

# HOMO NALEDI

*The Rising Star of Evolutionary Icons*



By Heath Henning

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Truthwatchers.com

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## Introduction

The official website of HomoNaledi.org informs us, “Thursday September 10, 2015 marked a new milestone in our knowledge of human history, as scientists announced in the journal *eLife* that a trove of bones found hidden deep within a South African cave represented a new species of human ancestor.”<sup>1</sup> That day the media began buzzing with the newest alleged evidence for evolution. Dozens of article were posted on the web along with newspapers across the nation, all competing for the privilege to reveal to their readers the rising star of evolution, a new icon. Most people jumped to conclusions before taking the time to weigh through the reports for the scientific validity or consider the multitudes of contradictions contained in the claims. This report may seem to be late but it is appropriate to take the time necessary to carefully discern these matters.

## History of the Find

South Africa in the first half of the twentieth century was known as the “cradle of humankind,” but has since been ignored having lost such a title and any interest from the evolutionary community. What seems as perhaps the lone exception was Dr. Lee Berger, a paleoanthropologist from the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. “Berger has encouraged recreational cavers to search for fossils in the caves north of Johannesburg...”<sup>2</sup> However, *National Geographic*<sup>3</sup> and *Wikipedia*<sup>4</sup> attempt to make the discovery appear as pure chance by amateur cavers who in

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<sup>1</sup> homonaledi.org

<sup>2</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>3</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic* <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>4</sup> Wikipedia, *Homo naledi*; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo\\_naledi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_naledi)



turn contacted Dr. Berger. In fact, “Two cave explorers found the fossils about 3 miles northwest of Johannesburg, Berger had asked them to help investigate about 800 sites he had identified using Google Earth.”<sup>5</sup> So Berger actually hand-picked the caves he desired to be searched and assigned them to Rick Hunter, 27, and Steven Tucker, 25, the two recreational cavers that made the initial discovery.

Even the creationists who have reported on the topic seem to imply that this was an accidental discovery, not understanding the significance that this cave was handpicked by Berger. Marc Ambler, writing for Creation.com states:

The particular cave where the remains were found was discovered by cavers Steve Tucker and Rick Hunter in 2013. They reported the find to Berger who, due to the narrow entrance to the cave, advertised on Facebook for skinny scientists to go and investigate the finds. He assembled a team of six women scientists who retrieved the remains during expeditions in 2013 and 2014.

About 1,500 bones belonging to at least 15 individual creatures have so far been retrieved. It is believed that many more remains still lie in this remarkable chamber called Dinaledi (‘stars’ in the local Sesotho language). The chamber was apparently previously undiscovered though other caves in the area have been the site of much exploration in the past...<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Annan Kuchment, “Scientist Lee Berger details discovery of primitive species in Perot Museum lecture,” Sep. 29 updated Sep. 30, 2015

<sup>6</sup> Marc Ambler, “What to make of Homo Naledi? More psuedo-scientific claims of human ancestry” Sep. 22, 2015; <http://creation.com/homo-naledi>

The particular cave was not discovered by these two cavers, nor was this chamber previously undiscovered; both these facts were plainly stated in the Dirks et al., “Geological and taphonomic” report<sup>7</sup> as well as the *National Geographic* article<sup>8</sup> which Marc Ambler cited from in his article.

Once Berger’s handpicked cavers reported to him that his hand-picked cave yielded favorable results, “Berger faced a huge task: organized a large-scale excavation in a hurry. He would need to recruit expert paleontologists able to drop everything for a month of exhaustive work.”<sup>9</sup> This he accomplished at the all-expense paid endeavors of *National Geographic*. “With funding from National Geographic (Berger is also a National Geographic explorer-in-residence), he gathered some 60 scientists and set up an aboveground command center, a science tent, and a small village of sleeping and support tents. Local cavers helped thread two miles of communication and power cables down into the fossil chamber. Whatever was happening there could now be viewed with cameras by Berger and his team in the command center.”<sup>10</sup>

## Burial Theory

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<sup>7</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>8</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>9</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>10</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>



i

This quick response mentality from creationists to slap together answers before performing a thorough investigation is disturbing, revealing that they quote-mined the official sources accessible to all the public yet they did not read it comprehensively. For example, the *National Geographic* article stated, “Having exhausted all other explanations, Berger and his team were struck with the improbable conclusion that [the] bodies of *H. naledi* were deliberately put there, by other *H. naledi*.”<sup>11</sup> This indeed was an improbable conclusion to anyone who read the reports released. However, the quick response of *The Institute of Creation Research* posted September 10, 2015, indicated, “The 15 partial

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<sup>11</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

skeletons were found buried in a difficult-to-access South African cave. Their human feet and skulls, plus ritualistic burial, show that *Homo naledi*—if this name stands the test of time—was likely just another human variety.”<sup>12</sup> Five days later the article was updated to conclude: “**Update:** Upon closer examination, the skeletal remains given the name *Homo naledi* show a host of primate characteristics, and evolutionists have pointed out shortcomings with the ritualistic burial interpretation.”<sup>13</sup>

The secular evolutionary slanted reports wrote with more reserve than ICR on the initial covering. Posted September 10, *Sci-News.com* acknowledged the burial theory as a possibility, “Perhaps most remarkably, the context of the find has led the team to conclude that this primitive-looking hominin may have practiced a form of behavior previously thought to be unique to humans.”<sup>14</sup> The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* September 10 article presented dogmatic evolutionary propaganda: “Yet researchers are convinced from the number of skeletons—some children, some adults—that *Homo naledi* placed their dead in the hard-to-reach cave deliberately.”<sup>15</sup> The same day post from *theguardian.com* seemed critical of this deliberate burial option, expressing, “But Berger and his colleagues favor a more radical explanation.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Frank Sherwin M.A., “‘Homo Naledi: A New Human Ancestor?,” originally posted Septembet 15: 2015; <http://www.icr.org/article/homo-naledi-new-human-ancestor/>

<sup>13</sup> Frank Sherwin M.A., “‘Homo Naledi: A New Human Ancestor?,” originally posted September 10, 2015, updates September 15, 2015; <http://www.icr.org/article/homo-naledi-new-human-ancestor/>

<sup>14</sup> Sci-News.Com, “Homo naledi: New Species of Human Ancestor Discovered” Sep. 10, 2015; <http://www.sci-news.com/othersciences/anthropology/science-homo-naledi-03224.html>

<sup>15</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwuaque Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>16</sup> Ian Sample, “Homo naledi: new species of ancient human discovered, claim scientist,” 10, September 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/sep/10/new-species-of-ancient-human-discovered-claim-scientists>

The same day *ICR* posted their update, *NovaNext* (the very heavily evolutionary slanted arm of *PBS*) quoted William Junger, a paleontologist at State University of New York, who said, “The chamber is a football field’s length from the caves entrance.... Mortuary rituals wherein pinheads regularly dispose of corpses makes a better headline than we don’t yet have a clue.”<sup>17</sup> A month later, *theguardian.com* recognized in a second post, “Others have criticized Berger for claiming that the remains come from a deliberate burial...”<sup>18</sup> Jamie Shreeve, whose *National Geographic* article inaugurated all the hype of the new icon understood the claim would stir doubt and attempting to pacify it, wrote:

The researchers don’t argue that these much more primitive hominins navigated Superman’s Crawl and the harrowing shark-mouth chute while dragging corpses behind them—that would go beyond, improbable to incredible. Maybe back then Superman’s Crawl was wide enough to be walkable, and maybe the hominins simply dropped their burdens onto the chute without climbing down themselves. Over time the growing pile of bones might have slowly tumbled into the neighboring chamber. Deliberate disposal of bodies would still have required the hominins to find their way to the top of the chute through pitch-black darkness and back again, which

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<sup>17</sup> Nadia Drake, “Why Did Homo naledi bury their dead?” Sep. 15, 2015, *NovaNext*; <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/next/evolution/why-did-homo-naledi-bury-its-dead/>

<sup>18</sup> Robin McLie, “Scientist who found New Human Species accused of playing fast and loose with the truth” 24, October, 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/oct/25/discovery-human-species-accused-of-rushing-errors>

almost surely would have required light—torches, or fire lit at intervals. The notion of such a small-brained creature exhibiting such complex behavior seems so unlikely that many researchers have simply refused to credit it.<sup>19</sup>

It would be more creditable if they claimed these pinheads “[w]ith a brain the size of an orange”<sup>20</sup> invented shovels, or even excavators, than to claim they places torches at intervals each time they buried one of the 15 bodies discovered (and encourage us to believe there is more as Berger claims “There are potentially hundreds if not thousands of remains of Homo naledi still down there.”<sup>21</sup>) and pursued this grueling trek all the while carrying the limp carcass of another evolving primate. Let us consider how the cave has been described for a proper judgement.

