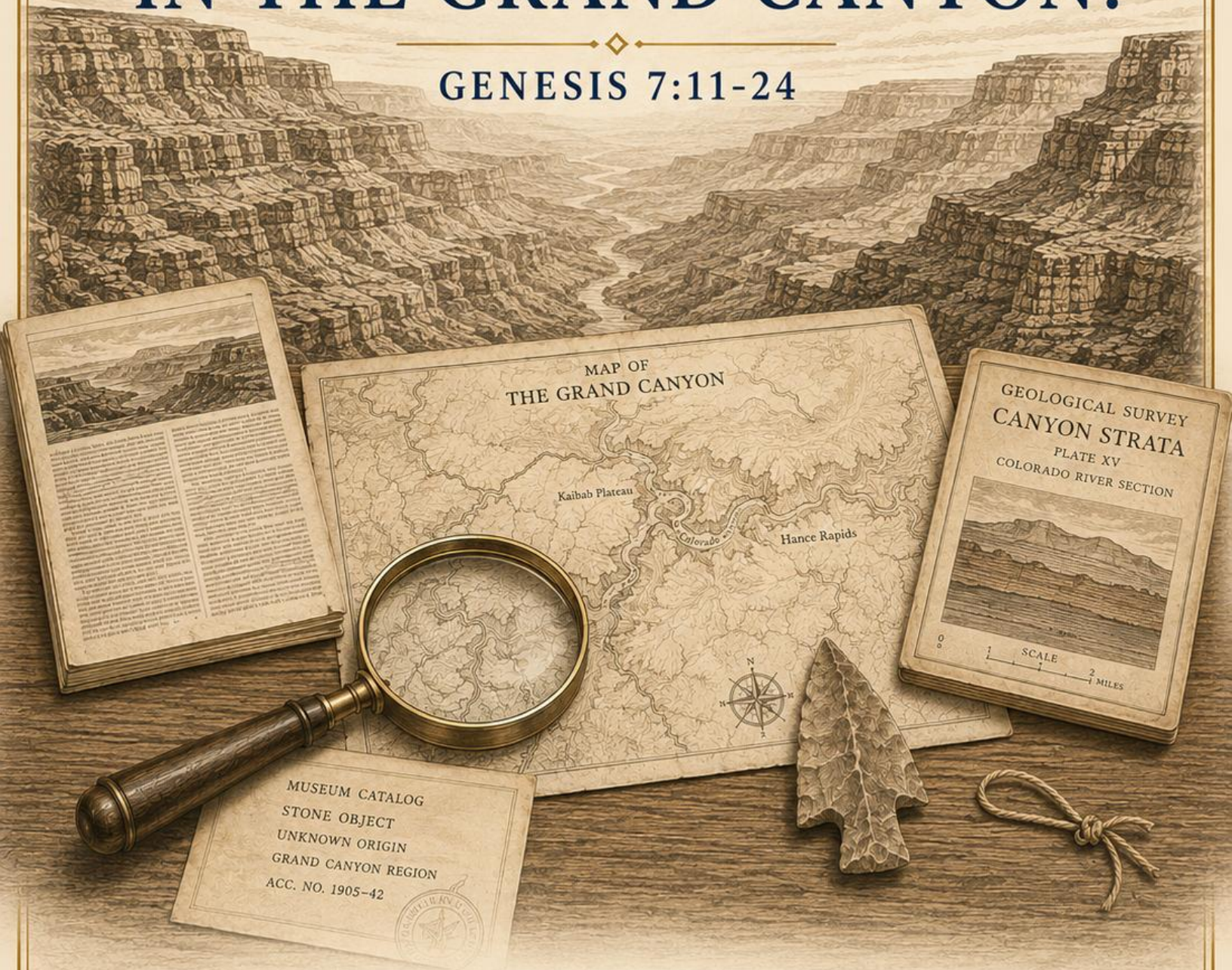


REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDY

WHAT STORY IS WRITTEN IN THE GRAND CANYON?

GENESIS 7:11-24



SERMON & PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Pastor & Teacher

www.ReasonTogether.Church

Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether you have been with us from the beginning, whether this is your first visit or whether you are still deciding what you believe, I am genuinely glad that you are here.

At Reason Together Church, we do not believe honest questions are enemies of faith.

We believe honest questions can lead us into a deeper and more careful examination of the Word of God.

Our invitation is simple.

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let us Reason Together the Word of God.

If you are visiting, please understand that you are our honored guest.

You are not expected to give anything.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to support your home church.

For those who call Reason Together Church their church home, there is a giving box available in the back.

We will not pass a plate and we will not interrupt the study to ask you for money.

The Bible tells us that God loveth a cheerful giver, so giving should never be produced by embarrassment or pressure.

We want you to be able to listen, think and reason without wondering what will be expected from you next.

There is also a guest card available.

We ask only for your first name and an email address so we can let you know what we will be studying next.

After the service, please remain for coffee and conversation.

The coffee is free.

The refills are free.

And around here, we like to say that the refills on conversation are free as well.

Those are just a few things I wanted you to know before we open the Bible together.

Now, let us take a breath together.

Some places are so large that a photograph can show us the view but cannot give us the feeling of standing there.

The Grand Canyon is one of those places.

A camera can capture the colors.

It can capture the cliffs.

It can capture the river winding far below.

But a photograph cannot make us feel the distance from one rim to the other.

It cannot reproduce the silence.

It cannot make us sense how small one human being appears beside those enormous walls of stone.

Our Reason Together question today is:

What story is written in the Grand Canyon?

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You for allowing us to gather around Your Word.

Thank You for the beauty and scale of the world You created.

Thank You for giving us minds that can observe, compare and ask questions.

Give us humility when the evidence does not fit what we expected.

Give us discernment when a claim goes farther than the evidence permits.

Keep us from dismissing something merely because it challenges our assumptions.

Keep us also from calling speculation a fact merely because it appears to support what we want to believe.

Help us distinguish what is known, what is claimed, what is inferred and what remains unknown.

Most of all, help us hear the warning Your Word gives through the Flood and the grace You have provided in Jesus Christ.

May Christ be honored in everything taught and everything received.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Psalm 104:24 says:

"O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

The first honest response to the Grand Canyon should be wonder.

We see layers of stone rising in walls above a river.

We see side canyons reaching into the plateau.

We see colors change as light moves across the rock.

We see a scale that no ordinary building can reproduce.

Wonder, however, is the beginning of our question.

It is not the answer to it.

A view can take our breath away, but a view cannot tell us by itself how it came to be.

The Canyon does not include a label upon its wall explaining every event that formed the rock and cut the gorge.

The evidence is there.

The interpretation must be reasoned.

As we reason, I want us to keep three kinds of testimony separate.

The first is what is carved in stone.

That includes the rock layers, fossils, faults, erosion and the present shape of the Canyon.

The second is what is printed on paper.

That includes geological models, museum records, maps, newspaper reports and later stories repeated about the Canyon.

The third is what is written in Scripture.

That includes God as Creator, the Flood as historical judgment, the fountains of the great deep, Noah's preservation and the warning of judgment still to come.

Stone must be observed.

Paper must be examined.

Scripture must be interpreted faithfully.

They are not identical witnesses and they do not carry identical authority.

A newspaper report is not inspired Scripture.

A geological model is not a verse from Genesis.

A rock does not interpret itself in words.

Proverbs 18:13 says:

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."

Verse seventeen says:

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him."

Those verses give us permission to listen before answering.

They also require us to examine the first explanation before treating it as the only possible explanation.

For every disputed claim, we will ask four questions.

What is known?

What is claimed?

What has been inferred?

What remains unknown?

That method will become especially important when we reach the story of Egyptian artifacts.

But first, let us begin with the witness under our feet.

What is actually carved in stone?

One common phrase can create confusion before the conversation begins.

People speak about the age of the Grand Canyon as though it were one event with one date.

It is not that simple.

The rocks existed before the present gorge cut across them.

