

When Your Faith Is Shaken

Are we tired of stories yet? Or should we get back to science? In this article, we will do both. We will have a story, a science discussion related to the story, and then another related story. Since we have had one story from the north, and one from the south, it's time to tell one from the east, or west. In this case it makes no difference which direction. Both stories take place half way around the world in Asia.

Story #1: I used to work for a company that built specialized equipment to be mounted on truck chassis. Our first shipment of equipment to Taiwan was an interesting experience for numerous reasons. We designed and built the equipment here in the States to be permanently mounted on a truck chassis in Taiwan with a 10,000 pound gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR). The dimensions of the chassis that the customer provided were perfect and the equipment fit the chassis like a glove. We were all pleased - that is until we stepped back and saw the springs all flattened! "Uh, does this vehicle have a 10,000 pound GVWR?" I asked. "Well, we didn't think that would matter," was the customer's response. "We can add springs," they continued. "What about the shocks, tires, brakes, frame strength, etc?" I asked. "We'll take care of that," was the response.

After a few more exchanges, they convinced me that they would drive to a truck modification facility that afternoon to modify the suspension. We drove to two facilities that afternoon. (Four of us crammed into this little Datsun truck.) Neither facility could possibly make the spring change for several weeks. (I don't think they even asked about any other changes.) After a long day, I finally got back to my hotel and noticed that the pictures on the wall were all crooked; very crooked. "That's strange," I thought, as I straightened them.

The next day we drove all day from one truck garage to another. In every case, "Not for several weeks," was always the response. "What a wasted day," I thought, as I got back to my hotel. As I returned to my room, I noticed that the pictures were all crooked again. "What sloppy house keeping," I thought. Oh, well. Later that evening, I was sitting in a comfortable chair reading a book when I suddenly felt slightly motion sick. As I looked up, the mystery of the crooked pictures was quickly solved! The chandelier and all the pictures were swinging wildly from side to side! Ah - EARTHQUAKE!

The next day at work (while driving around again) they informed me that we actually had numerous earthquakes in the past two days! Three had a magnitude of 5.5 - 6.0 on the Richter scale. We didn't feel the first ones since we were driving around in that truck! Fortunately there was no major damage. Nothing like the damage they recently experienced.

Science Lesson: Have you ever wondered why places like Taiwan, Japan, and California have so many earthquakes and we hardly ever have any here on the east coast? Dr. John Baumgardner of Los Alamos Laboratories may have the answer. His job is to monitor the motion of the earth's plates. He developed a computer program on a Cray computer (the fastest computer in the world) to predict plate motion, volcanoes, and earthquakes. Being a curious individual, he programed the computer and

- placed all the continents back together as one, (see Gen 1:7)

- drew fault lines in the relative shape of current continents, and
- started a complex activity called "subduction" out in the middle of the ocean. (This is a process where the solid oceanic plate breaks and begins to sink into the earth's molten mantle.)

As the program monitored and simulated this process, eventually all the continents, volcanoes, and mountain ranges had their current shapes and positions except the ocean floor was much higher, and the continents were much lower.

Surprise!!! For years, creation scientists could never explain how the sky could possibly hold enough water to flood the entire earth. But, IF God used this process called "subduction" to introduce the dust into the air, cause it to rain, lower the continents, and raise the oceans - a world wide flood would be eminent!!! Also, as the computer model continued, eventually, during the flood, the oceanic plates subsided and the continental plates became elevated due to continued tectonic upheavals. This motion, while covered with water, could explain the origin of the great faults, the bent strata (as visible at Siding Hill), and the "Rim of Fire" the regions with the most volcanic and/or earthquake activity! These regions of high volcanic and/or earthquake activity are fully consistent with the end results of Dr. Baumgardner's computer program!

Story #2: I mentioned that the trips to Asia were "an interesting experience for numerous reasons." Perhaps more interesting than the earthquakes was a fellow from Singapore by the name of Steven. This story describes a real life conflict between a Christian family living in an ungodly culture. "Steven" is his Christian name. He is a believer now! We sat up for hours in the evenings talking about his faith, how he came to know Christ, and the trials of being a Christian in Asia. As you know, Asia is deeply rooted in "ancestor worship." For this reason, family ties are extremely important. Since they work 6 days a week, Sundays are set aside for the extended family. They are expected to visit with the family every Sunday. To miss this gathering is to dishonor your family. Dishonoring your family brings shame and a sense of unworthiness. Not only does it affect your relation to your family, but it also affects your livelihood. Your employer would consider you to be untrustworthy. You may even be fired! Professional advancement would be inordinately difficult in this extremely competitive environment!

But Steven had a Christian family now. He needed to attend church and fellowship with his Christian family to fulfill his spiritual needs. He knew his spiritual needs were more important than his personal, financial, or physical needs. But he loved his family and desperately wanted to witness to them. The tremors of a family earthquake were noticeable! He tried to walk the tightrope by going to church AND trying to get to the family outings, but this proved impractical due to the time required to travel from one to the other. The tardiness of his arrival greatly offended them. Steam was bursting from the family volcano!

What should he do? What would you do "When Your Faith Is Shaken?" This is my quiz question for this article! Think about it. What would you do? Pray about it. Pray for him!

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