### The Dinaledi Cave

The Dirks et al., technical paper on the caves “Geology and taphonomy,” desiring to justify their burial theory, reported, “Thus, if hominins were traveling to the chamber, it is assumed that they would almost certainly have required artificial light. ...[assuming a scenario of] a catastrophic event during which a

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<sup>19</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>20</sup> Sara Nelson, “Homo Naledi: New Species Of Ancient Human Discovered In South African Cave,” October 9, 2015; [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave\\_n\\_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave_n_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1)

<sup>21</sup> Berger as quoted by Sara Nelson, “Homo Naledi: New Species Of Ancient Human Discovered In South African Cave,” October 9, 2015; [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave\\_n\\_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave_n_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1)

large group of animals was trapped in the cave. ...would have to explain why the animals chose to penetrate this deep into the cave, into the dark zone, moving away from all entrance points into the cave system.”<sup>22</sup> Of course, they would have to explain why these creatures would penetrate the cave so deep simply to bury their dead, with or without “artificial light.” Especially considering Marina Elliott of Simon Fraser University in British Columbia who was involved in the removal of bones said, “some of the most difficult and dangerous conditions ever encountered in the search for human origins.”<sup>23</sup>

The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported, “it was dangerous,”<sup>24</sup> “hard to reach cave,”<sup>25</sup> and “so difficult to reach...”<sup>26</sup> *NovaNext* identified, “The chamber is a football field’s length from the caves entrance...”<sup>27</sup> The difficulty consisted of having “to maneuver through the cave’s claustrophobic confines.”<sup>28</sup> The report from foxnews.com said, “Archaeologists had to squeeze through a 10-

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<sup>22</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>23</sup> John Noble Wilford, “Homo Naledi New Species in Human Lineage Is Found in South African Cave,” Sep. 10, 2015, *New York Times*; [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/science/south-africa-fossils-new-species-human-ancestor-homo-naledi.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/science/south-africa-fossils-new-species-human-ancestor-homo-naledi.html?_r=0)

<sup>24</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 7A

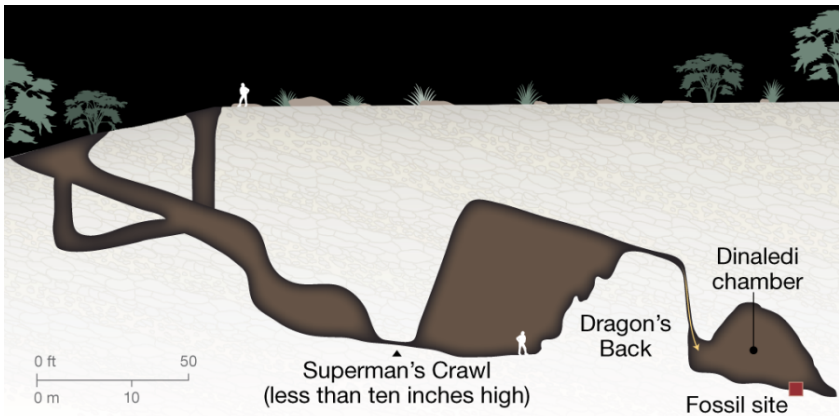
<sup>25</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>26</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>27</sup> Nadia Drake, “Why Did Homo naledi bury their dead?” Sep. 15, 2015, *NovaNext*; <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/next/evolution/why-did-homo-naledi-bury-its-dead/>

<sup>28</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

inch wide gap between underground rocks...”<sup>29</sup> Other reports said “To pass through one opening, a caver’s rib cage had to be no more than 7 inches from front to back.”<sup>30</sup> The bones were “accessible only through a chute just 18cm wide.”<sup>31</sup> Marina Elliott, who was the first scientist down the chute, said “Looking down into it, I wasn’t sure I’d be Ok,” Elliott recalled. “I was like looking into a shark’s mouth. There were fingers and tongues and teeth of rocks.”<sup>32</sup>



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<sup>29</sup> Paul Tilsley, “Mass grave of new human relative discovered in South Africa, claim scientists,” September 10, 2015; <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2015/09/10/mass-grave-new-human-relative-discovered-in-south-africa-claim-scientists.html>

<sup>30</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>31</sup> Sara Nelson, “Homo Naledi: New Species Of Ancient Human Discovered In South African Cave,” October 9, 2015; [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave\\_n\\_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave_n_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1)

<sup>32</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

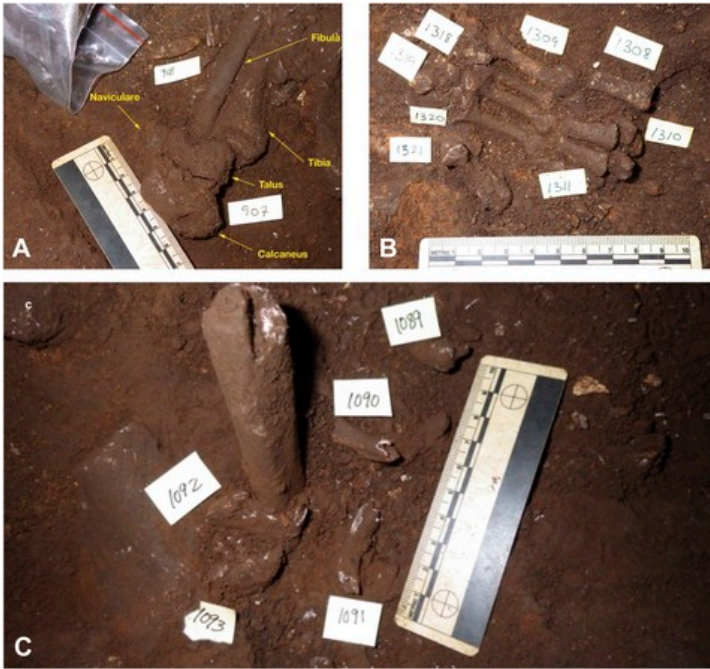


The frightening chute was not easy to get to. First, “The Dragon’s Back Chamber can currently be accessed in two ways, both involving steep climbs along narrow fractures and tight passages...”<sup>33</sup> Next, “Deep in the cave... a constriction called Superman’s Crawl—because most people can fit only by holding one arm tightly against the body and extending the other above the head, like the Man of Steel in flight. Crossing a large chamber, they climbed a jagged wall of rock called the Dragon’s Back.... Dropping down [a fissure in the cave floor], he found himself in a narrow, vertical chute, in some places less than eight inches wide.... 40 feet down the narrow chute... a passage way led into a large cavity, about 30 feet long and only a few feet wide...”<sup>34</sup> Imagine, hairy primates with torches (remember hair is very flammable), dragging dead bodies down one of the two steep climbs, through 10 inch height of Superman’s Crawl, up the jagged rock wall called the Dragon’s back, the distance of a football field to a chute 40 feet deep with a 7 inches width which is covered in jagged rocks described as a shark’s mouth to pack their deceased relative like sardines into a small chamber 30 feet long and a few feet wide.

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>34</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>



The cavers with lights and safety gear only stumbled upon this chute by accident according to one report. “Rick Hunter, 27, and Steven Tucker, 25, had been exploring the Rising Star cave, a place they’d been many times before. At one point, in order to get out of his partner’s way, Tucker maneuvered inside an 8-inch wide crack. He notices a gap where his foot did not touch the ground. He squeezed into the fissure and carefully descended 40 feet to the cave floor. The soil was strewn with bones, including a jawbone with teeth.”<sup>35</sup> These ape creatures would have to “squeeze” through rocks all the way to the chute as these skinny female archaeologists did. “Gurtov, a slender, 27-year-old

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<sup>35</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

graduate student from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, followed the tunnel to a narrow opening in the jagged rock, turned her head 90 degrees, and squeezed her body through. She inched down a 40-foot fissure, through cool air and the smell of moist earth, to the cave floor, where she could see, at least, what lay inside the chamber.”<sup>36</sup> It is highly improbable that the bodies could have been tossed down this chute according to the description of jagged rock like shark’s teeth; they would not just tumble down into the chamber below. They discovered “the fossils were found in a 30-square-foot section of the Dinaledi Chamber.”<sup>37</sup>

They worked in close quarters; the month long excavation covered a single patch of ground so small it became nicknamed “The Puzzle Box.” Inside it, the delicate bones lay on top of one another like Pick-up sticks.<sup>38</sup>

“An exhaustive search by a professional caving team and researches has failed to find any other plausible access point into the Dinaledi Chamber, and there is no evidence to suggest that an older, now sealed, entrance to the chamber ever existed.”<sup>39</sup>

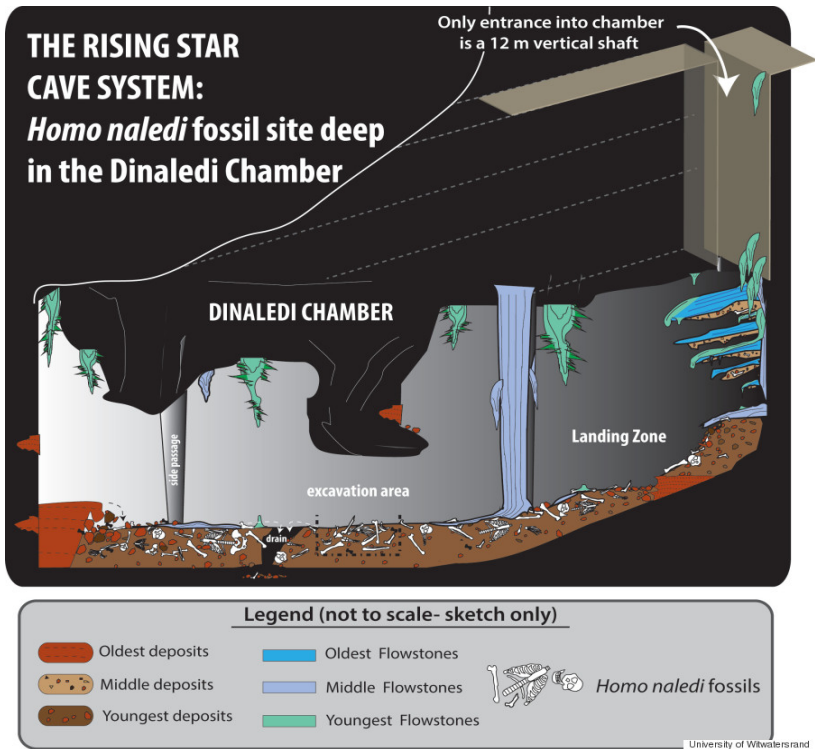
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<sup>36</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>37</sup> Paul Tilsley, “Mass grave of new human relative discovered in South Africa, claim scientists,” September 10, 2015; <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2015/09/10/mass-grave-new-human-relative-discovered-in-south-africa-claim-scientists.html>

<sup>38</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>39</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>



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The Dirks et al., paper speaking of the geology of the cave stated, “Throughout the Rising Star cave system erosional remnants of fossiliferous sediment, breccia, and flowstone unit provide evidence for several cycles of sediments fill and removal/dissolution as the level of the water table in the cave changed repeatedly.”<sup>40</sup> This is to express that the difficulty to reach this chamber may have been easier in the distant past. However, the same paper said, “unit 3 (main hominin bearing

<sup>40</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

unit) Note that Flowstone 2 has been undercut by post-depositional erosion of unit 3, which, in this location has resulted in a lowering of the floor by as much as 25 cm.”<sup>41</sup> If the entire cave system bears evidence of erosion, should we not expect that the cave has since become more accessible with the floor lowering.