The Canyon exposes layers that had to be present before they could be exposed by erosion.

Imagine a layered cake.

The layers are prepared first.

The knife cuts through them later.

The age of the layers and the time of the cut are related questions, but they are not the same question.

The analogy is limited.

Rock is not cake and a canyon is not produced by one clean pass of a knife.

But the distinction is important.

How were the layers formed?

How was the gorge excavated through them?

Those are two questions.

The Canyon contains great sequences of sedimentary rock.

It also exposes much older-looking crystalline rock near the river in portions of the inner gorge.

It contains faults, folds, unconformities, side canyons and a river that continues to erode today.

An unconformity is a surface where part of the geological record appears to be missing because material was not deposited or was removed before later material was placed above it.

Each feature must fit whatever explanation we accept.

Job chapter thirty-eight records God asking Job:

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding."

God was present when every layer formed.

God was present when every fault moved.

God was present when water first traveled through the region that became the Grand Canyon.

We were not.

That does not mean we cannot learn anything.

It means we should state each conclusion at the strength the evidence can bear.

Humility is not the refusal to reach a conclusion.

Humility is the refusal to pretend our reconstruction is an eyewitness account.

Once we separate the making of the rock from the cutting of the gorge, we can hear the competing explanations fairly.

The conventional geological account presents a long and detailed regional history.

In that account, sedimentary formations accumulated in different environments across enormous spans of time.

Seas advanced and retreated.

Rivers, coastal settings, deserts and other environments left different structures and fossils.

The region was uplifted.

The Colorado River system became integrated and the river incised through the rising plateau over millions of years.

Weathering, tributaries, rockfalls and continued river erosion widened and modified the Canyon.

This account does not simply say that a little river slowly scratched through solid rock.

It attempts to integrate fossils, sedimentary structures, radiometric ages, faults, regional uplift and drainage relationships.

If we disagree with the chronology, we should still represent the explanation honestly.

The Flood-geology account begins with a different historical framework.

It receives Genesis as an account of a real global judgment.

It interprets many large water-deposited formations, rapid burial, widespread sediment transport and major tectonic change within the Flood and its aftermath.

Flood geologists commonly argue that present rates should not be assumed to control every event in the past.

They point to modern catastrophes as demonstrations that moving water can accomplish enormous geological work quickly.

Large floods can remove sediment.

Dam failures can cut channels.

Volcanic deposits can harden and later be deeply eroded within observable periods.

Those examples establish capability.

They show that rapid erosion is physically possible.

They do not prove that the Grand Canyon formed by an identical event.

An analogy can open a question without settling it.

Flood researchers also disagree with one another about how and when the Canyon was excavated.

Some propose that receding Floodwater cut major channels late in the Flood.

Some emphasize enormous runoff as continents rose and ocean basins deepened.

Some propose that large post-Flood lakes breached natural barriers and released catastrophic flows.

Some combine lake drainage, preexisting channels, tectonic movement and later river modification.

The Bible is stronger than any one of those reconstructions.

Genesis records the Flood.

Genesis does not give us a map labeled Grand Canyon.

Genesis does not name a breached lake in Arizona.

Genesis does not provide the complete sequence of uplift, drainage and incision.

We should not turn a favored model into a verse Moses never wrote.

That honesty does not weaken the Biblical record.

It distinguishes Biblical certainty from geological reconstruction.

There are difficult questions that a Flood model must answer.

Why do different formations contain distinctive fossils rather than one completely mixed collection?

How were tracks, burrows, ripple marks and cross-beds formed and preserved within catastrophic conditions?

How were immense amounts of sediment transported without producing physical problems the model cannot resolve?

Where did the material excavated from the Canyon go?

What drainage gradient allowed the water to remove it?

How do proposed breached lakes fit regional elevations and deposits?

Those are serious questions.

They should be answered rather than mocked or avoided.

There are also difficult questions that long-age reconstructions must continue to examine.

Which features require rapid events even within a long chronology?

How did the river establish a course across or through an uplifting plateau?

How did changing drainage systems connect across the region?

What assumptions enter the dating of individual events?

Which dates measure a rock and which dates are inferred for an erosional surface or a missing interval?

Science advances by confronting questions, not by pretending every detail has been settled.

Our confidence in Scripture should make us more honest, not less honest.

Truth does not need caricature for protection.

Genesis now gives us a detail that ordinary rain cannot explain.

Genesis 7:11 says:

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."

Most pictures of Noah's Flood emphasize rain.

Rain is there.

The windows of heaven were opened.

But Genesis names another source.

All the fountains of the great deep were broken up.

The Flood involved activity associated with the deep as well as water from above.

Genesis 7:17 says:

"And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth."

Verse eighteen says:

"And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters."

Verse nineteen continues:

"And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered."

The Flood was not an ordinary rainstorm.

The water prevailed exceedingly.

The world experienced conditions outside the range of an ordinary season.

Genesis chapter eight says God remembered Noah.

Verse two says:

"The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained."

Verse three says:

"And the waters returned from off the earth continually."

The fountains were active and later stopped.

The waters prevailed and later returned continually.

What physical processes accompanied the breaking up of the fountains?

The text does not give us a modern geophysical diagram.

It does reasonably open discussion of crustal disruption, tectonic activity, uplift, subsidence, sediment transport and enormous water movement.

Those are model-level implications.

They are not words we should place into Moses' mouth.

The Biblical certainty is that the fountains of the great deep were broken up.

The strong inference is that the Flood involved profound physical change beyond ordinary rain.

The exact geological mechanism remains reconstructed.

Could activity connected with the fountains of the deep have contributed to conditions that formed layers later exposed in the Canyon?

Could Floodwater or water draining after the Flood have contributed to major excavation?

Those are legitimate questions.

Can we say Genesis explicitly identifies the Grand Canyon as the place where one fountain opened?

No.

Can we say one present creationist model has demonstrated every step beyond dispute?

No.

Can we say the Biblical Flood deserves serious consideration when we examine immense water-deposited rock and enormous erosion?

Yes.

We should not shrink the Flood to a local rainstorm.

We should not enlarge a geological model into inspired text.

God's judgment is not a myth made impressive by geology.

It is a Biblical event whose physical effects were as real as its moral cause.

The Canyon, however, holds more than rocks.

People have lived, traveled, stored food and worshiped within it.

The genuine human record of the Canyon is remarkable without adding anything Egyptian to it.

Archaeologists have documented habitation sites.

They have documented storage structures, kivas, pottery, projectile points and rock art.

Dry caves have preserved fragile objects that would disappear quickly in other environments.

Among the most unusual are split-twigg figurines.

These are small animal forms made by folding and twisting twigs.

They often resemble deer or bighorn sheep.

Archaeologists commonly date them to approximately two thousand to four thousand years ago.

Their precise purpose remains debated.

They may have been connected with hunting, ritual or another use that the surviving object does not fully explain.

The object is known.

Its complete meaning is not.

That distinction is exactly the kind of distinction we need.

The Canyon also remains culturally and spiritually connected with eleven traditionally associated tribes.

Their history should not be pushed aside because a more sensational story attracts attention.

Ancient does not automatically mean Egyptian.

Unfamiliar does not automatically mean foreign.

Restricted does not automatically mean suppressed.

Some caves and archaeological locations are not open to casual exploration.

There are ordinary and responsible reasons for that.

Caves can be dangerous.

Fragile sites can be damaged by one careless visitor.

Looters can remove an artifact from the very context that allows it to be understood.

Some locations involve tribal sensitivity and human remains.

Protecting a site does not prove that the site contains a different civilization.

Museums also remove objects from display for many reasons.

An object may enter conservation.

It may be placed in research storage.

It may be loaned.

It may be returned or repatriated.

It may no longer fit a particular exhibit.

That does not mean museums never make mistakes.

It does not mean institutions never protect reputations.

It means the movement of an object is not, by itself, proof of a cover-up.

