

Who was Neanderthal Man?

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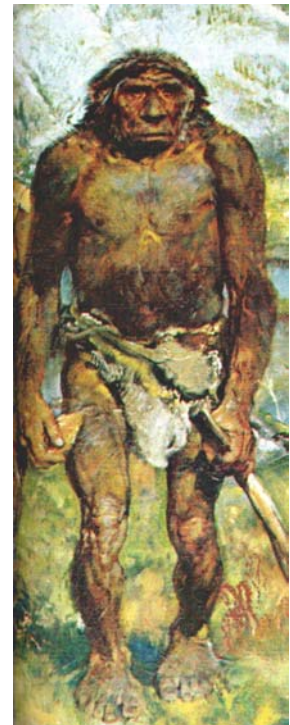
In 1856 the first fossils unearthed and recognized as Neanderthal were discovered (1). Many scientists after examining the fossils claimed that Neanderthal man was the missing link between modern man (*Homo sapiens*) and our supposed primate ancestors. He was so different that many declared him a new species (*Homo neanderthalensis*).

Since humans are evolving, which implies that they are improving, Neanderthals were often portrayed as very primitive and apish looking. Note the two drawings below (2,3,4). He was pictured as brutish because he was further back on the evolutionary scale. Modern humans, according to evolution, were more refined. These suppositions were not based on morphology and hard science, they were based on slanting the data to fit preconceived notions of how early man was supposed to look (5). As any forensic practitioner knows, it is impossible, from a skeleton, to identify; extent of hair covering, hair color, nose shape, lip shape, skin color, race. Often is not even possible to properly identify the sex of the individual. In the pictures below, and many others like them, what Neanderthal looked like is left to the imagination of the artist. Consider that most anthropologists only have fragments of Neanderthal bones to work with. It is very easy to see that their presuppositions can influence their findings (6).



← Figure 1. The picture on the left is based on the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal skeleton, discovered in France in 1908. It was published in *L'Illustration* in 1909, and in the *Illustrated London News* about a week later. It was done by Frantisek Kupka, based on the work of Marcellin Boule. The caption read, “An Ancestor: the Man of Twenty Thousand Years Ago.”

Figure 2. The picture on the → right appeared in *Early Man*, a Time Life book. It was published in 1965.



What are the morphological facts about Neanderthal? Have these facts been properly utilized by those who claim to follow the evolutionary scenario? Is it possible to construct another picture of Neanderthal that better fits these facts? As a scientist and a creationist, I believe that Neanderthal was fully human, a bona fide member of the *Homo sapiens* family. He was not an apish creature as he is often portrayed. These facts and findings can be harmonized with the

Biblical record. Before we look at these facts we must summarize what we know about Neanderthal.

Background

The following facts about Neanderthal have been compiled from two sources. The first is the evidence that we have via the fossil remains of Neanderthal that have been found in various places in Europe, and the Middle East. The second source is the Bible. The Bible has a lot to say about the people that lived before and shortly after the Noachian flood. These people are described in the first 10 chapters of the book of Genesis (all references are from the New King James Version).

The Fossil Background

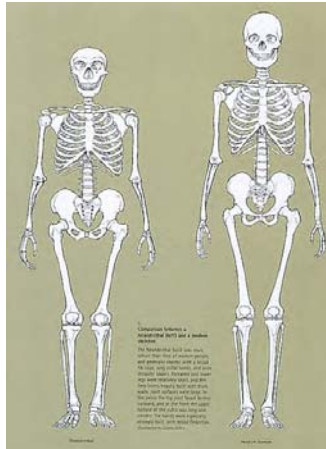


Figure 3. Skeleton of Modern human on right Neanderthal on the left. (Tattersall, 1999)