The reports seems quit confused as the bones are acknowledged to have been “found in clay-rich sediment”<sup>42</sup> which is identified as Unit 3, the youngest deposit in the chamber “derived from in situ weathering, and exogenous clay and silt, which entered the chamber through fractures that prevented passage of coarser-grained material.”<sup>43</sup> If the clay and silt entered the chamber, should the floor have risen instead of lowering by 25 cm? The report also admits, “Some coarser mudstone fragments did not disintegrate when immersed in water...”<sup>44</sup> so the clay and silt did not prevent it from entering the chamber. “Upon initial discovery of Dinaledi Chamber Unit 3 contained dozens of hominin bones exposed along its surface and partially buried within it... abundant additional hominin bones are buried at shallow depths within Unit 3 throughout much of the chamber.”<sup>45</sup> Notice the Unit 3, the youngest deposit (from which 1250 of the 1550 bones were

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<sup>41</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>42</sup> Wikipedia, Homo naledi; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo\\_naledi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_naledi)

<sup>43</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>44</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>45</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

collected) consist of hominin bones—not fossils—on the surface and partially buried. “Unit 3 also contains rare disarticulates rodent remains...”<sup>46</sup>

Contrast to the unfossilized hominin bones in Unit 3, “Unit 1, The oldest stratigraphic unit preserved in the Dinaledi Chamber...”<sup>47</sup> which is “[t]he source of micromammal fossils and sand in Facies 1b has not been determined with any certainty...”<sup>48</sup> “Because of the uncertainty, we presently do not include Facies 1b within Unit 1.”<sup>49</sup> This uncertainty continues in their analysis of Unit 2. “The top most outcrop of Unit 2 occurs below Flowstone 1a, and consists of a 10-15 cm thick erosion remnant of consolidated mud clast breccia.” “Outcrops of Unit 2 contains several, in situ macrofossil bones that can be identified as hominin, but are otherwise undiagnostic.”<sup>50</sup> So their focus is evidently on Unit 3, but oddly the flowstones around the chute to enter the chamber has macrofossil they identify as hominin as part of Unit 2, which they date as the middle deposit. Why would portions of the hominin bones be caught in these older flowstones at the chute entrance while the floor of the chamber is

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<sup>46</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

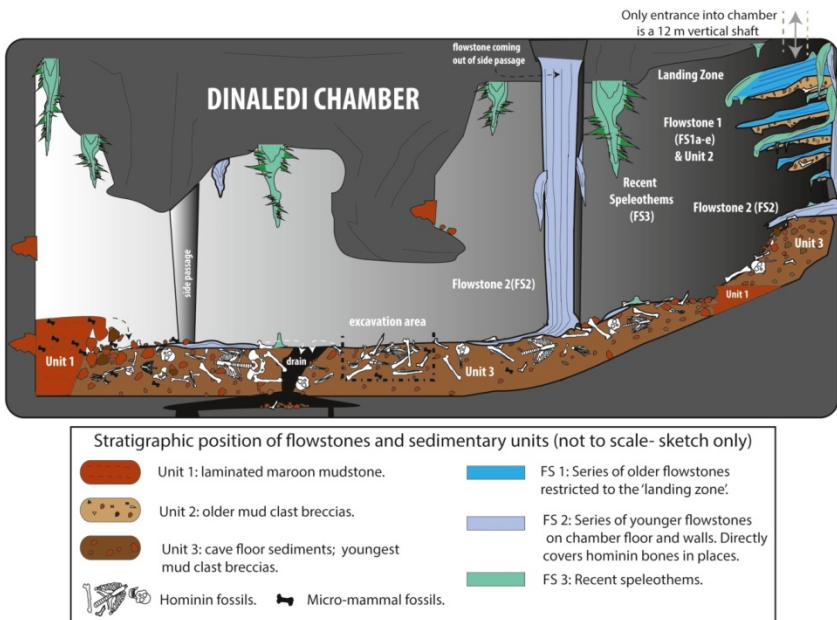
<sup>47</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>48</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>49</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>50</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

covered with younger deposits containing bones scattered over the surface? Should not the clay and silt entering the chamber through fractures cause these bones to be buried if they had been there millions of years? The bias of the Dirks et al. paper desires the cave floor to be lowering to explain why the bones are on the surface and only half buried or buried at a shallow depth as if they had become uncovered over long ages. The coarser mudstone fragments surely should have disintegrated being immersed in water periodically over millions of years.



## Not Fossilized Bones

The *National Geographic* article described the first reaction as the cavers entered the chamber to view the hominin bones, “The

cavers first thought they must be modern.”<sup>51</sup> This was a surprise since they had expected ancient fossilized remains of creatures supposedly millions of years dead. The Dirks et al., paper noted, “Hominin remains in the area are generally encased in lithified clastic deposits in caves that are situated in stromatolite-rich dolomite of the Malmani Subgroup.”<sup>52</sup> Or simply put, normally fossils are found encased in rocks but these were bones discovered on the top of soil. Annan Kuchment throughout her article referred to the discovery as fossils, though she accurately stated “...bones including a primitive jaw and skull—not encased in rock but simply scattered in dirt.”<sup>53</sup>

Other articles refused to present an accurate account of the discovery attempting to convince their readers that these were ancient fossils. The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* touted, “With help of UW researchers, scientists identify a new discovered species of human found in a huge trove of fossils in a South African cave”<sup>54</sup> Foxnews.com peddled, “At the entrance, they found 300 fossils, and in the chamber itself some 1,200 fossilized bones.”<sup>55</sup> One of

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<sup>51</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>52</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>53</sup> Annan Kuchment, “Scientist Lee Berger details discovery of primitive species in Perot Museum lecture,” Sep. 29 updated Sep. 30, 2015, *Dallas Morning News*; <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/dallas/headlines/20150929-scientist-lee-berger-details-discovery-of-primitive-species.ece>

<sup>54</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>55</sup> Paul Tilsley, “Mass grave of new human relative discovered in South Africa, claim scientists,” September 10, 2015; <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2015/09/10/mass-grave-new-human-relative-discovered-in-south-africa-claim-scientists.html>



the scientist who was on site and personally involved with the discovery revealed in an interview:

“The fossils have yet to be dated. The unmineralized condition of the bones and the geology of the cave have prevented an accurate dating,” said Dr. John Hawks of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.<sup>56</sup>

How does he call them fossils and also unmineralized bones? They cannot be both. Marc Ambler writing for creation.com, mentions:

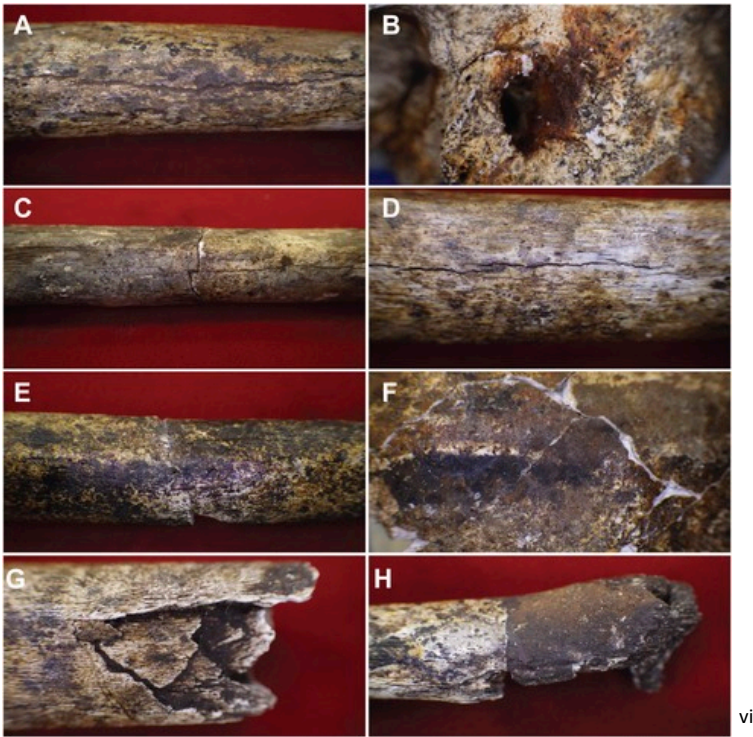
The Berger et al paper [actually it is the Dirks et al. paper] describing the geological context of their find repeatedly refers to the remains as ‘bones’ and only ‘partially mineralized.’ They were not ever excavated from lithified sediments but soil... The female crew ‘plotted and bagged more than 400 fossils on the surface, then started carefully removing soil around the half-buried skull.’ Thinking about it, this could very well be a description of the removal of bones from a WWI battlefield. All this indicates that the bones may well be quite young, in which case the obvious dating method would be carbon-14.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Homo naledi: New Species of Human Ancestor Discovered, Sep 10, 2015 by Sci-News.com; <http://www.sci-news.com/othersciences/anthropology/science-homo-naledi-03224.html>

<sup>57</sup> Marc Ambler, “What to make of Homo Naledi? More pseudo-scientific claims of human ancestry” Sep. 22, 2015; <http://creation.com/homo-naledi>; all citation from Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

So it is acknowledged that the bones are not fossilized but have been passed off to the public as fossils for the coloration due to mineral staining from the water that seeped into the cave chamber as noted above.