To claim suppression, we need a named object.

We need an accession record or another traceable description.

We need a chain of custody showing what the object was, where it went and how its identity was established.

The same applies when an image or article disappears from a website.

Web pages change.

Links break.

Publishers reorganize material.

A missing page may raise a question.

It does not answer the question.

Among the genuine archaeological record sits a very different story.

On April 5, 1909, the Arizona Gazette published an article titled "Explorations in Grand Canyon."

The article attributed a remarkable discovery to a man named G. E. Kincaid.

It reported that Kincaid found an entrance high above the river.

Inside, according to the article, were passages and chambers.

It described a central chamber or shrine.

It described tablets or hieroglyphic writing.

It described copper objects, granaries and mummies.

It used language suggesting an Oriental connection and possible links with Egypt.

The article also associated the investigation with the Smithsonian Institution through a professor identified as S. A. Jordan.

It is easy to understand why the story survived.

It has everything a mystery needs.

It has a hidden entrance.

It has ancient chambers.

It has mummies and strange writing.

It has a named explorer.

It has a prestigious institution.

It suggests that accepted history may be incomplete.

It suggests that the evidence may have disappeared.

Before we dismiss it, we should allow the report to be heard accurately.

Before we believe it, we should examine what can be verified.

Proverbs 14:15 says:

"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going."

The prudent person does not believe every word merely because it is printed.

The prudent person also does not reject every word merely because it is unusual.

He looks carefully.

Let us apply our four questions.

What is known?

We know the newspaper article was published.

Copies of the article can be examined.

It is a real historical report.

What is claimed?

The article claims that Kincaid found the cavern.

It claims that a Smithsonian-connected expedition investigated it.

It claims that unusual artifacts and mummies were present.

What has been inferred?

Later writers have inferred that the cavern contained Egyptian artifacts.

Some have inferred that the Smithsonian removed those artifacts.

Some have inferred that records, museum objects and media references were deliberately suppressed.

What remains unknown?

We do not have a verified entrance connected with Kincaid's report.

We do not have a traceable original photograph of the chambers or artifacts.

We do not have Kincaid's authenticated field notebook.

We do not have an excavation report.

We do not have an artifact catalog.

We do not have accession numbers.

We do not have an Egyptian inscription recovered in a documented Canyon excavation and independently authenticated.

The Smithsonian reports that it has no record of the expedition or the participants as described.

That denial should not be treated as infallible simply because it comes from an institution.

Institutions can lose records.

Institutions can make errors.

People within institutions can act improperly.

But a suspicion that something could have happened is not evidence that it did happen.

The absence of records does not prove metaphysical impossibility.

It does leave the claim unverified.

The strongest honest conclusion is not that nothing could possibly have happened.

The strongest honest conclusion is also not that the Smithsonian certainly hid it.

A remarkable report was printed, but the evidence necessary to verify the report has not been recovered.

That is less dramatic than either extreme.

It is also more truthful.

The article itself contains another reason for caution.

Modern retellings often call the objects Egyptian.

The original report used a mixture of Egyptian, Tibetan, Buddhist and generalized Oriental descriptions.

Those are not interchangeable cultures.

An archaeologist would need an assemblage whose objects, writing, material and context could be examined together.

An Egyptian scarab purchased in a modern gift shop and dropped in a cave would not prove an Egyptian settlement.

An object without context may be ancient and still tell us very little about how it arrived.

The date of the object is not automatically the date of the place where it is found.

The material must be connected with a secure archaeological layer.

Its chain of custody must be known.

Its writing must be analyzed by qualified specialists.

The conclusion must be open to independent examination.

Repetition cannot replace that process.

If one hundred websites repeat the same 1909 article, we do not have one hundred witnesses.

We have one report repeated one hundred times.

Familiarity can feel like confirmation when it is only repetition.

What evidence would change the classification?

A verifiable location connected with the report would matter.

Contemporaneous photographs with traceable originals would matter.

Field notes or correspondence tied to real participants would matter.

Artifacts with documented context and chain of custody would matter.

Independent analysis of inscriptions would matter.

A lawful and replicable investigation conducted with qualified archaeologists and proper tribal consultation would matter.

Until such evidence appears, the story remains a historical report rather than a verified discovery.

Someone may now point to the names found upon maps of the Grand Canyon.

There is Isis Temple.

There is Osiris Temple.

There is Tower of Ra.

There are other names drawn from mythologies and cultures outside North America.

Those names are real.

Their presence on the map does not prove the presence of Egyptians in the Canyon.

Nineteenth-century explorers and mapmakers used names drawn from several world mythologies when naming prominent formations.

The name was placed upon the rock in modern times.

It was not excavated from beneath the rock.

A name on a map is not an artifact in a layer.

If a street in Hawaii is named after a place in Europe, the street sign does not prove that an ancient European city once occupied the neighborhood.

Names tell us something about the people who assigned them.

They do not automatically tell us who occupied the land thousands of years earlier.

Others point to restricted areas within the Canyon.

Again, restricted access is a fact in some locations.

The inference that every restriction protects Egyptian artifacts is not a fact.

To make that argument, we would need evidence connecting a specific restricted place with a specific assemblage.

Others say the artifacts were once displayed and later removed from museums.

Which artifact?

Which museum?

What accession number?

Who excavated it?

Where was it found?

When was it displayed?

Where is the catalog entry?

Those questions are not excuses for an institution.

They are the beginning of verification.

If a named object can be traced, it can be investigated.

If no object can be named, a general claim of removal cannot carry the weight placed upon it.

First Thessalonians 5:21 says:

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

That verse permits neither gullibility nor automatic dismissal.

It calls us to disciplined testing.

We should not trust every institution blindly.

We should not distrust every institution automatically.

We should ask for evidence.

We should preserve the boundary between what is known and what is imagined.

We should be willing to change our conclusion if better evidence appears.

Even if ancient Egyptians once reached Arizona, that would not move the Egypt of Moses to Arizona.

That brings us to another opinion sometimes connected with the Canyon.

Some people propose that the Egypt named in the Bible was actually located in North America.

They connect the proposal with Egyptian-sounding place names, unusual artifacts or the 1909 report.

We should state the proposal without mockery.

Then we should test it against the whole record.

Genesis 12:10 says:

"And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land."

The chapters around that verse place Abram in a coherent relationship with Canaan, the south and the places to which he later returns.

Exodus describes Israel leaving Egypt in relationship with the land of the Philistines, the wilderness and the sea region.

Exodus 13:17 says:

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near."

Verse eighteen says:

"But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea."

The Biblical geography belongs within a connected Near Eastern world.

That Biblical relationship agrees with Egyptian inscriptions, Egyptian language, archaeology, neighboring records and the continuous historical identification of Egypt in northeast Africa along the Nile.

The North American proposal does not possess an equivalent chain.

It does not provide securely excavated Egyptian cities in Arizona.

It does not provide the sequence of kings, administrative records, temples, language, trade relationships and neighboring civilizations that identify ancient Egypt along the Nile.

It depends upon similarities, modern names and disputed claims while asking us to move an entire civilization across the world.

We must distinguish contact from relocation.

Suppose a verified Egyptian object were discovered tomorrow in a secure archaeological layer in Arizona.

That would be important.

It would raise a serious question about ancient contact or travel.

It would not relocate the Nile.

It would not move every Egyptian city.

It would not move the Exodus.

Finding a Japanese object in Hawaii does not mean Japan was located in Hawaii.

It may demonstrate contact, movement or trade.

An artifact can travel while a civilization remains where its cities, language and history locate it.

At present, a verified Grand Canyon Egyptian assemblage has not been established.

The opinion that Biblical Egypt was in North America exists.

The evidence required to teach it as a viable Biblical conclusion does not.

That does not require us to mock anyone who holds the view.

It requires us to let the whole record correct an attractive theory.

The deepest question is not whether Egypt can be moved on a map, but whether we will move when God warns us.

