

Post-Flood Distribution

From a creationist viewpoint, the differences we see today in the numerous species of the world can largely be attributed to rapid post-flood changes that have taken place since organisms were redistributed over the earth. Redistribution must have taken place from the ark along three distribution lines.



L. J. Gibson's research on mammalian distribution patterns shows that many mammals exhibit distribution patterns consistent with an ark distribution. The various continental and geographic barriers that exist today must be considered to be post-flood phenomena. A good example of this is elephants. They began as one wider distribution of elephants, but were separated by the deserts of North Africa and Arabia into the African and Asian elephant populations we see today.

We can see a pattern of north-south mammal distribution in Africa, and west-east mammal distribution in Asia. However, there is also genetic evidence for migration across the Bering Strait. The antelope ground squirrel (*Spermophilus undulatus*) found in the southern part of the Altai Republic (south-west Siberia, Russia) and the American species (*S. columbianus*) found in the mountains of northwestern United States and southeastern British Columbia are chromosomally identical, but separating them and living on both sides of the Bering Strait is another species (*S. parryi*), which has a different chromosome number.

More difficult to explain is the problem of native animals restricted to a certain country or area, also called *endemic families*. Endemic families occur largely in three distinct orders: marsupials, primates, and rodents. The fact that most of the endemic

species occur in positions further from the ark position (86% of endemic families occur on the southern continents or on islands) may account for some of their strange features. During the initial distribution from the ark, small groups that became isolated from the main body, due to geographic barriers or other reasons, would have exhibited a high potential for variation given the challenges of the new environments and the low competition rates due to small population sizes.

The unique animals found in Australia present a challenge to this study. The accepted paradigm is that the marsupial populations of Australia represent a relic of the once primitive forerunners of placental mammals, but none of the Australian endemic families have a fossil record outside of the Australian realm. In other words, the unique forms of the living animals and of their immediate ancestors were already confined to Australia. Perhaps the answer lies elsewhere.