### Other Animal Bones in the Cave

The propaganda campaign becomes evidently riddled with lies from the scientists involved if we take into account what they say in the technical papers and what they told the newspapers and magazines during interviews. The earliest post from theguardian.com stated, “No other animals were found in the

chamber that might hint at when the human relative got there.”<sup>58</sup> *NovaNext* expresses the uniqueness of the discovery is, “[t]he singular purity of the site—there is nothing but fossils of *H. naledi* in the cave—defies all conventional explanation for how the bones got into the cave.”<sup>59</sup> Berger, the main scientist involved in the discovery, is quoted to say “What’s important for people to understand is that the remains were found practically alone in this remote chamber in the absence of any other major fossil animals.”<sup>60</sup> This exact same quote is attributed to Dirk by Sci-News.com,<sup>61</sup> but the same article, quoting Dr. Hawks, states “that out of more than 1,500 fossil elements recovered, only about a dozen are not hominin....”<sup>62</sup>

Berger, Dirks, and Hawks were involved with the discovery, the first two strived to present the public with a single purity of the site while in the technical paper by Dirk et al. it was admitted, “six birds and several rodent specimens,”<sup>63</sup> were found and “[t]he avian specimens were part of a group of bones that had been ‘arranged’ on rocks by an unknown caver prior to discovery by our

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<sup>58</sup> Ian Sample, “Homo naledi: new species of ancient human discovered, claim scientist,” 10, September 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/sep/10/new-species-of-ancient-human-discovered-claim-scientists>

<sup>59</sup> Nadia Drake, “Why Did Homo naledi bury their dead?” Sep. 15, 2015, *NovaNext*; <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/next/evolution/why-did-homo-naledi-bury-its-dead/>

<sup>60</sup> Sara Nelson, “Homo Naledi: New Species Of Ancient Human Discovered In South African Cave,” October 9, 2015; [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave\\_n\\_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave_n_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1)

<sup>61</sup> Sci-News.Com, “Homo naledi: New Species of Human Ancestor Discovered” Sep. 10, 2015; <http://www.sci-news.com/othersciences/anthropology/science-homo-naledi-03224.html>

<sup>62</sup> Dr. Hawks; Sci-News.Com, “Homo naledi: New Species of Human Ancestor Discovered” Sep. 10, 2015; <http://www.sci-news.com/othersciences/anthropology/science-homo-naledi-03224.html>

<sup>63</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

caving team...”<sup>64</sup> Now we can begin to understand why they wish for the world to think only their hominin remains were present.

First, we see that the bones were known about previously but not perceived to be significant, or possibly, when the former cavers were present adjusting the bird bones the hominin bones were not present. Why were the hominin bones only recognized after Berger’s hand-picked cavers found them in Berger’s hand-picked cave? The former cavers seemed more interested in the bird bones. Why? Secondly, as Casey Luskin concluded, “If multiple species are present, the evolutionary model being promoted by *naledi’s* discoverers falls apart.”<sup>65</sup> She rejected the unreasonable idea of apes carrying torches bury their dead theory, but speculated that these creatures hid in the cave in a quick attempt to flee predators. However, the cavers repeatedly acknowledge the deep recesses of this cave were difficult and dangerous to reach. It would be impossible in the dark. This is why the animal bones, especially of birds, makes this evolutionary presupposition fatally flawed. How did birds fly a football field’s distance in the dark through dangerous crevasses, dodging jagged rocks, to head down the tight squeezed chute and die? Or why did these creatures bury birds with the dead loved ones? All theories crumble when this fact comes to light.

Furthermore, evolutionary ages hold no validity when these avian specimens are noted. The study of taphonomy is the rate of decomposition of dead bodies in light of the surrounding atmosphere (such as the caves geology) primarily of interest to

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<sup>64</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>65</sup> Casey Luskin, “Hominid Hype and Homo Naledi: Did Scientists Really Discover a Human Ancestor?” September 30, 2015; <http://www.christianpost.com/news/hominid-hype-and-homo-naledi-did-scientists-really-discover-a-human-ancestor-146381/>

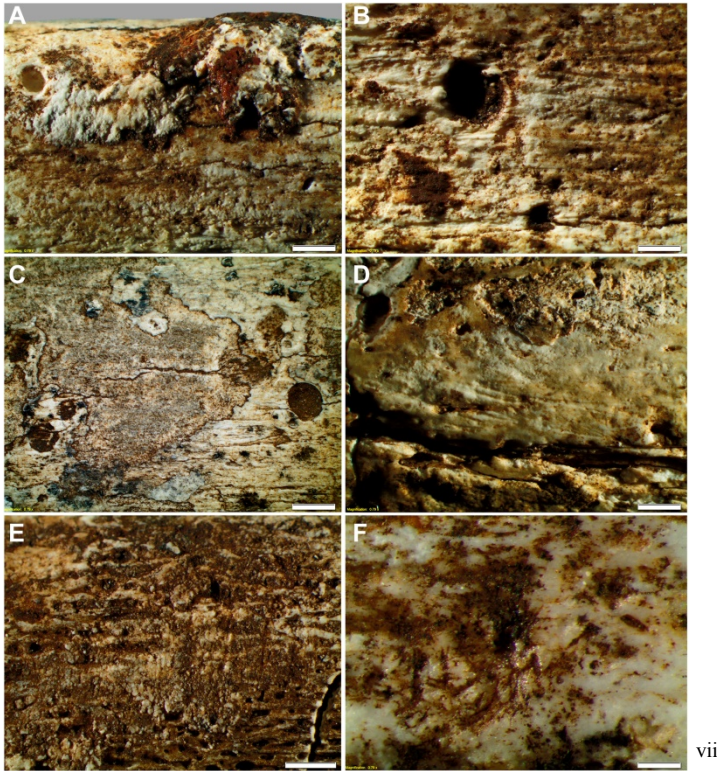
crime scene investigators and archeologist. “Bones are largely a fibrous matrix of collagen fibers, impregnated with calcium phosphate. In warm, damp environments, bacteria and fungi will attack the collagen protein and the skeleton will crumble over the course of a few years. Calcium phosphate isn’t attacked by microorganisms, but it reacts readily with acid, so bones decompose fastest in well aerated, peaty soils.”<sup>66</sup> The fact that birds have fragile, hollow, light weight bones designed for flight, means that they would decompose much more rapidly than a supposed ape-man. Speaking of human remains completely decomposing, John Mixon says, “Some many things can cause it to vary, but lets assume that under optimal conditions (unclothed body, acidic soils, exposure to the elements, animal predations, etc.) inside of 1-3 years a body can disappear or be reduced to such fine components that it cannot be easily discovered. Greater than five years and a body won't be discovered by anyone but an archaeologist/anthropologist with experience at turning minute findings into larger clues.”<sup>67</sup> The Dirks et al. “geology and Taphonomy” paper presented the fact that the bones bore evidence of damage caused by larva, gastropods, beetles and snails with a comparison of an environmentally controlled laboratory experiment to discover the rate of such damage to bones in a four month period. These bones could not have existed millions of years unfossilized.

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<sup>66</sup> Science Focus, “How Do Animal Bones Decompose?” April 7, 2011;  
<http://www.sciencefocus.com/qa/how-do-animal-bones-decompose>

<sup>67</sup> John Mixon, “How long does it take for a human body to completely decompose?”  
<https://www.quora.com/How-long-does-it-take-for-a-human-body-to-completely-decompose>

Image of bones from Dinaledi cave.



The Dirks et al. paper adds these notes under this image:

**Figure 11.** Taphonomy—surface modifications.

(A) Removal of the bone surface with sets of shallow, evenly spaced, multiple parallel striations on fibula (UW101–1037), which run longitudinal with the main axis of the bone and are interpreted as gastropod radula damage. (B) Fibula (UW101–1037) showing removal of the bone surface with sets of shallow,

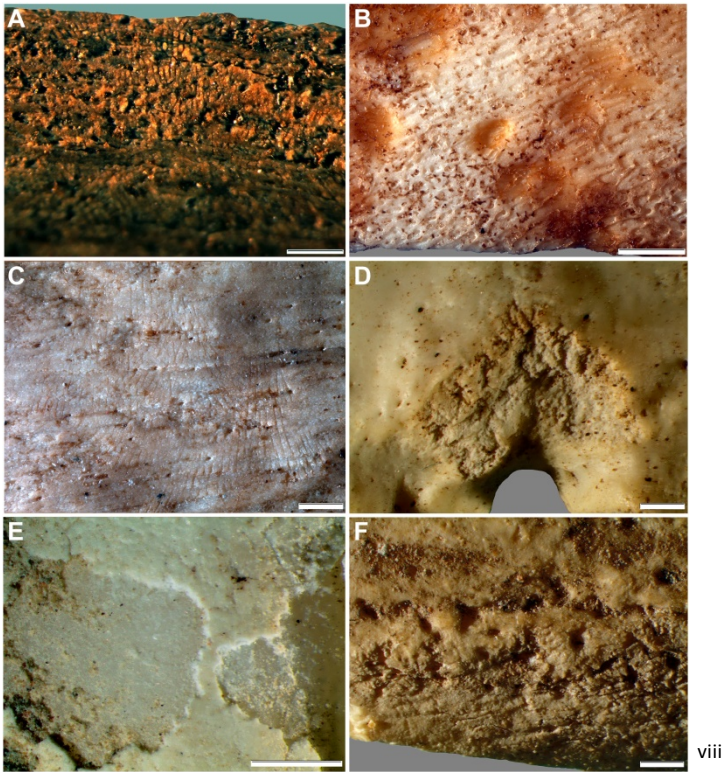
evenly spaced, multiple parallel striations that follow the collagen fibres together with shallow circular pits ranging from 0.1 to 3 mm in diameter, the bases of which may be smooth, cupped, or covered with multiple parallel striations. These features have been attributed to gastropod radula damage. **(C)** Tibia (UW101–484) showing removal of the bone surface with sets of shallow, striations that show a smooth scalloped edge together with circular pits ranging from 0.1 to 3 mm in diameter interpreted as the result of gnawing by beetle larvae. **(D)** Tibia (UW101–484) with areas of surface removal that have a straight edge associated with scrape marks interpreted as damage made by a beetle mandible. **(E)** Fibula (UW101–1037) with sets of shallow, evenly spaced, multiple parallel striations orientated transverse to the long axis of the bone interpreted as gastropod radula damage, resulting in an etched surface appearance that exposes underlying structures. **(F)** Tibia (UW101–484) showing clusters of large individual striations that are variably arrow-shaped and often overlap, interpreted as damage made by a beetle mandible. Compare with [Figure 12](#) which shows surface modifications made by modern snails and beetles and their larvae. The scale bar in all samples equals 1 mm.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>



The comparative image of the controlled experiment:



The Dirks et al. paper adds these notes under this image:

Figure 12. Comparative examples of surface modifications on bone made by modern snails and beetles and their larvae after four months in controlled experiments.