Second Peter chapter three brings us from geological history and archaeological mystery to personal accountability.

Beginning in verse three, Peter writes:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Listen carefully to their argument.

Life appears ordinary.

The fathers have died.

Christ has not yet returned.

Therefore they assume tomorrow must be ordinary because yesterday was ordinary.

They interpret continuity as permanence.

They interpret delay as cancellation.

They assume the world has always operated without decisive intervention from God.

Peter answers in verse five:

"For this they willingly are ignorant of."

That expression goes beyond simply lacking information.

Peter describes an ignorance connected with the will.

The part of history they exclude is inconvenient to the life they want to live.

Peter continues:

"That by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

Peter answers skepticism about the future by directing attention to the past.

God created by His Word.

God judged the former world by water.

History has not always continued without Divine intervention.

The people before the Flood experienced ordinary days.

They ate.

They drank.

They married.

They worked.

They built.

They planned another day.

Then the world that then was perished.

Jesus made the same connection in Matthew chapter twenty-four.

He said:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Eating was not their sin.

Marriage was not their sin.

The danger was not ordinary life.

The danger was allowing ordinary life to convince them that judgment could never interrupt it.

They mistook routine for security.

We can do the same thing.

We build homes.

We plan careers.

We prepare for retirement.

We schedule next month.

None of those things is wrong.

But tomorrow is not guaranteed merely because we placed it on a calendar.

The Grand Canyon reminds us that the surface of the world has not always looked as it looks today.

Whether every part of its excavation is explained correctly by our preferred model or not, the Canyon confronts us with scale, change and the power of water.

Scripture gives that observation a moral horizon.

The Flood was not merely water moving sediment.

It was judgment upon human wickedness.

Genesis 6:5 says:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Verse eleven says:

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence."

The people were not judged because they used the wrong geological model.

They were judged because sin had corrupted human life.

The same human mind that creates music, architecture and technology can also create violence, exploitation and rebellion.

Intelligence does not make us righteous.

Education does not remove guilt.

New discoveries cannot reconcile us to God.

Peter continues in Second Peter 3:7:

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The same God who judged before has promised judgment again.

The Canyon is not a date-setting device.

Kincaid's story is not a sign that allows us to calculate the return of Christ.

The connection is stronger and more direct.

Past judgment tells us that apparent stability does not cancel God's Word.

Then Peter explains why the promised judgment has not yet arrived.

Second Peter 3:9 says:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

The delay is not evidence that God forgot.

The delay is mercy.

God's patience is not His absence.

God's patience is not His approval of sin.

It is an opportunity for repentance.

Noah lived during a period of patience.

The Ark was constructed while ordinary life continued around it.

Every day before the Flood was another opportunity to believe the warning of God.

Eventually, the door was shut.

Peter asks a personal question in verse eleven:

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

Peter does not ask who won the geological argument.

He asks what manner of persons we ought to be.

If the former world perished, how should we live in the present world?

If Christ will return, where should we place our trust?

If God's patience is giving us time to repent, what are we doing with that time?

If the Canyon reminds us that judgment is real, Noah reminds us that God also provides refuge.

Genesis 6:8 says:

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

Grace appears before Noah enters the Ark.

Noah did not save himself by understanding every physical process involved in the Flood.

He did not survive because he could explain the fountains of the deep.

He believed God's warning and received God's provision.

The Ark was not Noah's invention for improving society.

It was God's provision through the judgment that was coming.

Today our refuge is not a wooden vessel.

Our refuge is Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in John 10:9:

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

We should not force every detail of the Ark into symbolism.

The central pattern is clear.

God warns.

God provides.

God calls people to enter the refuge He has provided.

Our greatest problem is not that geologists may have placed an event in the wrong century.

Our greatest problem is sin.

The Bible says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

That includes geologists.

That includes archaeologists.

That includes creationists.

That includes museum directors.

That includes preachers.

That includes every person listening today.

God is holy.

We have sinned against Him.

We cannot build our way back into His presence.

We cannot reason ourselves into forgiveness.

We cannot wait for an archaeological discovery to solve our guilt.

But God did not leave us without hope.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into this world.

He lived without sin.

He died upon the cross and bore the judgment our sins deserved.

He was buried.

On the third day, He rose again.

First Corinthians 15:3 says:

"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."

Verse four says:

"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

That is the Gospel.

Salvation is received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

It is not received by proving the Kincaid story.

It is not received by rejecting the Kincaid story.

It is not received by choosing the correct Canyon excavation model.

It is not received by becoming more moral than the people around us.

It is received by turning from our sin and placing our trust in Christ.

If you recognize your sin and understand that you cannot save yourself, you can call upon Him today.

The prayer I am about to offer is not a magical collection of words.

Repeating after a pastor does not save anyone.

Jesus saves the person who genuinely repents and places his or her trust in Him.

If that is the desire of your heart, you may pray quietly with me.

Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I cannot save myself.

I believe that You died for my sins.

I believe that You were buried and rose again.

I turn from trusting myself and place my faith in You.

Please forgive me, save me and make me Your own.

Thank You for the gift of eternal life.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

If you prayed that prayer and meant it, please speak with me before you leave.

I would be honored to pray with you, answer your questions and help you understand what comes next.

For every believer, Peter's question remains.

What manner of persons ought we to be?

We should be people of holy conversation and godliness.

We should be people who love truth enough to state a claim accurately.

We should be people who are not threatened by an unanswered question.

We should be people who listen fairly to someone with whom we disagree.

We should be people who refuse to repeat an exciting story as fact when the evidence supports only a report.

We should also be people who refuse to dismiss Scripture because a modern model claims greater authority than it possesses.

Stone can be examined.

Paper can be tested.

Scripture speaks with final authority.

During the coming week, read Genesis chapters six through nine.

Then read Second Peter chapter three.

Notice the relationship between creation, judgment, patience, grace and the return of Christ.

When you hear a claim about an artifact in the Canyon, ask four questions.

What is known?

What is claimed?

What has been inferred?

What remains unknown?

Do not be afraid to say, "I do not know."

Do not fill every unknown space with the answer you prefer.

Allow a mystery to remain a mystery until evidence changes its classification.

Stand firmly where the Word of God has spoken.

If you disagree with something I said today, please do not leave with the disagreement silently growing into frustration.

Bring the question upstairs.

Let us open the Bible.

Let us examine the evidence.

Let us talk over coffee.

The coffee is free and the refills on conversation remain free.

If a question returns on Tuesday afternoon instead of Sunday morning, you do not need to wait until the next service.

Please contact me.

If this study has made you wonder whether faith and geology are pulling in opposite directions, I would be honored to talk and pray with you.

This church exists for more than a weekly presentation.

We want to walk together, reason together and help one another grow in Christ.

Let us close in prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word.

Thank You for the beauty and scale of the Grand Canyon.

Thank You for every rock, every river and every feature of creation that reminds us of Your power.

Give wisdom to geologists, archaeologists, historians and researchers who investigate the Canyon.

Give them courage to follow evidence when it challenges a familiar conclusion.

Protect them from exaggeration and protect us from repeating exciting claims before they have been established.

Help us distinguish what is observed from what is interpreted.

Help us distinguish a historical report from a verified discovery.

Help us respect the genuine history of the people whose lives and cultures are connected with the Canyon.

Where an institution has acted properly, keep us from accusing it falsely.

Where any institution has acted wrongly, bring truth into the light through real evidence.

Where a geological model explains the record well, help us acknowledge its strength.

Where a model leaves questions unanswered, give us patience and honesty.

Thank You for preserving the account of the Flood.

Thank You for warning us that the world has not always continued as it appears today.

Thank You that Noah found grace in Your eyes.

Thank You for the refuge You have provided in Jesus Christ.

Bring conviction and salvation to anyone who has heard the Gospel today.

Teach us to live in holy conversation and godliness.

Carry this conversation into our homes and into the coming week.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

The Canyon may leave questions in the rocks, but God has not left us uncertain about Christ.