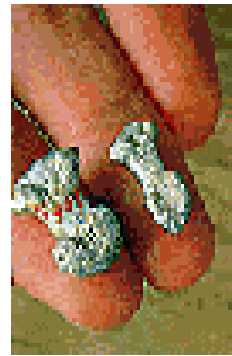
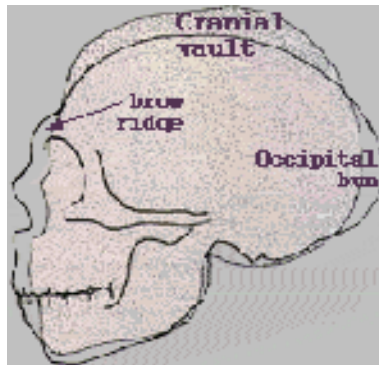


Figure 4. Neanderthal had a flatter skull, but it was longer and wider. The mandible was more robust than modern human's.
 Figure 5. Finger bones of a Neanderthal on the left and those of a modern human. Neanderthal had an extremely strong grip.
 Figure 6. Femur bones of a modern weightlifter on the right and a Neanderthal on the left. Note the thickness and density!

- Neanderthal was shorter than modern man (7). Although shorter he was a very powerful individual. In fig. 3 notice how much more surface area the knee socket on the Neanderthal skeleton has (8). This allowed for a greater attachment of ligament, tendons, and muscles. It also allowed Neanderthal to carry heavier loads with less strain. Neanderthal also had extremely thick bones. In figure 5 and 6 the extreme calcification of the bones is very noticeable. Notice the size of the hands and feet. Neanderthal was very agile and had excellent manual dexterity. The rest of the skeleton exhibits similar traits.
- Neanderthal skeletons have been unearthed with the voice box intact. These are called hyoid bones. Neanderthal's hyoid bones are identical to modern humans. Neanderthal had the ability to speak.
- The average brain size for Neanderthal is larger than modern humans (9). According to the evolutionary theory Neanderthal should have a smaller braincase.
- Neanderthal was extremely muscular and strong. Notice the following quotes:

One of the most characteristic features of the Neanderthals is the exaggerated massiveness of their trunk and limb bones. All of the preserved bones suggest a strength seldom attained by modern

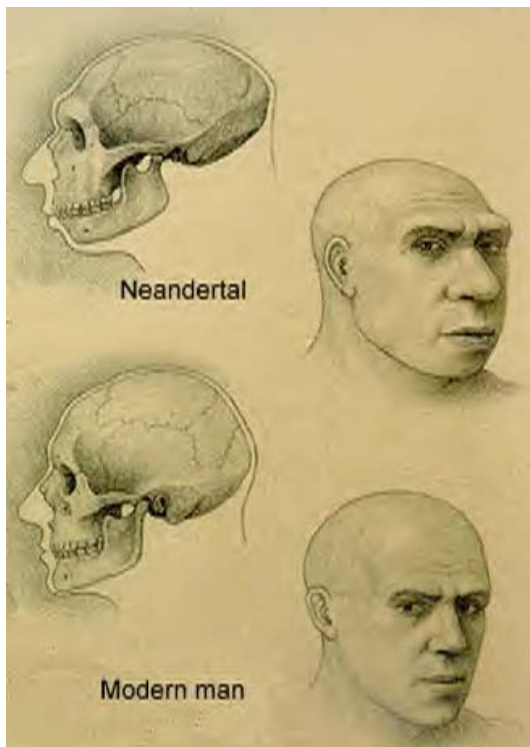
humans. Furthermore, not only is their robustness present among the adult males, as one might expect, but it is also evident in the adult females, adolescents, and even children. (10)

Neanderthal was far more powerful than modern humans. Whereas archeologist can experimentally duplicate the wear pattern on tools such as were used by people from the Upper Paleolithic (the people that followed Neanderthal...), the wear patterns on Neanderthal's tools cannot be duplicated. (11)

The evidence indicates that Neanderthals were people of incredible power and strength—far superior to all but the most avid bodybuilders of today. (12)

The vertebral columns of the Shanidar Neandertals are similar to those of modern man but with a marked tendency to robustness. The ribs are thick. The upper limb bones disclose a pattern of morphology close to that of other Neandertals of the Near East and of Europe. This pattern includes powerful shoulders, arms and hands built for grasping, pulling and lifting. The lower limb remains conforms to the pattern of Neanderthal man in that they are robust, powerfully muscled and in keeping with upright posture and bipedal gait. In addition it seems that the distribution of muscularity is such that powerful acceleration would have been possible in running, jumping or climbing. (13)

- The skull was very thick, note fig. 7. It had prominent brow ridges. It was flatter, wider, but longer. The longer cranial cavity had what is often called an occipital bun, a pointed end. This allowed more room for a larger brain. The teeth were larger. The mandible was more massive and did not protrude as much as the modern version.