Gastropods and beetles were found to produce similar modifications to those observed on the Rising Star hominin remains, and remove the surfaces of fresh,



dry and fossil bones to an equal degree (see [Figure 11](#)). (A) Dry bovid rib showing surface removal associated with evenly spaced, multiple parallel striations made by the radula of an *Achatina* (land snail). (B) Fresh sheep bone that was originally covered with tissue showing how *Helix aspersa* (garden snails) have removed the outer cortical lamellae to produce an etched appearance and create circular shallow pits with smooth and striated bases. (C) Dry bovid rib showing shallow, evenly spaced, multiple parallel striations produced by *Achatina*. (D) Dry bird femur showing large individual striations that are variably arrow-shaped and often overlap, made by *Omorgus squalidus* (hide beetles). (E) A weathered bovid tooth showing surface removal with a scalloped edge produced by *Dermestes maculatus* larvae, and with a straight edge associated with scrape marks. (F) Scrape marks created by a *D. maculatus* adult beetle mandible on a dry medium-sized bovid long bone flake. The scale bar in all samples equals 1 mm.<sup>69</sup>

## Dating the Bones

As with every claim of an evolutionary icon discovered, long ages is required to prove evolution and *Homo naledi* is no exception. “If the fossils prove to be substantially older than 2 million years, *H. naledi* would be the earliest example of our

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<sup>69</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

genus that is more than a single isolated fragment.”<sup>70</sup> Lee Berger desperately needs to convince the public of these millions of years for his claim to fame to stand since he is calling these bones of the “homo” genus. However, “Lee Berger has of yet made no attempt to have the fossils dated.”<sup>71</sup> Why? “Because dating fossils is really difficult.”<sup>72</sup> But they were not fossilized.

What makes the dating process so difficult? Primarily getting results that they want based on their presupposition. “There are also many sites which have yielded carbon 14 dates that are clearly too recent to be correct. Often these spuriously young dates are not published, though every archaeologist is aware of some examples. Those that are published rarely receive the special attention they deserve. The significance of these inexplicable dates is that they also are often quite secure and no flaw can be found in their determination.”<sup>73</sup> Propaganda must sound scientific so only dates that are acceptable to evolutionary time frames are ever admitted. As Robert Lee informed us, “the radiocarbon method is still not capable of yielding accurate and reliable results. There are *gross* discrepancies, the

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<sup>70</sup> Lee R. Berger, et. al., “Homo Naledi, a new species of the genus Homo from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” September 10, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560v1>

<sup>71</sup> Dr. Elizebeth Mitchell, “Is Homo naledi a New Species of Human Ancestor?” Sep. 12, 2015, <https://answersingenesis.org/human-evolution/homo-naledi-new-species-human-ancestor/>

<sup>72</sup> Ed Young, “Why Don’t We Know the Age of the New Ancient Human?” September 14, 2015, *The Atlantic*; <http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/09/why-dont-we-know-the-age-of-the-new-human-ancestor-homo-naledi/405148/>

<sup>73</sup> Grover S. Krantz, “The Populating of Western North America,” *Society for California Archaeology Occasional Papers in Method and Theory in California Archaeology*, no. 1 (December 1977), p. 7-8

chronology is *uneven* and *relative*, and the accepted dates are actually *selected* dates.”<sup>74</sup> The homo naledi find is no different.

The researchers reported an attempt to date the fossils using the uranium-series dating technique, which measures the amount of uranium trapped in flowstone deposits and compares it to an assumed depositional rate. But they never revealed the results of this “failed” attempt because they claimed the process was contaminated from “fine dusting of a detrital component derived from associated muds.”<sup>75</sup>

Whenever the results do not fit their predetermined opinion, the results are suppressed from the public; which is extremely suspicious in this situation since Berger is a publicity hound and scientist around the world have criticized the transparency of this discovery as all other such discoveries have taken 7-15 years in the peer-reviews journals before the public is even aware of the initial discoveries.

So what is the preconceived date that they desire for these bones? “Although Berger and his associates have not yet dated the fossils, he said the species is at least 2.5 million years old and may have persisted in Africa for hundreds of thousands of years.”<sup>76</sup> John Hawk, a biologist from UW Madison says “The different lines of evidence just don’t agree. We’re really hoping to

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<sup>74</sup> Robert E. Lee, “Radiocarbon, Ages in Error,” *Anthropological Journal of Canada*, vol. 19, no. 3 (1981), p. 29

<sup>75</sup> Tim Carey, Ph.D. “Homo Naledi: Claims of a Transitional Ape,” February 2016, *Acts & Facts*. 45(2). P. 15; <http://www.icr.org/article/homo-naledi-claims-transitional-ape/>

<sup>76</sup> Annan Kuchment, “Scientist Lee Berger details discovery of primitive species in Perot Museum lecture,” Sep. 29 updated Sep. 30, 2015, *Dallas Morning News*; <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/dallas/headlines/20150929-scientist-lee-berger-details-discovery-of-primitive-species.ece>

avoid that scenario. We're committed as a team, to not publish a date estimate until we have multiple estimates that arrive at the same results."<sup>77</sup> So they have tried one dating method that they claim has failed due to contamination and refuse to publish any dates until multiple methods can confirm an estimated date even though Lee Berger is already on the record setting the date of "at least 2.5 million."

Marc Ambler, writing for creation.com, stated:

A glaring omission is the lack of any effort to date the bones. Hints are given that the scientists involved would like to see them around 2 million years old, which would then help place them as perfect "links" between *Australopithecus* and *Homo* by evolutionary assumption. Berger's excuse for this omission is that he "didn't feel it ethical to destroy hominin material until it had been described; dating the specimen would mean the destruction of the material." As more than 1,500 pieces have been removed and examined in the chamber, surely they could have sacrificed just one bone for radiometric dating?<sup>78</sup>

This is indicating the creationists response to what has been repeated from many of the evolutionists involved with the discovery. For example, Paul Dirks indicated, "Some tests, such as carbon dating, will destroy the material, and will only be tried

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<sup>77</sup> Ed Young, "Why Don't We Know the Age of the New Ancient Human?" September 14, 2015, *The Atlantic*; <http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/09/why-dont-we-know-the-age-of-the-new-human-ancestor-homo-naledi/405148/>

<sup>78</sup> Marc Ambler, "What to make of Homo Naledi? More psuedo-scientific claims of human ancestry" Sep. 22, 2015; <http://creation.com/homo-naledi>

once the bones have been studied more closely.”<sup>79</sup> *Creation Ministries International* (CMI—creation.com) offered to pay for the bones to be dated by carbon 14, saying: “This is a public challenge to those involved in the *H. naledi* claims. As a ministry, CMI will fund the 14C analysis if they make samples available to us in a manner acceptable to both parties ensuring that contamination has been avoided.”<sup>80</sup> Tim Carey also acknowledged, “The researchers could also have used electron spin resonance dating that other evolutionists use for tooth enamel. *Homo naledi* researchers Lee Berger’s team found 179 dental crowns in the cave—yet no test was conducted.”<sup>81</sup> With 179 teeth available, they would not be much of a loss to use one for the dating process. But they still have refused to perform these tests. One objection (or perhaps an excuse) was given by John Hawks who is recorded by *The Atlantic* to have said “*Homo naledi* is probably far older than [50,000]”<sup>82</sup> so there is no reason to use carbon 14 dating which can only calculate up to approximately 50,000 years.

Moreover, Ed Young, the author for *The Atlantic* mentioned, “They’re also going to try to extract DNA from the fossils

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<sup>79</sup> Paul Dirks, as referenced by Ian Sample, “*Homo naledi*: new species of ancient human discovered, claim scientist,” 10, September 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/sep/10/new-species-of-ancient-human-discovered-claim-scientists>

<sup>80</sup> Marc Ambler, “What to make of *Homo Naledi*? More pseudo-scientific claims of human ancestry” Sep. 22, 2015; <http://creation.com/homo-naledi>

<sup>81</sup> Carey, Tim Ph.D. “*Homo Naledi*: Claims of a Transitional Ape,” February 2016, *Acts & Facts*. 45(2). P. 15; <http://www.icr.org/article/homo-naledi-claims-transitional-ape/>

<sup>82</sup> Ed Young, “Why Don’t We Know the Age of the New Ancient Human?” September 14, 2015, *The Atlantic*; <http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/09/why-dont-we-know-the-age-of-the-new-human-ancestor-homo-naledi/405148/>

themselves.”<sup>83</sup> This is interesting since “DNA should not survive at all, even if the creature only lived 50,000 years ago.”<sup>84</sup> Brian Thomas also cited an experiment that concluded “DNA molecules in bone break down after only 10,000 years into tiny chemical segments too short for modern technology to sequence. And this result assumes preservation factors that optimize biochemical longevity.”<sup>85</sup>

*The Institute for Creation Research* has contended:

Finding the “naledi” fossils in uncemented, loose sediments implies these fossils may be recently deposited then most other nearby finds, opening up the possibility they date to the post flood Ice Age, which would make *Homo naledi* only about 4,000 years old!<sup>86</sup>

But this comment again seems to ignore the fact that these are not fossils—but bones, and should have deteriorated over the years (even if only 4,000 years) having not been covered in sediment for preservation. As we saw the “damage on bones by

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<sup>83</sup> Ed Young, “Why Don’t We Know the Age of the New Ancient Human?” September 14, 2015, *The Atlantic*; <http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/09/why-dont-we-know-the-age-of-the-new-human-ancestor-homo-naledi/405148/>

<sup>84</sup> James J. S. Johnson, J.D., Jeffrey Tomkins, Ph.D., and Brian Thomas, M.S., “Dinosaur DNA Research: Is the tale wagging the evidence?” *Acts & Facts*, Oct. 2009, p. 5; accessible at <http://www.icr.org/article/dinosaur-dna-research-tale-wagging/>

<sup>85</sup> Brian Thomas M.S., “DNA In Dinosaur Bones?” *Acts & Facts*, 2013, p. 15; accessible at <https://www.icr.org/article/7160/>

<sup>86</sup> Tim Carey, Ph.D., “Homo Naledi: New Claims of a Missing Link,” December 2015, *Acts & Facts*. 44 (12). p. 17; <http://www.icr.org/article/9005>

gastropods and beetles”<sup>87</sup> and other causes of decay, these bones should have long since disappeared.

### Assessing the Skeleton

When we consider all the evidence as cited above we wonder how the hype ever got so exploited to excite the world of the idea that a new evolutionary icon is being presented to us. Understand that the propaganda is essentially identified with the bones that appear like an ape linked to the claim of a ceremonial burial site for their dead. The general description has frequently visualized primarily a primate with hands and feet of a more human-like form.