Thank you for reasoning together with us today.

If you are our honored guest, thank you for trusting us with part of your day.

Please remain for coffee, questions and conversation.

If you need prayer, if you made a decision for Christ or if something in this study has raised a personal concern, I will remain available.

The conversation does not need to end at the door.

Aloha Nui Loa.

Commentary Introduction

The Grand Canyon invites certainty before it invites careful thought. One visitor sees millions of years. Another sees the scar of Noah's Flood. Another remembers a 1909 newspaper report describing an immense cavern, Egyptian-looking writings, copper implements and mummies. Still another points to Isis Temple, Osiris Temple and the Tower of Ra and concludes that the names must preserve an ancient presence. Every one of these observations or reports deserves to be placed in the right evidential category before a conclusion is announced.

This Commentary accepts Genesis as true history. It also refuses to use weak evidence as if Biblical confidence depended upon it. Scripture establishes creation, worldwide judgment, the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, the recession of the waters, the grace shown to Noah and the certainty of judgment to come. Scripture does not name the Grand Canyon, identify one Canyon cave as Egyptian or relocate Biblical Egypt to Arizona. Those further claims require geological, archaeological and historical evidence of their own.

The subject must therefore be heard through three records. The stone record contains strata, fossils, faults, lava, river deposits, caves and archaeological context. The paper record contains the 1909 Arizona Gazette story, institutional records, museum catalogs and later retellings. The Scriptural record tells us who created the world, why the Flood came and what the former judgment means for the present generation. The records are related, but they do not perform the same work.

The Commentary follows the permanent Reason Together method. It asks what is known, what is claimed, what has been inferred and what remains unknown. It treats conventional geology fairly without making deep time immune from examination. It presents Flood geology sympathetically without calling one reconstruction inspired. It investigates the Egyptian claims without ridicule, but it will not call absence of records proof of suppression.

CONTROLLING PRINCIPLE

The Canyon is a real witness to immense change. The newspaper is a real witness to what was reported. Scripture is the authoritative witness to creation, judgment, grace and Christ. Honest study keeps each witness within its proper authority.

Commentary in Brief

The responsible answer to the cover question is that the Grand Canyon records enormous geological change, repeated catastrophic events, long human presence and continuing scientific debate. It is consistent with a world in which water has performed immense work. Genesis gives Biblical reason to expect extraordinary geological disturbance during the Flood, including activity associated with the fountains of the great deep. Yet the precise relationship between the Flood and each Canyon feature remains a matter of reconstruction.

Conventional geology places the major exposed rock sequence within a long chronology and most excavation of the integrated modern Canyon within roughly the past five to six million years. Flood geologists commonly interpret much of the Paleozoic sequence as Flood deposition, then differ over whether the Canyon was cut chiefly by receding Floodwater, post-Flood lake breach, rapid river development or a combination of events. Both broad positions recognize catastrophe. Their disagreement concerns chronology, scale, boundary conditions and the integration of many lines of evidence.

The archaeology is already important without an Egyptian claim. The Canyon preserves habitation sites, storage structures, pottery, projectile points, rock imagery and split-twigg figurines. Eleven traditionally associated tribes maintain living cultural relationships with the Canyon. These confirmed histories deserve to be presented before an extraordinary foreign-civilization story is allowed to dominate the discussion.

The April 5, 1909 Arizona Gazette article is authentic as a published report. The expedition and assemblage it describes remain unverified. No authenticated entrance, excavation plan, field notebook, original photograph, artifact catalog, accession number or securely provenanced object has been recovered. Smithsonian denials are relevant archival evidence, though an institutional denial is not metaphysical proof that nothing happened. The present classification is therefore reported and unverified.

Biblical Egypt remains connected with the Nile and the ancient Near Eastern world by routes, cities, language, kings, inscriptions, neighboring records and geography. A future authenticated Egyptian object in Arizona could reopen a question of ancient contact or travel. It would not, by itself, move Egypt, the Nile or the Exodus to North America.

RESPONSIBLE ANSWER

The Canyon strengthens the case that the earth has experienced powerful water and catastrophic change. Genesis establishes the Flood. Geology tests how particular features relate to it. The Egyptian cavern remains a fascinating historical report without a verified artifact chain. The final certainty is not a theory or a hidden chamber. It is Jesus Christ.

1. Begin with the Word, Not the Wonder

Genesis 7:11

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

The text gives the interpreter a historical event before it gives him a geological model. The Flood is dated within Noah's life. It comes after the moral diagnosis of Genesis 6 and after Noah finds grace in the eyes of the LORD. The fountains are broken up and the windows of heaven are opened. Rain is part of the account, but rain is not the whole account.

That order matters. If the Canyon becomes the foundation of faith, every unresolved formation or changed scientific proposal feels like a threat to Genesis. If Scripture is the foundation, geological investigation becomes an effort to understand the physical history of the world God made. A model may be revised without revising the inspired text.

The same order protects the study from sensationalism. A dramatic report may awaken curiosity, but the Gospel does not depend upon Kincaid's cave. A Christian has no need to exaggerate an artifact claim to rescue Moses. The Bible should make us more truthful, not less careful, because the God who speaks in Scripture is the God of truth.

BIBLICAL STARTING POINT

The Flood is revealed history. The Canyon is an investigated landform. A proposed connection between them must be presented with a level of confidence proportionate to the evidence.

2. The Fountains of the Great Deep

Genesis 8:2-3

The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; And the waters returned from off the earth continually.

The fountains language prevents the Flood from being reduced to an unusually long thunderstorm. The Hebrew deep is associated with the great waters, the oceanic deep and the waters beneath the ordered surface. The verb translated broken up communicates violent opening or cleaving. The later stopping of the fountains shows that their activity belonged to a sustained sequence, not to a momentary poetic flourish.

A reasonable geological implication is that the Flood involved extraordinary movement related to the deep. Tectonic disruption, crustal motion, volcanism, changing ocean basins, sediment transport and enormous water movement may belong in a physical reconstruction. Creationist proposals such as catastrophic plate tectonics and hydroplate theory attempt to supply mechanisms, but they differ in their assumptions, heat problems, predicted signatures and treatment of the rock record.

Genesis does not identify a particular fault, spring or Canyon as one of the fountains. Saying that the Canyon may record consequences of Flood-related disruption is a model-level statement. Saying that the Grand Canyon itself was a named fountain opening is stronger than the Biblical text and presently stronger than the physical evidence.

The recession language is equally important. God sent a wind. The fountains and windows were stopped. The waters returned continually. A Flood model must explain not merely where the water came from, but how it moved, drained, transported sediment and reshaped a changing surface across many months.

NECESSARY DISTINCTION

Genesis establishes extraordinary activity associated with the deep. It does not supply a modern tectonic diagram or identify a particular Canyon opening. Mechanism belongs to geological reconstruction, not to the authority of the verse.

3. Rock Formation and Canyon Excavation Are Different Questions

The Canyon exposes an enormous stack of rocks, but the visible gorge was cut through rocks that already existed. The age assigned to a layer is therefore not automatically the age assigned to the modern Canyon. Confusing those questions makes both conventional and Flood arguments sound simpler than they are.

Deposition asks how sediment, minerals or volcanic material accumulated. Lithification asks how sediment became rock. Deformation asks when rock was faulted or folded. Uplift asks how land rose relative to drainage. Incision asks how concentrated water cut downward. Widening asks how tributaries, slope failures, weathering, debris flows and continuing river work enlarged the gorge. Each question uses overlapping but distinct evidence.

The distinction also prevents a common sermon error. The present Colorado River did not deposit every horizontal layer it now cuts. Nor does the conventional age of the oldest exposed basement rock mean that the visible Canyon has stood open for the same length of time. Flood geology must likewise avoid treating the deposition of all units, their hardening, their deformation and complete Canyon excavation as one undifferentiated event unless the evidence supports that sequence.