- Culturally, Neanderthal was fully human (14). He buried his dead. He drew paintings on cave walls. He used fire and tools. He played the flute. He worshipped bears. He was cannibalistic. He cared for the injured and elderly. In essence he did the things that other humans have done down through history.
- In summary Neanderthal was more muscular, more agile, and stronger with a greater bone density than modern humans. He also had a bigger brain. He would easily overpower most modern day *Homo sapiens*. When archeologists describe Neanderthal they often use the word “robust.” This is a fancy way of saying bigger, thicker or larger.

↑ Figure 7. A comparison of the cranium of a modern man and a Neanderthal man. In the reconstruction Neanderthal looks very much like any other stocky, modern, muscular, well built person.

The Biblical Background

- The people who lived before and immediately after the flood lived a very long time! This had a profound physiological effect upon their body systems. This would especially affect the growth of bones. The average age of the people mentioned in Gen 5, before the flood from Adam to Noah (10 generations), was 847 years. After the flood, from Shem to Abraham (10 generations), the average age was 317. Today the average life expectancy is about 72 years.
- Man's nature had gone from bad to worse. The world was extremely violent (Gen. 6: 5, 13). Any fossils bone of the antediluvians would show signs of this violence in the form of broken bones, scars, and healed over bone growths. The Bible says that these men accomplished great deeds and that they were "men of renown." (Gen. 6: 4)
- The ecological systems of the Earth underwent catastrophic changes with the coming of the Noachian flood. These included; a restructuring of the atmosphere, changes in the magnetic field (15), great mountain building episodes and volcanic activity (16), the start of the ice age/s (17), the beginning of a meteorological cycle based on rain and wind systems (Gen. 2:5-6, 9:16), a geological restructuring of the earth with great sedimentary deposition of water borne particles, a great earth wide extinction of air breathing land dwelling animals (Gen. 7:21-22), the deepening of the ocean basins to collect the flood waters (Ps. 104:5-9).
- The nature of animals was changed. In the Garden of Eden, Adam was able to name all the animals. They apparently had no fear of man. After the flood this was a thing of the past. Some animals would kill people because God allowed man to avenge himself on any animal that killed a human (Gen. 9:5). Also the rise of Nimrod was made possible by his skill as a hunter, in other words he made a name for himself, by protecting people from the beast of the earth and their newly acquired ferocious nature (Gen.10: 8-10).
- The Bible says that God was going to destroy not only mankind but also the Earth (Gen.6: 13). When Noah disembarked from the ark the world was a completely different world than the one he had been living in.

Our Perspective?

What caused Neanderthals unique facial and skeletal characteristic? Evolutionist will tell you that since Neanderthal is an ancestor of modern humans then the morphological differences are due to the evolutionary changes that are constantly remolding our features. Is evolution the only mechanism by which these changes could have been produced? Many scientists disagree with the theory of evolution. If there is a simpler answer does it not make sense to examine the evidence? What I would like to do is summarize and present evidence from my own research, and the research of others, that shows that non-evolutionary factors and forces could have produced Neanderthals unique anatomical differences.

Neanderthal was not a combination half-man half-ape. He was fully human and was a full-fledged member of the human family (18). Although he carried this distinction there were some slight anatomical differences. I believe that these differences could be explained in the context of the events that occurred in the opening chapters of the book of Genesis. This included the events before and after Noah's flood.

