

4064 Pleasant Valley Road
Oakland, MD 21550
January 12, 2000

John A. Holzmann, Director
Sonlight Curriculum
8042 South Grant Way
Littleton, CO 80122-2705

copy #2

Dear John,

To say that this letter is long overdue is a serious understatement. I am very sorry and embarrassed about this neglect of you, and of other important communications. If you will take a quick momentary view of the first paragraphs of the enclosed form letter which I am sending to a few of my friends and colleagues, you will perhaps understand better about my delay in writing you.

The last time we talked on the phone I promised to obtain, from George Lambert, the source and date of the derogatory comments which Ken Ham made about you, by name--and send them to you. George no longer had a copy of the statement (which he had read to me earlier on the phone), but he told me that it was from a Ken Ham article in the Summer 1999 issue of the extreme creationist magazine Ex Nihilo, located "near the middle of the magazine."

I am also very late in thanking you for promptly sending me the 10 copies of the new printing of God's Time-Records in Ancient Sediments. We are of course very thankful that it has been reprinted, and we owe you a debt of gratitude for working so efficiently and persistently on it. We pray that our Lord will let your efforts be a help to many confused people. You will notice that the 6th and 7th paragraphs of the enclosed form letter give some information regarding the reprinting of the God's Time-Records book. And I hope you will be satisfied with my efforts in those paragraphs to honor your desire that we be careful not to give the readers an opportunity to criticize Sonlight Curriculum for promoting a "bad book."

Concerning the distribution of this book, we hope that you are not encountering any serious problems at present, and that the parents and students are finding it to be sufficiently readable for their background level. Also, we hope that the demand for the book will continue to be large enough to justify the efforts and expense which you put into it. In sending out the sample copies which you shipped to me, I am going to be careful to suggest that the recipients direct all quantity orders for it to you.

Yours in Christ's service,



Daniel E. Wonderly

DEW/ew
Enclosures

4064 Pleasant Valley Road
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April 25, 2000
and May 10

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Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of 14 April, with information regarding some oppositions which have arisen. I have very frequently thought of you and your work, and several times recently have realized that I must try to give you a friendly phone call to ask how things are going regarding my books. Now your letter has come with news that I did not want to hear, and I feel responsible to do all that time and strength will permit me to help. Yes, my health problems are still very much with me. The heart problem, mentioned in the form letter (dated Dec. 10) which I sent you a couple of months ago--with my much-belated thanks for the copies of the second printing--is about the same as in Dec. But the arthritic hip has rapidly gotten worse, to where we have had to schedule a total replacement of the joint to be done May 18.

So, the number of hours I can spend on the problem you presented is limited. But I do not think the situation is hopeless at all. Attacks of this same kind have been made on several of the evidences which the Lord has helped me to put into writing. In several cases I have been able to encourage those who wonder what validity the attacks might have.

The various claims concerning rapid growth of corals make a strong impression on people who have not had time to study the growth processes and habits of corals or to read concerning the growth of actual reefs. Since such claims were being circulated even before I wrote God's Time-Records in Ancient Sediments, I made (on pages 31-38) an extended explanation of the great difference between the growth rates of individual coral colonies, and the rate of accumulation of the coral material to form actual reefs. However, the young-earth critics have usually refused to even carefully read the explanation, or to check the documentation which I have always included.

By now you may realize that this kind of refusal is typical of the loudest of the critics. The truth is that they just do not respect or care about data which have been collected for the purpose of demonstrating great age. (It took me more than a year of experience and observation, while teaching at Grace College and Seminary, to come to believe that such an attitude could be really upheld by college and seminary professors.) Their typical reply is that such data can not be valid, because "it is tainted with evolution doctrine," and contradicts the Bible. Thus, they claim for themselves that they are not responsible to examine the data which we present to them, if it appears that those data were collected for the purpose of showing that the earth is really old. Numerous times in the late 1960's and 1970's I challenged Dr. John Whitcomb and his colleagues, Dr. George Howe, Stephen Austin (who published for several years under the false name Stuart Nevins), and others to study the drilling records which give the characteristics and growth processes of the ancient reefs. But they flatly refused, saying that that would be a waste of their time, because the data can not be correct, and thus Christians are not responsible to use it or even to read or examine it. For example, what could be more boldly careless than the rejection of the abundant, specific data