TEACHING ANALOGY

A layered cake must exist before a cut can pass through it. The analogy helps separate deposition from excavation, but every formation still requires its own geological analysis.

4. What the Canyon Establishes Directly

Visitors can observe laterally extensive strata, marine fossils in several formations, cross-beds, ripple structures, faults, folds, unconformities, caves, springs, lava remnants, river gravels, debris fans and a deep integrated gorge. The Colorado River occupies the inner Canyon. Tributaries enter from both rims. Archaeological sites record human activity in sheltered and open settings.

These observations establish deposition across large environments, burial of marine organisms, moving fluid or air, deformation, erosion, volcanic blockage, concentrated drainage and substantial removal of rock. They do not carry a complete chronology in their appearance alone. A cross-bed requires analysis of grain size, geometry and regional context. An unconformity shows erosion or nondeposition, but its visible surface does not by itself announce the amount of missing time.

The western Canyon also preserves evidence that lava entered and blocked the river more than once. U.S. Geological Survey research identifies several great outburst floods following lava-dam failures within the conventional chronology. These episodes establish that threshold events can release extraordinary water, move large clasts and alter local walls, benches and channels rapidly. They do not by themselves establish that one lava-dam failure excavated the entire Canyon or that every high deposit belongs to Noah's Flood.

The permanent evidence method keeps observation, measurement and inference connected but distinct. A rock is observed. Its chemistry, geometry or isotopic ratios are measured. A regional history is reconstructed by relating many measurements. The reconstruction may be strong without becoming identical to direct observation.

OBSERVATION RULE

The Canyon unquestionably records powerful water, erosion, deposition, volcanism and catastrophe. The duration, sequence and relationship of those events require interpretation.

5. Hearing Conventional Geology Fairly

The conventional account places the oldest exposed rocks near 1.84 billion years, many familiar rim-forming layers within the Paleozoic and most integration and excavation of the modern Canyon within roughly the past five to six million years. It uses radiometric methods, stratigraphy, fossils, thermochronology, cave deposits, basalt flows, river gravels, sediment provenance and downstream basin records to build a regional history.

This position does not teach that every grain moved slowly. Conventional geologists recognize large floods, debris flows, landslides, volcanic dam failures, river capture and rapid local erosion. Their distinctive conclusion is that these episodes occurred within a much longer chronology and that repeated ordinary and catastrophic processes together produced the present system.

Questions remain within that framework. Researchers have debated whether older paleocanyons existed, how the upper and lower Colorado systems became connected, how drainage crossed the Kaibab uplift and how much incision occurred in different segments. A 2026 Science paper reported an upstream Colorado River sediment signature in the Bidahochi Basin by about 6.6 million years ago and argued that lake spillover helped establish the route through Grand Canyon. That current development strengthens a threshold-event contribution within the long-age model while leaving questions about the proposed lake and exact overflow path.

Fair hearing does not require uncritical adoption. Numeric ages depend upon methods, initial conditions, closed-system behavior, calibration and model selection. Regional reconstructions may change when new measurements appear. The responsible critique examines those assumptions and asks whether alternatives make testable predictions. It does not dismiss every geologist as dishonest or describe conventional geology as nothing but belief in slow erosion.

FAIRNESS RULE

Conventional geology includes catastrophe. Its distinctive claim is that catastrophic episodes operate within a much longer regional history. Critique the chronology and its assumptions without caricaturing the processes it actually accepts.

6. Hearing Flood Geology Fairly

Flood geologists begin with Genesis as reliable history. They expect extensive marine deposition, rapid burial, continent-scale sediment transport, tectonic change, volcanism and extraordinary erosion during the Flood year and its aftermath. Many place much of the exposed Paleozoic sequence within the Flood. They emphasize broad strata, marine fossils high in continental sequences, rapidly buried organisms, large cross-beds and evidence of rapid deformation.

Their strongest contribution is not the simple statement that water can erode. Everyone accepts that. The stronger challenge is that geological rates are not always uniform and that unusual boundary conditions can produce enormous work over short intervals. Catastrophic sediment loads, rising land, deepening basins, channelized retreat and sudden drainage should be tested quantitatively rather than excluded because present conditions look calmer.

Flood geologists disagree about Canyon excavation. One proposal concentrates receding Floodwater into major channels late in the Flood. Another assigns large work to post-Flood lake breach. A hybrid model combines preexisting lows, tectonic change, spillover, river capture and later Colorado River erosion. Other models place most excavation after the Flood within a compressed post-Flood chronology. These disagreements are not a reason to abandon Genesis, but they are a reason not to preach one reconstruction as if Moses supplied it.

A complete Flood model must explain fossil order, trace fossils, ecological zones, cross-beds, mudcracks, soils, burrows, erosional surfaces, lithification, deformation, heat, uplift, water routing and the destination of excavated

sediment. It must distinguish Flood-year features from Ice Age, volcanic and later river modification. Pointing to one impressive photograph is not enough to integrate the whole regional record.

CREATIONIST HONESTY

The authority of Genesis does not rise or fall with one Canyon excavation mechanism. Competing Flood models should be represented accurately, tested carefully and kept below the authority of Scripture.

7. Catastrophe, Thresholds and the Work of Water

The Canyon is useful pastorally because it challenges the assumption that visible change must always proceed at the rate familiar to an ordinary afternoon. A stable-looking barrier can hold until it fails. A river can carry modest sediment most days and perform disproportionate work during a rare flood. A slope can weather slowly and collapse suddenly. The present landscape may record long preparation followed by rapid threshold behavior.

That insight supports openness to catastrophe without deciding every chronological question. A local outburst flood demonstrates rapid local work. It does not automatically establish global causation. Conversely, recognition that a gorge was later modified by ordinary river flow does not prove that its initiation was slow. The right question is what a specific event predicts about gradient, discharge, sediment size, erosion surfaces and downstream deposits.

The Genesis Flood supplies boundary conditions unlike ordinary rainfall. The fountains, prevailing waters, covering of the high hills and continuing recession describe a world-scale judgment. That Biblical history makes extraordinary geological work expected. Yet the sermon must resist turning expectation into a site-specific proof before the regional evidence has been integrated.

PROPORTIONAL CONCLUSION

Catastrophic water can perform immense work rapidly. The Grand Canyon contains evidence of catastrophic episodes. The extent to which one or more such episodes initiated or enlarged the complete Canyon remains a model question.

8. The Genuine Archaeology of the Canyon

The Canyon is not an empty geological monument waiting for a foreign civilization to make it interesting. National Park Service material identifies habitation rooms, kivas, storage structures, pottery, projectile points, tools, ornaments, rock imagery, food remains and many other records of human life. Dry caves have preserved fragile split-twig figurines made from a single folded twig. Their precise use remains debated, but their craftsmanship and secure context are real.

The park recognizes eleven traditionally associated tribes. Their relationships with the Canyon involve residence, travel, food, ceremony, oral history and continuing spiritual responsibility. Oral tradition is not the same evidential form as a stratified artifact, but it is historical testimony that deserves accurate attribution and respectful hearing.

This confirmed record supplies an ethical guardrail. A mysterious foreign civilization must never be introduced by implying that sophisticated objects or construction could not be Indigenous. Human beings made in the image of God are capable of observation, invention, organization and art. Archaeological interpretation must be governed by context, not by an assumption that excellence requires an outsider.

Restrictions on caves and archaeological sites have ordinary and serious reasons. Looting destroys provenance. Public maps can endanger burials, sacred places, fragile deposits, wildlife habitat and visitors. Controlled access is not evidence that every closed cave contains a hidden civilization. The proper research path is lawful documentation, tribal consultation and protection of contextual evidence.

ETHICAL GUARDRAIL

Present the Canyon's confirmed Indigenous history before extraordinary foreign claims. Mystery must not erase people whose presence, skill and continuing relationship are actually documented.