Noah's flood was a major catastrophe that affected the earth. As has already been shown these factors affected all of the earth's ecological system. These changes in the ecological system affected the physiological systems of the humans that lived on the earth. Most modern day geologist and evolutionist do not fully comprehend the ramifications of the flood. The vast majority of these scientists follow the uniformitarianism principle as it relates to the events of the earth's prehistory. They believe that the "present is the key to the past." They will only accept as possible what is happening today. Since there are no earth wide floods occurring now there have never been any in the past. They have blinded their eyes to divine revelation. Since no one can prove with certainty what has happened in the past they refuse to consider any other position except their own. My assertion is that the earth's geologic structures and the biological system that we see in operation today can be fully explained in the context of Biblical revelation.

What were some of the physiological and environmental factors that produced Neanderthal? Before we address this topic certain groundwork must be laid. As humans we tend to view things from our own perspective. We consider it normal to die at about 72 years of age. We consider it normal to be in a constant state of battle with various debilitating diseases. We consider it normal to age the way we do. We consider it normal to go through puberty in our teenage years and be married in our twenties. We consider it normal to retire at 65 because our bodies are too old to continue to function. We consider all these things normal because this is the only way of life that we have know.

But consider the facts as outlined in the Bible. Think about how different life would be if we had lived in the world before the flood. What if it was normal to have good health? What if it was normal to eat foods that actually helped retard or slow the aging process? What if it was normal to go through puberty at 30 – 40 years of age? What if it was normal to be able to live 500 + years? What if it was normal to be able to conceive and bear children at the age of 100, or 200, or 300? What if the characteristic of Neanderthal morphology were normal? What if it were normal to have a bigger brain than you have now? What if it were normal to have a bone structure that was 20 –25% more dense than you have now? What if it were normal to have a well-muscled and healthy body? A body that could do massive amounts of physical work and do this type of work for centuries.

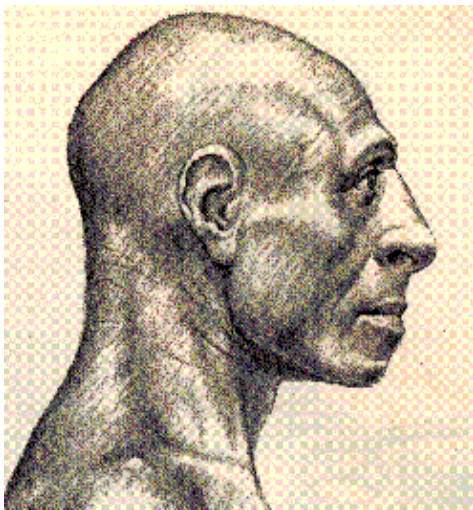
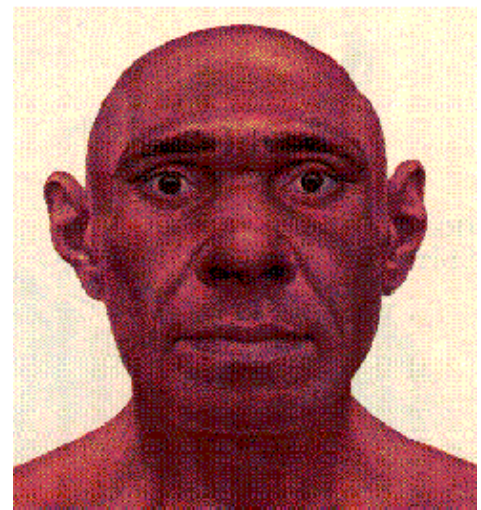


Figure 8. Compare these pictures of Neanderthal with fig 1 & 2. Recent research has shown that Neanderthal was a very modern looking individual. He was well muscled, extremely strong, and had a well developed skeleton. He also had all the cultural attributes of modern man. These drawings are the work of scientific illustrator Jay Matternes, from the October issue of *Science* 81.



What I am proposing is that we need to completely change our thinking about Neanderthal man. I propose that he is normal and we, modern day humans, are abnormal. If this is true, then in fact we have been devolving. We are on a downward path as a species. This goes contrary to the theory of evolution, but it fits nicely within the framework of biblical knowledge about our ancestry and our current path as a society.

Neanderthal Morphology

What would happen to a human baby that was born into the antediluvian world? Would it age and develop the way babies do today? My contention is that the Neanderthal characteristics were a physiological response to a human being living under the conditions as described in the early chapters of Genesis. There are several factors that we need to examine in our explanation of Neanderthal's unique morphology.