The technical paper reports the discovery consisted of skeletal remains indicating the “age to death distribution... for only 13 individuals, with 3 infants, 3 young juveniles, 1 old juvenile, 1 subadult, 4 young adults and 1 old adult.”<sup>88</sup> The foxnews.com report brings the propaganda to fruition, saying, “The archaeologists have some across 1,500 fossils—entire families of hundreds of early humans.”<sup>89</sup> Various sources described the perceived ape-like/human-like ratio differently. “*Homo naledi* stood about 5 feet in height, roughly the size of an African pygmy, with long legs and ape-like shoulders, hands and feet similar to our own, but a brain only one-third the size.”<sup>90</sup> Notice how the

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<sup>87</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>88</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., “Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>89</sup> Paul Tilsley, “Mass grave of new human relative discovered in South Africa, claim scientists,” September 10, 2015; <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2015/09/10/mass-grave-new-human-relative-discovered-in-south-africa-claim-scientists.html>

<sup>90</sup> Mark Johnson, “Our family tree grows,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

comparison of its height is with pygmies instead of a modern ape that stands the same height to push the evolutionary idea. The legs are long which is not common with ape and the hands and feet are definitively described by all sources as human-like. Only the shoulder and the skull size (with nothing to say of the skulls shape) have any comparison to an ape. Can this generalized description be suitable when presenting the world with the most recent claim from scientists? *National Geographic* offers a little more precision in the portrayal. “A fully modern hand sported wackily curved fingers, fit for a creature climbing trees. The shoulders were apish too, and the widely flaring blades of the pelvis were as primitive as Lucy’s—but the bottom of the same pelvis looked like a modern human’s. The leg bones started out shaped like an australopithecine’s but gathered modernity as they descended toward the ground. The feet were virtually indistinguishable from our own.”<sup>91</sup> We will assess the anatomical structure to determine whether these depictions are appropriate or excessively inaccurate.

### **Mosaic Masterpiece**

Creationist Tim Carey explains, “A supposed mosaic species has features resembling unrelated kinds that are all somehow integrated.”<sup>92</sup> In evolutionary ideology, mosaic species are interpreted as intermediate species, one distinct kind half way evolved into another distinct kind. Most of the mosaic factors are expressly artistic rendering, not empirical science. Consider for example, Ronald J. Ervin, a medical illustrator who was

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<sup>91</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>92</sup> Tim Carey, Ph.D., “Homo Naledi: New Claims of a Missing Link,” December 2015, *Acts & Facts*. 44 (12). p. 17; <http://www.icr.org/article/9005>



commissioned “to produce a huge number of illustrations for a major college biology textbook—Raven and Johnson’s *Biology*.”<sup>93</sup> He confessed in an interview about how his employer wanted him to illustrate Lucy in their textbook.

I was told to make her more ape-like, or more “transitional” in appearance...

I had been given a cast of a skull, and I was shown some drawings other artists had done of “Lucy”, and was asked to improve on these—to make her look more transitional. I had to make some things up, while keeping the anatomical bones intact, like the temple bone and other features which are standard....

I added more body hair, and did another sketch. “No”, they said, “she’s got to have more this and more that” I just kept adding and subtracting until I got what they wanted....

The whole evolutionary thing is just like illustrating fiction anyway.<sup>94</sup>

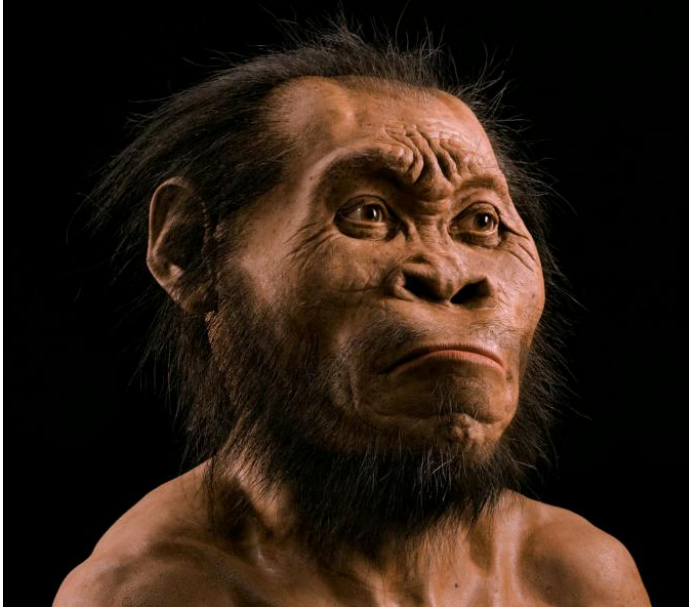
It is interesting how *National Geographic* cannot just allow bones to appear as they are, but always insist on illustrations to enhance their agenda. The mosaic fashion is to produce a primitive ape-like/modern human-like creature as some sort of intermediate species. “*Homo naledi*, as they call it, appears very primitive in some respects—it had a tiny brain, for instance, and apelike

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<sup>93</sup> Ronald Doolan and Calr Wieland, “Filling in the Blanks: Interview with Illustrator Ronald J. Ervin, *Creation* 17(2):16-18, 1995; <http://creation.com/filling-in-the-blanks>

<sup>94</sup> Ronald Doolan and Calr Wieland, “Filling in the Blanks: Interview with Illustrator Ronald J. Ervin, *Creation* 17(2):16-18, 1995; <http://creation.com/filling-in-the-blanks>

shoulders for climbing. But in other ways it looks remarkably like modern humans.”<sup>95</sup>



ix

Notice how the chimpanzee face sits on top of hairless shoulders that appears completely human contradicting every single source that demand the shoulders specifically to be ape-like. This depiction comes from *National Geographic* who tells us, “Parts of the skeletons looked astonishingly modern. But others were just as astonishingly primitive—in some cases, even more apelike than the australopithecines.”<sup>96</sup> Australopithecine is to refer to what is commonly known as “Lucy” which Jonathan Sarfati commenting

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<sup>95</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>96</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

on, says, “Australopithecines are more different from both human and apes than they are from each other, so are a distinct type of creature. Some evolutionists reject them as human ancestors. Lucy was a knuckle walker which did not walk like humans at all.”<sup>97</sup> Lee Berger said, “Look at its pelvis or shoulders, says Berger, and you would think it was an ape like *Australopithecus*, which appeared in Africa about 4 million years ago and is thought to be an ancestor of *Homo*. But look at its foot and you could think it belonged to our species, which appeared just 200,000 years ago.”<sup>98</sup> Yes, just look at the shoulders in the image above; does it look like an ape or is this the art of deception?

The article that appeared on *New Scientist* stated:

The team refers to the fossils’ mixture of features as “anatomical mosaic”. We have previously seen such a mosaic in *Australopithecus sediba*, a 2-million-year-old hominin that Berger and his colleagues excavated in 2008 from the Malapa cave, a few kilometres away.<sup>99</sup>

Berger is hoping to link *Homo naledi* as the transitional form that followed after his *Australopithecus sediba*. Describing the *Homo naledi* bones, Berger says, “they are morphologically homo

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<sup>97</sup> Jonathan Sarfati, PH.D., F.M., *The Greatest Hoax on Earth? Refuting Dawkins on Evolution*, Creation Book Publishers (Atlanta, Georgia: 2010), p. 164

<sup>98</sup> Collin Barras, “New species of extinct human found in cave may rewrite history,” September 10, 2015, *New Scientist*;  
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22730383-700-new-species-extinct-human-found-in-cave-may-rewrite-history/>

<sup>99</sup> Collin Barras, “New species of extinct human found in cave may rewrite history,” September 10, 2015, *New Scientist*;  
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22730383-700-new-species-extinct-human-found-in-cave-may-rewrite-history/>

genus..."<sup>100</sup> meaning the forms or shapes are a mosaic but similar enough to mankind. Richard Dawkins said:

In general, there seemed to be enough “modern” to place the find with the *Homo* genus... but there is one problem.

“It has a tiny head. People expect species from the *Homo* genus to have bigger brains.” That’s what my friend and paleoanthropologist Briana Pobiner told me when I asked her about *H. naledi*....

So it seems we might have to give up on “big brains” being the hallmark of our genus.<sup>101</sup>

Dawkins is expected to bend the evidence to suit his evolutionary propaganda, but he is just following the steps of Berger’s team.

Berger goes beyond the common shoulder, pelvis, feet, and hands to say even the skull and many other bones represent transitional forms. “In addition to general morphological homogeneity including cranial shape, distinctive morphological configurations of all the recovered first metacarpals, femora, molars, lower premolars and lower canines, are identical in both surface collected and excavated specimens.... These considerations strongly indicate that this material represents a single species, and not commingled assemblage.”<sup>102</sup> It is intriguing

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<sup>100</sup> Lee R. Berger, et. al., “Homo Naledi, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” September 10, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560v1>

<sup>101</sup> Richard Dawkins, “Homo Naledi—Another Awesome Twig on the Human Family Tree,” Sep 17, 2015; <https://richarddawkins.net/2015/09/homo-naledi-another-awesome-twig-on-the-human-family-tree-part-2/>

<sup>102</sup> Lee R. Berger, et. al., “Homo Naledi, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” September 10, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560v1>

how Berger and his team are attempting to refute anyone from questioning whether these bones are mismatched representing more than one kind of animal. We know there were birds and rodents discovered in the chambers even though the reports reported only *H. naledi* were found; and we also know the statement Berger made just above contradicts what he and his team wrote elsewhere in the same paper. “U.W. 101-377 is a mandibular fragment that preserves dental anatomy in an unworn state; at present it cannot be definitively associated with any of these Dinaledi Hominin (DH) individuals, and indeed might represent another individual.”<sup>103</sup> So it is evident that the mainstream media has misrepresented the findings to the public just as the technical papers written by the team of discoverers are loaded with contradictions. No wonder similar discoveries in the past spent 7-15 years in peer review journals before the public is informed—it takes that long to refine the obvious lies out enough to be half-way believable. It is necessary to consider each aspect of the creature’s anatomical structures separately to determine what may or may not be true as concerning the multitudes of contradicting reports.