9. What the 1909 Arizona Gazette Article Actually Says

On April 5, 1909 the Arizona Gazette printed an article titled “Explorations in Grand Canyon.” It described an immense cavern and an ancient people said to have migrated from the Orient. The report credited G. E. Kincaid or Kinkaid with discovering a high entrance during a river journey. It named a Smithsonian-connected professor, S. A. Jordan, as the director of later work.

The story described long passageways, chambers, a central shrine, a seated figure, ventilation, copper implements, pottery, granaries, tablets or hieroglyphic writings and rows of mummies. Its cultural language moved among Egyptian, Tibetan, Buddhist and generalized Oriental comparisons. That mixture is important because resemblance is not the same as professional cultural identification.

The article is a primary source for one secure fact: this claim was printed in 1909. It is not a primary archaeological record of the reported cavern. It supplies no byline, measured excavation plan, artifact plates, provenance log, field notebook or independent field report. Reported photography is mentioned, yet no authenticated original images have surfaced. No securely identified Smithsonian archaeologist or expedition file matching the story has been recovered.

Later books, videos, broadcasts and websites frequently repeat the same article. Repetition can create an illusion of many witnesses even when later accounts derive from one report. A source adds independent support only when it contributes a new photograph, archive record, witness, location, object or specialist analysis. Otherwise it documents the spread of the story rather than the reported event.

SOURCE RULE

The newspaper proves that a remarkable story was published. It does not by itself prove that the reported expedition, cavern or artifacts existed. One hundred retellings of one article remain one report retold one hundred times.

10. The Alleged Egyptian Assemblage

Each alleged object must be tested separately. Hieroglyphic tablets require an image or original object, excavation context and a qualified reading. Mummies require human remains, dating, biological analysis and a documented recovery record. Copper tools require cataloged objects, alloy analysis, manufacturing study and provenance. Granaries require botanical samples, dating and location records. A seated figure requires photographs, measurements and iconographic analysis.

At present, the recoverable evidence for these claims is the newspaper description and later repetition. No publicly authenticated catalog number, accession record, artifact photograph or secure chain of custody has been connected to the claimed assemblage. The proper classification is therefore claimed and unverified, not proven false merely because it is unusual and not established merely because it would be exciting.

The Smithsonian reports that it can locate no records of Kincaid, Jordan or the expedition as described. That denial matters because a large institutional expedition ordinarily produces personnel records, correspondence, expense accounts, annual-report notices, field notes and collection records. Archives can be incomplete and names can be misspelled, so denial is not infallibility. Yet failure to recover any predicted record across more than a century materially lowers confidence.

Absence must not be made circular. If missing records are called proof of suppression, then every failed search strengthens the claim no matter what is found. That makes the proposal impossible to test. The evidence standard must allow new primary material to increase confidence and persistent failure to locate predicted material to decrease it.

BALANCED CONCLUSION

A remarkable report was printed, but the evidence needed to verify the reported discovery has not been recovered. A securely provenanced artifact or authenticated field record could reopen the case.

11. Museum Removal Is Not One Category

Museums display only a small portion of their holdings. Objects rotate because of space, conservation, light sensitivity, loans, new interpretation or changing exhibit plans. Archaeological material may remain in research storage. Human remains, funerary objects and culturally sensitive material may be removed from public display and returned through repatriation. A label can disappear while the accession record remains.

Stored, loaned, conserved, repatriated, deaccessioned and intentionally suppressed are different categories. Each predicts different documentation. Storage predicts a catalog and location code. A loan predicts an agreement and destination. Conservation predicts treatment records. Repatriation predicts consultation and lawful transfer records, though cultural restrictions may limit public detail. Deaccession predicts governing approval. Suppression requires evidence of intentional concealment, false cataloging or destruction.

A generalized claim that “many Egyptian artifacts were removed from museums” cannot be audited until at least one object is identified. The necessary questions are concrete: Which object? Which museum? What accession number? Where was it excavated? Who handled it? What photograph or label shows it was displayed? What record shows its later disposition? Without that chain, the claim remains unsupported as a general allegation.

The study may invite listeners to bring a specific example for future investigation. Openness to evidence is not the same as repeating accusation. First Thessalonians 5:21 commands believers to prove all things and hold fast that which is good. That protects Christians from gullibility and also from bearing false witness against institutions or individuals.

CLAIM BOUNDARY

An object disappearing from public view is not by itself evidence of concealment. Identify the object, institution, accession number and custody trail before alleging suppression.

12. Egyptian Names on Canyon Maps

Names such as Isis Temple, Osiris Temple, Tower of Ra, Horus Temple and Cheops Pyramid are real map names. Their reality is often presented as if the names had to descend from ancient Egyptian occupation. National Park Service history explains a different and well-documented origin: Clarence Dutton and other non-Native explorers applied names drawn from world literature, architecture and religions to dramatic Canyon formations.

The same naming system includes Hindu, Buddhist, Greek, Roman and other mythological references. That broader pattern is decisive for what the names establish. They reveal the education, imagination and thematic preferences of later naming authorities. They do not establish that all of the named civilizations inhabited the Canyon.

Place names can preserve ancient history when independent evidence connects them to an earlier people. In this case, the names are evidence about the namers unless archaeology supplies the missing cultural link. Modern naming cannot be converted into ancient provenance merely because the selected names fit a desired story.

NAMING RULE

A place name is evidence about the person who assigned it until independent archaeology connects it with an earlier culture.

13. Was Biblical Egypt in North America?

The proposal appears in alternative-history teachings that relocate familiar Biblical geographies. It may be connected with the Kincaid story, Egyptian-sounding Canyon names, claims of transoceanic contact or the belief that ancient locations were deliberately reassigned. The proper response is neither mockery nor adoption. The proposal must explain the cumulative Biblical, linguistic, archaeological and historical record better than the Nile identification does.

Genesis 12:10

And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

Egypt stands in coherent relationship with Canaan, the Philistine route, the wilderness, the Red Sea region, Cush, Assyria, Babylon and Mediterranean powers. Egyptian language and scripts form a documented sequence in northeast Africa. Memphis, Thebes, temples, tombs, settlements, cemeteries, king lists, inscriptions, foreign correspondence and neighboring records overlap along the Nile. Geography, ecology and travel routes fit the same integrated setting.

No comparable North American route network explains Abram's movement, the Exodus journey and the prophetic relationships. No secure Egyptian administrative corpus, city sequence, royal archive or Nile-like geographical system has been excavated in the Canyon. Modern names and isolated similarities do not reproduce the whole Biblical world.

Ancient contact is a different proposition from civilizational relocation. People, objects and ideas can travel. A future Egyptian object in secure pre-Columbian context would deserve serious testing for antiquity, contamination, trade, travel or collection history. It would not move an entire civilization whose cities, language, rulers, neighbors and ecological setting remain integrated elsewhere.

COMMENTARY DECISION

The opinion that Biblical Egypt was located in North America may be described and tested, but it is rejected as a viable Biblical conclusion on the present evidence. Contact can move an artifact. It does not move the Nile or the Exodus.

14. What Other Christian Teaching Contributes

Christian sermons and teaching resources commonly use the Canyon in four fruitful ways: as an invitation to worship the Creator, as evidence that water can perform immense geological work, as an illustration of Flood judgment and as a bridge to the return of Christ. Canyon Ministries material connected with John Whitcomb emphasizes the worldwide Flood and Christ as the ultimate refuge. A “Lesson from the Grand Canyon” uses 2 Peter 3 to answer the assumption that continuity cancels judgment. Bethlehem College and Seminary material likewise connects Noah's Flood, the Canyon and Jesus' return.

Issues, Etc. preserved a substantial discussion of the Canyon and Noah's Flood with Dr. Joel Heck. Answers in Genesis, the Institute for Creation Research and Creation Ministries International supply extensive Flood-geology material with different emphases and internal disagreements. These resources contribute useful geological questions, illustrations and Gospel applications often missing from ordinary church teaching.