which I cite on p. 31-38 (and cf. p. 28) in the God's Time-Records book to show that the Enewetak Atoll was not formed by some mysterious rapid process that violates the natural laws that God established along with the creation of this earth? Evidently such persons as Dr. Jay Wile, Dr. A. A. Roth, and J. Verstelle just either refuse to read the evidences to which I refer on pages 28 to 38, or else they just don't care how much evidence exists. John, if you can find time to read even some of pages 31 to 38 you will understand what I am saying, and will realize that such objections as those of Wile, Roth, and Verstelle are not science at all, but just repudiation by simple denial of the existing data and a substituting of isolated, inaccurate and misleading reports. (For example, Roth's citing of the rare type of coral organisms which can flourish in deep water--but which are not found as making up a significant part of any of the great ancient reefs of the world.) And what sort of crude measurements used in 1932 for supposedly measuring "the growth rate at various depths of coral reefs" (Verstelle) could nullify the immense amount of data recorded in the Enewetak drillings? Whoever was making those crude measurements could not have been measuring reef growth. (See the section "Coral Growth Rates vs. Reef Growth Rates" on p. 31 to 33 of God's Time-Records..., along with p. 28 of the same.)

I would also hasten to remind the readers of my books that large amounts of additional time-indicating data have been collected at Enewetak and other outstanding reef sites since the writing of my God's Time-Records book. For example, see the enclosed, xerox page from Abstracts, vol. 2 of 3, 28th International Geological Congress: Washington, D. C., July 9-19, 1989, p. 2-14. (It has some ink notes and markings of my own on it, which make it look untidy, but it may be helpful. The page was made from my own set of the abstracts of that congress, so after attending a major part of that congress, I made some notes and markings in some of the volumes which were issued to me, as a registrant of the congress.) I had the privilege of hearing the oral presentation of this paper on new field research regarding the disconformities which are present in the Enewetak Atoll. Even though the authors (Halley and Ludwig) used some strontium-isotope dating for parts of that reef, the young-earth critics who refuse to accept radiometric dating will soon notice that this new research in the Atoll contains much non-radiometric evidence for great age--just as the original research revealed large amounts of non-radiometric evidence (which the young-earth critics find much harder to deny).

I also must not neglect to strongly suggest that you and others who are interested in the evidences seen in the structure and growth patterns of reefs, should be sure to study the materials I have so meticulously outlined and documented concerning the ancient, buried, true-coral reefs which have been found and well-described in the oil fields of Canada, and of Michigan, ^{for this there is not only Chapter 5 of the God's Time-Records book,} but also Chapter 9 of the Neglect of Geologic Data book. Much of that evidence is so strong that hardly any of the young-earth leaders have been willing to even look at it a little bit. They just hope that people won't find out about it.

In the paragraphs below I may say more about this problem of their attempted refutation by simple denial. But here I want to suggest that the best way to combat such propaganda is just to encourage those people who show signs of wanting to know what the crust of the earth is really like, with respect to age, to go ahead and carefully read the evidences which I have presented, and to pay attention to the documentation; and then ask themselves the question, "What should we do with this evidence and the data which obviously support it?"

You should also warn people that one of the most common methods of denying the data is to cite a supposedly analogous structure or process in nature, to compare with the structure or processes which we have cited as evidence. The second item listed from the critics in your letter (J. E. Maragos, et al., "Tropical Cyclone...")

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Another important principle to keep in mind is the fact that some parts of geologic formations (using "formations" in the most common geologic sense of the word) were formed rapidly by sediment gravity flows--down along an under-water marine slope. These and other similar rapid-deposition activities were (and still are) formed by seismic disturbances on the sea floor or on land near the coasts. Young-earth proponents often point to these and tell their untrained followers that this shows that all geologic formations could have been formed rapidly. This is of course nonsense, because there are so many good ways (both non-radiometric and radiometric) to distinguish between slow and rapid deposition, and to determine the approximate length of time which was required for the deposition and maturation of a given layer or series of layers of rock. One of these methods is of course the identification of long-extinct genera and species of fossils in most deep petroleum well-drilling columns. (There is a lot of information on such deep-well stratigraphic columns in both my 1977 book and my 1987 Neglect of Geologic Data..., and, since I took great pains to include all important topics in the indices of those books, finding the material on stratigraphic columns is not difficult. Most such material is in Chapter 6, "Rapid Burial of Organisms and Sedimentary Structures to Be Fossilized," of Neglect of Geologic Data, and also in Chapter 7, "Fossil Distribution..." Of course young-earth leaders try to categorically deny that there is any objective evidence for great age in fossil distribution, but many evidences cited in those Chapters 6 & 7 can not be denied without showing a willingness to be openly irrational.

I hope you will find the above materials to be helpful in giving reassurance to those who wonder about the validity of the geologic data.

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