## The Skulls

Wikipedia reported “Four skulls were discovered, thought to be two female and two males...”<sup>104</sup> The Berger et al. paper stated, “The endocranial volume of all *H. naledi* specimens is clearly small compared to most known examples of *Homo*.... Despite its small vault size, the cranium of *H. naledi* is structurally similar to those

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<sup>103</sup> Lee R. Berger, et. al., “Homo Naledi, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” September 10, 2015;

<http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560v1>

<sup>104</sup> Wikipedia, *Homo naledi*; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo\\_naledi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_naledi)

of early Homo.”<sup>105</sup> Notice how this varies dramatically from Dawkin’s discussion saying that the small size was a problem for the creature to be identified as Homo genus (human kind), he concludes, however, we should no longer consider large brains to be the hallmark of defining what is unique about genus Homo. His ridiculous conclusion is simply following the suggested rout from Berger and his team. They claim the structure is similar enough to ignore the size difference.

*National Geographic* revealed “In their general morphology they clearly looked advanced enough to be called *Homo*. But the braincases were tiny—a mere 560 cubic centimeters for the males and 465 for the females... These were not human beings. These were pinheads, with some human like parts.”<sup>106</sup> The error is to claim “some human like parts” unless they are liberally defining the word “like.” However, they are accurate in the comments about the braincases identifying that they were not human beings—but then why insist on calling them *Homo*? The range of braincase 465-560 is consistent with Orangutans and Chimpanzees but humans generally measure at 1100-1700, twice the size of *H. naledi*. This is an extremely important factor to note.

Since there are variations in tissues and fluids, the cranial capacity is never exactly equal to brain size, but can give an approximation. A skull’s capacity is determined by pouring seeds or buckshot into the large hole at the base of the skull (foramen magnum), then emptying the pellets in to a measuring jar. The

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<sup>105</sup> Lee Berger, et al., “*Homo naledi*, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep 10, 2015, <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560.full>

<sup>106</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

volume is usually given in cubic centimeters (cc.). Living humans have a cranial capacity ranging from about 950cc. to 1,800cc., with the average about 1,400cc.<sup>107</sup>

*Sci-News* quoted Paul Dirks, mentioning:

“The features of *Homo naledi* are similar to other early hominids combining a human-like face, feet and hands, but with a short, ape-like torso and a very small brain,” said Prof. Paul Dirks of James Cook University.<sup>108</sup>

However, the reports and images cannot verify this claim from Dirks. Dr. Elizebeth Mitchell accurately assessed, “Nevertheless, despite a sloped lower face and—based on the published photographs—no visible evidence of the protruding nasal bones typical of all humans, Berger has identified the fossils as a new species of human ancestor, *Homo naledi*.”<sup>109</sup> What Dr. Mitchell is identifying is summed up more clearly by Dr. Dave Menton, “The human skull is easily distinguished from all living apes, though there are, of course, similarities. The vault of the skull is large in humans because of their relatively large brain compared to apes. From this perspective, the face of the human is nearly vertical, while that of the ape slopes forward from its upper face to its

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<sup>107</sup> Richard Milner, *The Encyclopedia of Evolution: Humanity's Search for Its Origin*, Henry Holt and Company, 1993, p. 98

<sup>108</sup> “*Homo naledi*: New Species of Human Ancestor Discovered” Sep. 10, 2015, *Sci-News*; <http://www.sci-news.com/othersciences/anthropology/science-homo-naledi-03224.html>

<sup>109</sup> Dr. Elizebeth Mitchell, “Is *Homo naledi* a New Species of Human Ancestor?” Sep. 12, 2015, <https://answersingenesis.org/human-evolution/homo-naledi-new-species-human-ancestor/>

chin. From a side view, the bony socket of the eye (the *orbit*) of an ape is obscured by its broad, flat upper face. Humans, on the other hand, have a more curved upper face and forehead, clearly revealing the orbit of the eye from a side view. Another distinctive feature of the human skull is the nose bone that our glasses rest on. Apes do not have protruding nasal bones and would have great difficulty wearing glasses.”<sup>110</sup>

The image below was presented by the *National Geographic* article to present the comparison of the *Homo naledi* skull to the average human skull. *National Geographic* indicated that the *H. naledi* skull in the image was the largest one found at 560 cubic centimeters though left no indicator of the approximate size shadowed by the human skull. Did they offer the largest scale possible for the human skull or the smallest to attempt to gap the obvious visual size difference?

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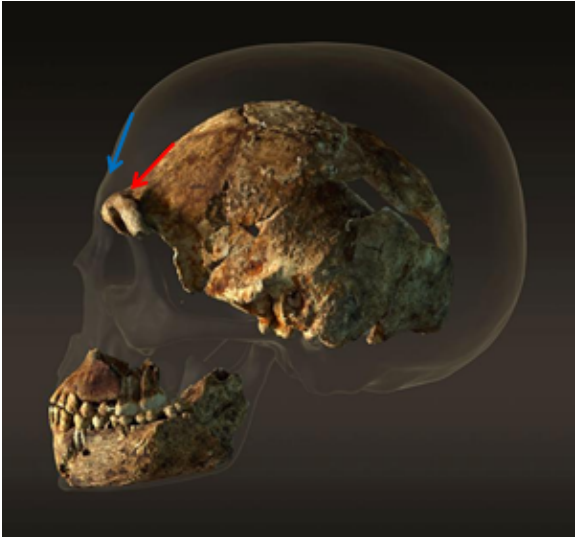
<sup>110</sup> Dr. David Menton, “Did Humans Really Evolve from Apelike Creatures?”  
<http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/nab2/humans-evolve-apelike-creatures>



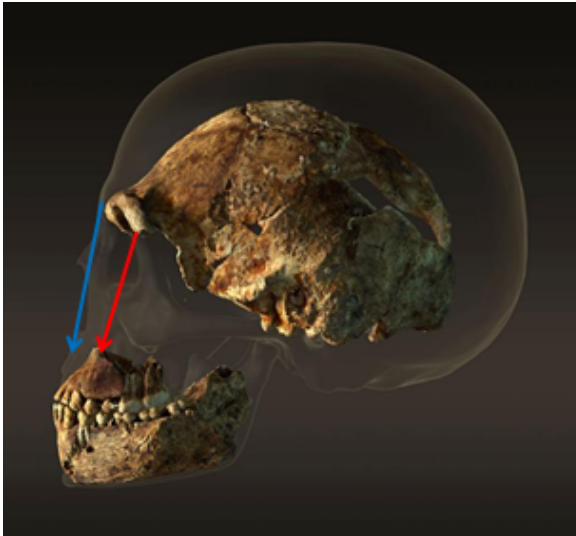


Notice how only giving the skull cap and jaw, the image is forced within a human skull shadowed in the back ground. Is this a fair representation? First, note the slope of the human skull from the top to the brow ridge in comparison to the *H. naledi*. The angle is significantly different.

## Homo Naledi: The Rising Star of Evolutionary Icons

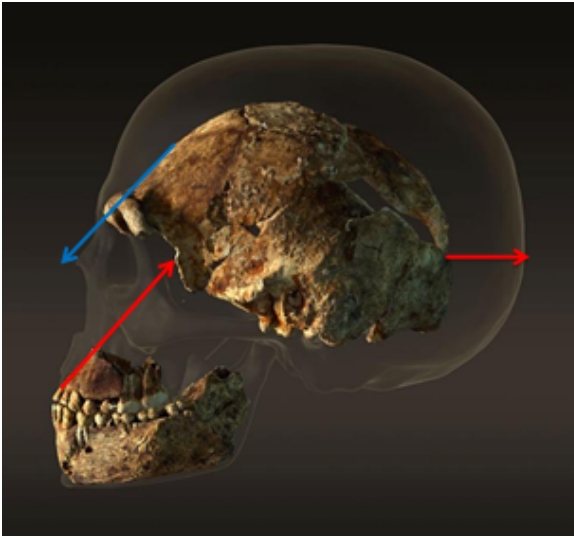


Notice next how *National Geographic* identifies the slope from the bottom of the human skull is almost the exact angle they give to the *H. naledi* skull. Again, we ask if the is accurate representation of filling in the gap of the bones.



Finally, draw your attention to the slope at the angle one would expect to find if we followed a consistent trajectory of the angle identifiable from the jaw and the forehead. Calculating these angles we can see that the skull cap should be pushed further back for an accurate representation.

# Homo Naledi: The Rising Star of Evolutionary Icons

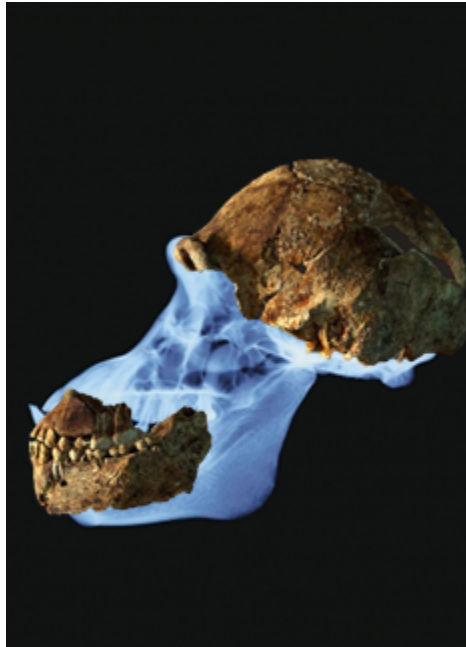


These angles are more consistent with a chimpanzee's skulls.



xi

Notice the significant slope of the face as well as the lack of a nose bone and the size difference. “The human skull (left) houses a brain that's three to four times the size of a chimpanzee's (right). Scientists have spotted a stretch of DNA that could have prompted this expansion.”<sup>111</sup> Notice what happens when the portions of the *Homo naledi* skull are laid over the chimpanzee skull with the exact angles indicated by the arrows above.



The problem is, which is a frequent one with evolutionary icons, is that the portion of the skull that is missing is conveniently the same portions that would tell too much of the creature had the

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<sup>111</sup> Josh Fischman, How Our Brains got Big...” September 4, 2011; <http://chronicle.com/article/How-Our-Brains-Got-BigOur/128878/>

significant portion of the skull been retrieved. Bonnie Yoshida offering an online lecture on “Early Hominin Evolution” says, “The face and jaws of humans lie underneath the brain case rather than protruding out like the ape. If you look at a profile-view of the human skull...the lower face hardly projects at all. A protruding lower face or snout-like appearance... is called prognathism. A gradual reduction in prognathism is a trend through time in the hominin lineage.”<sup>112</sup> If Berger’s discovery included this portion of the skull he would not be able to speculate it as an intermediate type between his earlier discovery *Australopithecus Sediba* and modern *Homo sapiens*.