RTS-056 retains their strongest pastoral movement: wonder should lead to worship, past judgment should warn the present and Noah's refuge should direct the listener to Christ. It also adds evidence boundaries. It acknowledges catastrophe within conventional geology. It presents multiple creationist excavation proposals. It separates the authentic newspaper report from verification of the reported event. It distinguishes museum categories and tests the North American Egypt proposal against cumulative Biblical geography.

The recurring risk in popular teaching is to let one dramatic comparison settle an entire geological history. A strong sermon can be urgent without overstating a photograph, accusing geologists of dishonesty or implying that every creationist accepts one mechanism. Pastoral power is not weakened by careful labels. It is strengthened because the listener knows which conclusions rest upon Scripture and which remain under investigation.

RTS CONTRIBUTION

Retain wonder, catastrophe, judgment and Christ from the strongest Christian teaching. Add source dependence, competing models, claim boundaries, genuine archaeology and a clear distinction between Biblical certainty and geological reconstruction.

15. The Four Questions of Biblical Discernment

The permanent RTS method asks four questions because difficult topics often collapse when evidence categories drift. The questions do not eliminate disagreement. They make disagreement intelligible and prevent confidence from being borrowed from one category and spent in another.

- What is known? The Canyon exposes extensive strata, records major erosion, contains lava-dam flood deposits and preserves genuine archaeology. Genesis teaches a historical Flood. The 1909 article was printed.
- What is claimed? Flood models propose different excavation mechanisms. The Gazette describes a cavern and artifacts. Later retellings allege Smithsonian involvement, restricted access and museum removal.

- What has been inferred? Conventional and Flood researchers connect measurements to different regional chronologies. Advocates connect names, missing records and descriptions to an Egyptian presence or suppression.
- What remains unknown? The exact contribution of each catastrophic episode, the best integrated Flood reconstruction and whether any recoverable object, image or location can be securely connected to the 1909 report.

These questions preserve both conviction and teachability. Scripture can be certain while a mechanism remains disputed. A physical observation can be secure while its date is model-dependent. A report can be historically real while the event it narrates remains unverified. An institution can have ordinary reasons for restricted access while a specific future record could still challenge the present conclusion.

The method also requires fair opposing views. Conventional geology should be heard in its strongest responsible form, including its recognition of rapid events. Flood geology should be heard from serious advocates rather than reduced to rain cutting the Canyon in forty days. The extraordinary archaeology claim should be examined item by item rather than mocked. Fairness is not indecision. It is the discipline required before a decision is trustworthy.

SENTENCE TO REMEMBER

The Canyon may leave questions in the rocks, but God has not left us uncertain about Christ.

16. The Apostolic Destination: 2 Peter 3

2 Peter 3:5-7

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Peter does not invoke the Flood merely to settle an ancient geological debate. He answers scoffers who reason from apparent continuity. They say that all things continue as they were. Peter points to creation by the Word of God and to a former world that perished beneath water. The present order is not independent, self-explanatory or permanent. It is upheld by the same Word and reserved for judgment.

The Canyon can illustrate Peter's argument because it exposes a world marked by upheaval, burial, erosion and water. Yet the Canyon is not itself a date-setting sign. The 1909 story is not required to fulfill prophecy. The apostolic emphasis is moral and eschatological: apparent delay does not cancel God's promise.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Divine patience is not divine absence. The delay that scoffers use against judgment is the mercy that gives sinners time to repent. That is why a Canyon sermon must not end with a geological victory. Peter moves from the Flood to the coming day of the Lord, then to holy conversation, godliness and diligent readiness.

2 Peter 3:11

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

APOSTOLIC DESTINATION

The final question is not whether the listener can explain every stratum. It is whether he will mistake ordinary life for permanence, ignore the warning of past judgment or receive the mercy of God while there is time.

17. Noah Found Grace and Entered the Refuge

Genesis 6:8

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

The Flood account is not primarily a hydraulic experiment. It begins in a world filled with corruption and violence. It reveals holy judgment, but it also reveals grace. Noah did not save himself by calculating the fountains, dating the sediment or mapping every current. He believed God and entered the provision God supplied.

The ark points the Commentary toward the refuge offered now. Jesus Christ lived without sin, died for our sins, was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures. He is not one theory among many. He is the Savior. Geological knowledge cannot remove guilt and an authenticated artifact could not reconcile a sinner to God. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ.

John 10:9

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The deepest certainty in RTS-056 is therefore not the age of a formation, the route of a vanished lake or the identity of a hidden chamber. It is Christ. Rocks may challenge a reconstruction. Archives may revise an archaeological claim. The promise of God in the Gospel remains the proper foundation for the soul.

GOSPEL CONCLUSION

The Canyon testifies to a world that has not remained untouched. The Flood warns that sin is judged. Noah's deliverance announces grace. Jesus Christ is the refuge God now commands sinners to enter.

A Personal Response

This study should leave more than an opinion about a Canyon wall or a mysterious report. It should leave five questions before the reader:

- Have I mistaken the routine of ordinary life for proof that judgment will never come?
- Am I willing to test claims honestly even when they support a conclusion I prefer?
- Have I treated scientific knowledge or institutional authority as if either were incapable of error?
- Do I receive the patience of God as an invitation to repentance or as permission to continue in sin?
- Have I entered the refuge God has provided in Jesus Christ?

If you recognize that you have sinned and cannot save yourself, turn to Jesus Christ. A prayer does not save through the repetition of words. Christ saves the person who genuinely repents and trusts Him. You may speak honestly to Him:

PRAYER OF FAITH

Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and cannot save myself. I believe You died for my sins, were buried and rose again. I turn from trusting myself and place my faith in You. Please forgive me, save me and make me Your own. In Jesus' name, Amen.

If you have trusted Christ or if this study has raised questions, please speak with Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley. Reason Together Church exists so those questions can be opened with the Bible, examined patiently and discussed without fear.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for creating the heavens and the earth and for preserving Your Word. Thank You for revealing judgment, grace and the refuge You provide. Give us courage to stand where Scripture has spoken and humility where our reconstructions remain incomplete. Protect us from gullibility, pride and false accusation. Help

scientists, archaeologists, historians and pastors to handle evidence truthfully. Teach us not to mistake Your patience for Your absence. Bring every reader to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and make us diligent in holy conversation and godliness as we await His return. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Commentary Conclusion

The Grand Canyon is consistent with a world shaped by immense water and catastrophic change. Its strata, fossils, erosion, volcanic history, river deposits and archaeological sites record many events that require patient integration. Genesis supplies the authoritative history of a worldwide Flood involving both rain and the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep. That Biblical account warrants serious catastrophic reconstruction, but it does not identify the Canyon itself as a fountain or make one creationist mechanism inspired.

Conventional geology offers a detailed long-age reconstruction and recognizes substantial catastrophe within it. Flood geology offers a Biblical starting history and challenges assumptions about rates, scale and boundary conditions. Both should be represented accurately. Neither should be reduced to a slogan. The difference between deposition and excavation, the quantity of water, the route of drainage, the chronology of uplift and the destination of sediment remain central tests for every model.

The Egyptian-cavern story remains a real 1909 newspaper report without a verified entrance, field record or artifact chain. Smithsonian denials lower confidence but do not prove metaphysical impossibility. Restricted sites and removed exhibits have ordinary legal, ethical and curatorial explanations that must be excluded before suppression is alleged. Egyptian-themed place names document later naming practices. Biblical Egypt remains securely integrated with the Nile and the ancient Near Eastern world.

The Canyon finally calls the listener beyond mystery. The world has not always continued as it appears today. The former judgment warns that God's Word does not fail. His patience invites repentance. Noah found grace and entered the provision God supplied. The sinner's refuge now is Jesus Christ.

FINAL COMMENTARY PRINCIPLE

Stone records immense change. Paper records a remarkable claim. Scripture reveals creation, judgment, grace and Christ. Think Biblically, speak honestly and enter the refuge God has provided.

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Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let's Reason Together the Word of God.