

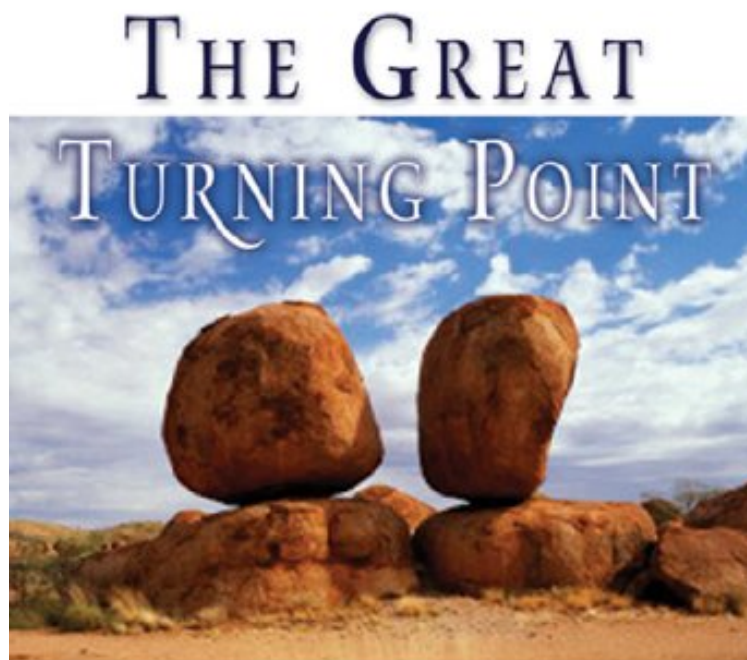
(Download free pdf) The Great Turning Point

## The Great Turning Point

*Terry Mortenson*

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Terry Mortenson



*"The Church's Catastrophic Mistake on Geology  
— Before Darwin"*

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**Terry Mortenson : The Great Turning Point** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Turning Point:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Philosophy not science By Birchtree Excellent book that shows that the idea of an ancient earth was driven by worldview assumptions not by scientific study. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Read By David G. Olson If You are looking for the historical background of Geology as it relates to Biblical Truth Read this Book and let the Truth be told 6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Fine Historical Overview By Donald D. Ensign This is an important book. It deserves to be read by those interested in

the debate between creationists of all stripe-Young Earth and Old Earth Creationists alike. Some OEC and secular evolutionists have charged that the Young Earth approach is relatively recent. They comment that the Creationist revival of the past forty years has been largely fueled by the recycling of ideas popularized by George MacReady Price in the early 1900s. This book conclusively refutes this myth. Terry Mortenson is well qualified to address this subject. He has his Ph.D in the history of geology from Coventry University in England and has done extensive research in the early literature by and concerning the scriptural geologists. The book starts off with a short historical overview of those in earlier centuries who believed in a straight forward view of Genesis that points to a recent creation and a global catastrophic flood. Early church fathers like Tertullian, Chrysostom and Augustine are mentioned as well as 17th and 18th century scientists like Niels Steenson (Steno), John Woodward, William Whiston, Alexander Catcott and others who advocated a recent creation and a worldwide deluge. During this periods others argued for a more ancient date for the formation of the earth and denied that the Biblical Flood was significant in producing much of the Earth's sedimentary and fossil bearing geological deposits. Mortenson is careful to set the historical context for what comes next. Through thorough and meticulous research that was the foundation for his doctrinal dissertation Mortenson has amassed a wealth of data that points out principled and intelligent opposition to the forceful tide of geological uniformitarianism that was sweeping academic circles in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This tide was largely stimulated by the works of James Hutton and Charles Lyell. This opposition was carried by those who would come to be known as Scriptural Geologists. The main portion of the book is dedicated to an examination of these Scriptural geologists. Most chapters contains a brief biography of each individual, how they viewed scripture and geology and their views of creation and the flood. The author goes to length to examine the qualifications each man had in order to write competently on scriptural and geological subjects. Since the science of geology was in its infancy in the first half of the 19th century qualifications are far different than they are now. Two criteria are used to judge the credentials of these scholars. One was a knowledge of the geological literature of the period and the other was field experience. The men Mortenson examines fair well in these areas and compare favorably to their early uniformitarian opponents. Some were competent theologians like George Young, George Bugg, and others were well known scientists like John Murray, William Rhind, and Andrew Ure. Each of these men wrote well reasoned books and other publications expressing their views concerning a recent creation and the global and catastrophic nature of the Genesis flood. While they were writing in the same general time frame (1820-1850) they seemed like lone prophets crying in the wilderness. They were individually opposing what they rightly realized was an attack on the foundations of Biblical Christianity and the Judeo-Christian worldview that had been dominate for centuries. They were not a cohesive unified movement and apparently had limited knowledge of each other's work and little if any contact. The last and very important section of the book "Generalizations and Conclusions" wraps up the historical significance of the Scriptural geologists. Such questions as what impact did the Scriptural geologists have at the time, how did their critics treat their work and the historical, and societal reasons why their work had little lasting influence. This section deserves special attention and concentrated study. One observation is in order. The scriptural geologists of the early nineteenth century opposed atheist thinking in geology and compromisers in Biblical interpretation. Progressive creationists, day age and gap theory advocates as well as secular naturalists were the foes the scriptural geologists fought against. While Darwin's articulation of his theory of descent by modification was still several decades future the notion of some sort of evolution (i.e. Lamarck) was present during this period. While the scriptural geologists were unified on the recent origin of the earth and the globally destructive flood they developed differing approaches on other issues. Such issue as whether the antediluvian climate was uniformly tropical, whether the flood accounted for most of the secondary and tertiary geological formations, whether God re-created new animal species after the flood, the precise chronology of the event in Genesis and so forth. So much of this echoes current debates between YEC and OEC and even within the YEC community. This book clearly shows that a literal, normative interpretation is a historically valid, and as YEC contend, is the correct approach to the early chapters of Genesis. This book deserves to be widely read. While Mortenson made every effort to make this a lay reader friendly publication is still rings with a labored and academic tone. For those comfortable with early 21st century journalistic "easy read" prose the author's use of often lengthy early 19th century quotes laden with passive voice and seemingly endless qualifiers make this book, for some, a challenging reading experience. My suggestion to the non-academic reader-read the first and last sections and as you have interest peruse the chapters on the individual scriptural geologists. This book has extensive footnotes, bibliography, scripture, person and subject indices.

Many people in the Church today have the idea that young-earth creationism is a fairly recent invention, popularized by fundamentalist Christians in the mid-20th century. Is this view correct? In fact, scholar Terry Mortenson has done fascinating original research on this subject in England, and documents that several leading, pre-Darwin scholars and scientists, known as scriptural geologists did not believe in long ages for the earth. Mortenson sheds light on the following: Before Darwin, what did the Church believe about the age of the earth? Why did it believe this way? What was the controversy that rocked the Church in 19th-century England? Who were the scriptural geologists? What influences did the Church contend with even before Darwins book? What is the stance of the Church today? This book

is a thoroughly researched work of reference for every library - certainly every creationist library. Terry Mortenson spent much time and work on this project in both the United States and Great Britain. The history of the Church and evolution is fascinating, and it is interesting to see not only the tremendous influence that evolution has had on the Church, but on society as well.