Neanderthal man was a direct descendant of Adam. He was therefore closer to the creation than we are. Adam and Eve did not suffer from genetic loading. Genetic loading is the devolution of our genetic material via mutations and alterations in our chromosomes. The Bible states that after Adam and Eve were created that God pronounced his creation very good. (Gen. 6:31) Adam and Eve had perfect genetics. They would not suffer from many of the genetic diseases that we have today because of genetic imperfection. After Adam and Eve sinned then death and decay was projected into the picture. The question is often asked where did Adam descendant get their spouses. The answer is that they intermarried among themselves. This would not have caused any physical problems because there would have been no genetic loading. When a mutation occurs in the genetic material it is usually recessive. In other word it does not manifest itself unless it is matched with another recessive gene from the other parent. Adam's closer descendants did not have these mutated recessive genes. Abraham married his half-sister. This caused no genetic problems. As mankind progressed (devolved in reality), then God had to institute marriage laws. By this time humanity had built up a number of genetic mutations and marriage among close relatives would have caused defects and diseases.

What caused these genetic mutations? Many factors cause mutations. Some include ionizing radiation, non-ionizing radiation and chemical carcinogens (19). Atmospheric radiation reaches us from the sun and some naturally occurs in the rocks of the earth. Carcinogen are eaten, absorbed, or breathed.

What could have lessened the formation of mutations in the past? There are many theories. One concerns atmospheric and magnetic changes. According to the proponents of this scenario an increase in the strength of the earth's magnetic field, through its increased shielding effect, would have kept excessive solar radiation from entering the earth's atmosphere. This solar radiation has been implicated in many chromosomal mutations. But the sun is not the only source of radiation. The rocks of the earth give off natural radiation. Radon-222 (Radon for short) is a radioactive decay product of uranium-238 and radum-226. Radon has been shown to cause cancer in humans. Much radioactive rock is buried below the surface of the earth. The flood of Noah cause large-scale massive tectonic activity. There were great earthquakes and volcanoes. This brought the deeply buried radioactive elements to the surface of the earth. After the flood there was an increase in the background radiation both from the sun and the new volcanic

deposits. It is interesting to note that the life span of the people mentioned in the Bible dropped dramatically after the flood. This would have been caused by the increase in the genetic malformations, which were linked to the atmospheric and geologic radiation.

Let us now turn our attention to carcinogens. Carcinogens are chemicals that we are exposed to that cause cancer. In the pre-flood world the transport of carcinogens would have occurred at a different rate. The book of Genesis states that the earth at this time did not have a rain-evaporation cycle. All of the moisture was deposited by a dew process (Gen. 2:6). This would retard the spread of any chemical. These carcinogens would not have a transport mechanism and would therefore remain outside of the diet of the people before the flood. Only in recent times, when chemicals have been concentrated and become widespread, has the carcinogenic effect of chemicals been noted. After the flood the meteorological conditions of the earth changed. Rain was now a transport mechanism. This allowed man to ingest more chemicals and trace elements than before. These newly ingested carcinogens would have had effects on the rates of cancer and disease. It would also have shortened the life span of people after the flood.

These shortened life spans would have caused vast morphological changes in human and animal anatomical systems as compared to organisms that lived longer. Once again we must consider that God's intention was for humans to live a long time. We are living in a cursed world. God pronounced a curse on the earth (Gen. 3:17; 5:29). This cursing of the earth affected the production of increased solar and ground radiation, carcinogens, hostile environmental conditions, a change in fauna and therefore lessened nutrition, less oxygen and reduced atmospheric pressure. All of these factors tended to lessen the life span of post-diluvian mankind.

Long-lived Neanderthals

Little research has been done on the effects of aging, above the 120-year level, on the human anatomy. The reason is obvious. This is the upper limit for present-day humans. The reason that limited research has been done on this field is the constraints placed on scientists by the uniformitarian philosophy. Since humans do not live past 120 years today, they certainly did not live any longer in the past. The question still remains what would happen to a child born into the pre-flood world when the life expectancy was in the hundreds of years? Would not the environmental factors extant at that time affect his growth and development? We would not expect to see changes in human's morphology.

