether it happened during or after the 'Flood'? No.4 is a matter for hydrologists and I have no right to comment. My main point was linguistic and I maintain that the normal translation for '*ya 'alu hatiym; yerdu beqa 'oth*' is '*mountains rose, valleys sank*'. Some Bibles may mislead by saying '*the mountains rose ...*' but the text doesn't involve every last mountain or valley. But it does suggest that the 'Flood' was very much more than masses of water. It was a *mabbul* (Hebrew) or a *kataklysmos* (Greek), and I'm angry with those who want to play it down. That's how evolution began in Europe, through the French philosophes.

Charles Taylor
Orange, New South Wales
AUSTRALIA

The coal-mass nonproblem

A number of critics of the Bible have alleged that there is too much coal in the earth's crust to have been formed in the Flood. Two German creationists, the late Gerard Schonknecht and Dr Siegfried Scherer, have tacitly accepted the