

slightly above the height of the tower. The second stage eroded the remaining area into a wide valley, through which the Belle Fourche River runs today.

## Interpretation

The evidence of the tower's composition, its columns and its erosion can be studied by anyone. What needs to be remembered, however, is that each observer approaches the evidence with certain beliefs that determine how they interpret that evidence.

## Evolutionary interpretation

Evolutionary geologists interpret the evidence surrounding Devils Tower as proof of millions of years of slow erosion. On an evolutionary timescale, the rock that makes up Devils Tower is a relatively young 40 million years old. Before that time, deep sedimentary layers were formed by advancing and retreating seas over a period of more than 150 million years. About 65 million years ago, pressures within the earth uplifted the Rocky Mountains and the Black Hills. Devils Tower was formed underground about 20 million years later. The land was slowly eroded away by the retreating and returning of seas, which took place over these vast ages.

## Biblical interpretation

Since creation took place around 6,000 years ago, according to the Bible, Devils Tower could not have formed millions of years in the past. One catastrophic event could be responsible for the formation of this natural wonder. This event was the Genesis Flood about 4,500 years ago, as recorded in Genesis 6–9.

There is evidence that dramatic volcanic activity accompanied the Flood, which would explain the intrusion of magma that initially formed Devils Tower underground. It is also likely that the earth's surface was dramatically changed as the crust of the earth shifted. This shift, causing new ocean basins to sink and continents to rise, would have created the mountains and valleys of the world. After the ocean basins began sinking, the Flood waters began to drain from the land surface. Initially, rapid erosion of sediments would have occurred in wide spans, cutting wide, flat surfaces across the landscapes. Eventually, the receding waters split into large channels which cut deep valleys and, in this instance, formed the valley of the Belle Fourche River and exposed Devils Tower.

## Consider it

If we approach the evidence with the idea that the earth is millions of years of old, we are left with inconsistencies. If Devils Tower had been exposed through slow erosion of the land, numerous things about the tower would be different. First, the formation would have most likely eroded completely away since we can observe it eroding even today. Secondly, the formation would have cracked and broken apart due to the constant freezing and thawing occurring each year over millions of years. Lastly, the top of Devils Tower would be drastically smaller than its base, as erosion slowly exposed more and more of the tower. These visible contradictions speak against the evolutionary interpretation of the evidence and confirm the biblical age of just a few thousand years.

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# devils tower

## in Wyoming