Much scientific literature addresses the subject of skeletal and cranial shape changes that would occur as a person aged. (20,21,22,23). This research presents a convincing case that accounts for the unique Neanderthal morphology to the cranium and skeletal features. The main thrust of this research states that as humans age, the skull flattens, it becomes wider, and it lengthens. The pronounced brow ridges can be accounted for by the long term and greater pressure that the Neanderthal chewing would place on the teeth and face (24). Since the Neanderthals were more muscular and heavier boned, the brow ridges would become more pronounced in order to allow the greater stress to be absorbed. All of these features would occur to modern man if he lived longer and had a heavier musculature (25). In other words, Neanderthal unique cranial features were a result of non-evolutionary factors.

Another factor to consider is the nutritional factor. Some Neanderthal skeletons exhibit skeletal changes that are consistent with rickets. Rickets is a vitamin D deficiency. The body's skin tissue produces vitamin D when the body is exposed to ultraviolet sunlight. People that do not have the proper amount of vitamin D develop rickets, which is a bending and thickening of some of the skeletal bones. The Neanderthal population lived during the Pleistocene Epoch, sometimes called the ice ages. They would spend most of their time in caves. They would tend to wear fur clothing, which covered most of the skin. All of these factors would not allow enough exposure to the sun and would therefore produce rickets. The first Neanderthal skeletons that were analyzed all show features characteristic with rickets (26). Once again this is a non-evolutionary explanation for Neanderthal features.

Conclusion

Neanderthal man was a direct descendant of Adam and Eve. He was fully human and was a product of his environment. Neanderthals were larger brained, more muscular, extremely strong, and longer-lived than modern man. We must not let our preconceived notions about supposed prehistoric men cloud our picture of the proper understanding of Neanderthal man. Only when we consider all the facts can we see the complete picture.

Neanderthal man was not a product of evolution. All of the evidence properly understood supports the Genesis account of early man as described in the Bible.

Works Cited—Research Notes

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6. Marcellin Boule's reconstruction of the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neanderthal skeleton was very biased. This evaluation was done at the turn of the century when Darwin's theory had come to acceptance by most of academia. It was expected that fossil men would be more primitive and therefore they were interpreted as such. In the book *Guide to Fossil Man* by M. H. Day, an evaluation of Boule's evaluation, quoted below, is given on page 34. Day was overly diplomatic in his assessment of the situation.

In view of the features of the post-cranial skeleton, Boule suggested that the stance of La Chapelle man (Neanderthal man) was stooping with flexed hips and knees and jutting head carriage, and his undoubtedly bipedal gait imperfect and slouching. Examination of the skeleton (Arambourg, 1955; Cave and Straus, 1957; Patte, 1955; Dastugue and de Lumley 1976) has shown that there is evidence of gross deforming osteoarthritis present in the specimen and that Boule's reconstruction is faulty in a number of respects. The reasoning behind Boule's conclusion concerning the stance and gait of the La Chapelle Man, as well as his conclusion that the Neanderthals represent an extinct side branch, has been explained by Hammond (1982). He advances the view that these conclusions owe more to preconceived notions than to a dispassionate anatomical appraisal. Comparison with other Neanderthal remains and a wider range of modern skeletal material has shown that many of the features recognized as being characteristically Neanderthal fall within the range of modern human skeletal variation. Whilst Cave and Strauss (1957) do not deny the distinctive morphological characters of Neanderthal man, they suggest that he stood and walked as does modern man.

A full re-evaluation of the La Chapelle skeleton has suggested that, whilst this individual did indeed suffer from degenerative joint disease, Boule's faulty postural reconstruction was not affected by the presence of this condition (Trinkaus, 1985)

7. Although most estimates of Neanderthal place him about 5'4"-5'8". Some skeletons of earlier man show them to be over six feet tall. A *Homo erectus* (supposed earlier ancestor of modern man and earlier than Neanderthal) skeleton of a teenage boy was discovered. It was estimated that he would have been six feet tall at maturity. See the following:

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