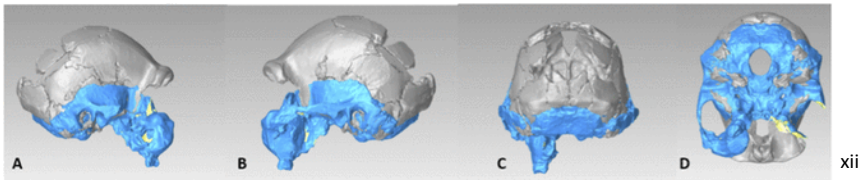
Java Man is another example of a discovery that contained similar portions of the skull leaving it dubious. The discoverer, a Dutch anthropologist Eugene Dubois (1858-1940) maintained his claim that it was an intermediate link while some evolutionary textbooks and creationists misunderstood him as reporting it as a giant gibbon. Creationists today hold that Java Man was a man, generally classified by evolutionists as *Homo erectus* which was simply human and is evident by the facts indicating *Homo erectus* had seafaring capabilities and was determined to have been present on the islands of “Lombok, Bali, Sumbawa, and Flores.”<sup>113</sup> With the many claims of evolutionary icons in the past, we find very slim pickings as of what bones can determine being so fragmentary. With *Homo naledi* it is different because there was a wealth of bones discovered, yet the discovery still conveniently allows the ambiguity of a faithful or undisputable reconstruction. The image below is given in the Berger et al. paper shows the blue

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<sup>112</sup> Bonnie Yoshida, “Early Hominin Evolution,” Last Updated 01/13/2015; <http://gctest.grossmont.edu/people/bonnie-yoshida-levine/online-lectures/early-hominin-ev.aspx>

<sup>113</sup> Jonathan Sarfati, PH.D., F.M., *The Greatest Hoax on Earth? Refuting Dawkins on Evolution*, Creation Book Publishers (Atlanta, Georgia: 2010), p. 161

portion as the computer generated reconstruction as how the artist wants the skull to appear as the shape it was reveal from *National Geographic* without the significant slant (prognathism) that would indicate a more ape-like appearance. Interestingly, hidden in the technical jargon of the Berger et al. paper is the comparison of the dentition of *Homo naledi* with *Homo erectus* exposing “differing from the steeply inclined posterior face of *H. naledi...*”<sup>114</sup> which depicts a sloping face we would expect but are not be shown in the artistic renditions.



## Jaw and Teeth

Though some reports made much about the jaw and teeth, the *National Geographic* which had the most to gain, as it had invested financially in this discovery, offer little hope for any acknowledgement of *Homo naledi* being a Homo Genus. “Certain features, especially those of the jawbone and teeth, were far too primitive.”<sup>115</sup> This of course gets contradicted in the same article by the same author. “Some features were astonishingly humanlike—the molar crowns were small. For instance, with five

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<sup>114</sup> Lee Berger, et al., “*Homo naledi*, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep 10, 2015, <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560.full>

<sup>115</sup> Berger, Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

cusps like ours. But the premolar roots were weirdly primitive.”<sup>116</sup> The dental comparison can speak volumes and they found 179 dental crowns in the cave. Though they are fragmentary findings, the jaw appears more in resemblance of *Australopithecine*. “The dental arch or jaw of an ape is more U-shaped, while the human jaw is shaped more like a parabola, more open toward the back.... the australopithecine has reduced canines, no diastema, and somewhat of an intermediate jaw shape.”<sup>117</sup> It is self-evident that any discussion of the teeth becomes overly complicated as to the wearing down which would indicate the age of the creature who owned it and is therefore unable to be appropriately assessed at this time without enough information presented. Each tooth would need to be thoroughly described which at this point has only been addressed with generalization in the technical paper of Berger’s team.

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<sup>116</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>117</sup> Bonnie Yoshida, “Early Hominin Evolution,” Last Updated 01/13/2015; <http://gctest.grossmont.edu/people/bonnie-yoshida-levine/online-lectures/early-hominin-ev.aspx>



## Homo Naledi: The Rising Star of Evolutionary Icons



xiii

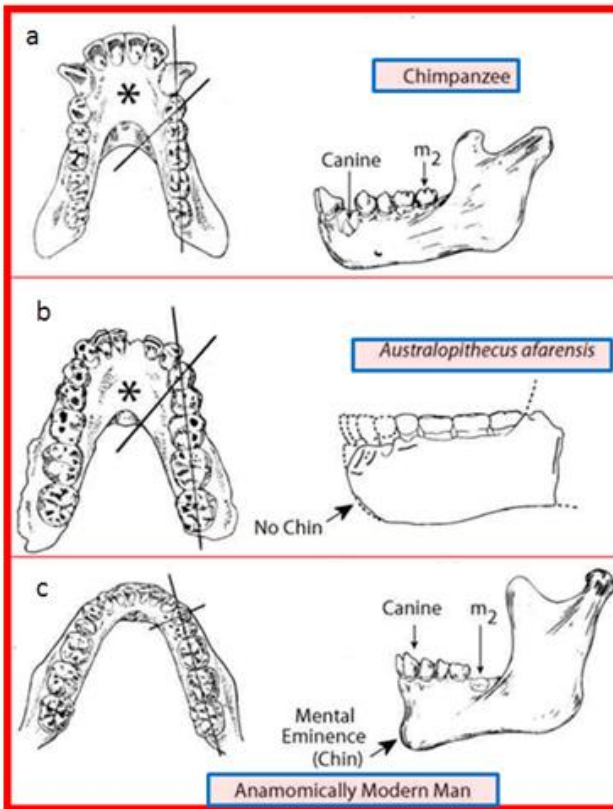


xiv

The image above on the top is *Homo naledi* and the image on the bottom is *Australopithecus*—“Cast of the lower jaw AL 400 1a, found between 1974 and 1977 at Hadar, Africa, by Don Johanson. It is dated to about 3 million years old. It shows characteristic features such as a relatively long and narrow jaw, moderately-

sized back molar teeth with human-like ‘Y-5’ pattern and relatively wide incisors.”<sup>118</sup>

Biologos, a theistic evolution apologetic group, presented a good picture to depict the difference between a chimpanzee, Australopithecus, and Human jawbone. The *Homo naledi* jaw is clearly matched to the Australopithecus.



xv

<sup>118</sup> Australian Museum “Australopithecus afarensis lower jaw,” December 3, 2009; <http://australianmuseum.net.au/image/australopithecus-afarensis-lower-jaw?vm=r&s=1>

The Biologos article explains, “In apes, the first premolar is rotated relative to the tooth row and has a very high cusp so that it creates a sharpening surface for the opposite canine when the two teeth come together. In Lucy, the cusp is somewhat lower and the premolar is only slightly rotated. In humans, the cusp does not extend above the tooth row and there is no rotation at all.”<sup>119</sup> The obvious appearance of the U-shaped jaw of the human with the teeth lining at an outward angle is quite contrast to the chimpanzee and Australopithecus as is also true for the *Homo naledi* proving it should not be classified as *Homo* genus.

### Shoulder Bones

Berger’s team properly admits, “The shoulder are configured largely like those of australopiths.”<sup>120</sup> The ape shoulder has a greater degree of rotation because they were designed to hang from trees and swing. A human would pop their shoulder out of its joint if they attempted to spin, swivel, or twist, the same way an ape is capable while hanging from a tree branch.

“Human shoulder blades are odd, separated from all the apes,” explained researcher Nathan Young.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> James Kidder, The Human Fossil Record, Part 4: Australopithecus Conquers the Landscape,” April 4, 2011; <http://biologos.org/blogs/archive/the-human-fossil-record-part-4-australopithecus-conquers-the-landscape?vm=r&s=1>

<sup>120</sup> Lee Berger, et al., “*Homo naledi*, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep 10, 2015, <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560.full>

<sup>121</sup> Brook Hays, “Ancient human shoulders reveal links to ape ancestors” Sep 9, 2015, UPI Science News; [http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/2015/09/09/Ancient-human-shoulders-reveal-links-to-ape-ancestors/2581441809938/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2015/09/09/Ancient-human-shoulders-reveal-links-to-ape-ancestors/2581441809938/)

It is clear as an undisputed fact that *Homo naledi* “apelike shoulders for climbing...”<sup>122</sup> which shows us again that it cannot be classified with the *Homo* genus.

## Hands

Concerning the hands, the Berger et al. paper stated plainly that the fingers were “more curved proximal and intermediate phalanges of ray 2-5 ... more curved than most australopiths.”<sup>123</sup> *Homo naledi* had “more curved than most australopiths.”<sup>124</sup> Tracy Kivell of University of Kent in England acknowledged in an interview for *New York Times*, these bones showed “extremely curved fingers, more curved than almost any other species of early hominin, which clearly demonstrates climbing capabilities.”<sup>125</sup> Casey Luskin wrote, “Unlike humans, its hands had long, curved fingers that were tailored for climbing.”<sup>126</sup>

With such universal agreement on this anatomical structure, the few sources providing propaganda about the hands is rare, nevertheless, it has been said: “it’s hands more modern, their

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<sup>122</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>123</sup> Lee Berger, et al., “*Homo naledi*, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep 10, 2015, <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560.full>

<sup>124</sup> Lee R. Berger, et. al., “*Homo Naledi*, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” September 10, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560v1>

<sup>125</sup> John Noble Wilford “*Homo Naledi* New Species in Human Lineage Is Found in South African Cave,” Sep. 10, 2015, *New York Times*; [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/science/south-africa-fossils-new-species-human-ancestor-homo-naledi.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/science/south-africa-fossils-new-species-human-ancestor-homo-naledi.html?_r=0)

<sup>126</sup> Casey Luskin, “Hominid Hype and *Homo Naledi*: Did Scientists Really Discover a Human Ancestor?” September 30, 2015; <http://www.christianpost.com/news/hominid-hype-and-homo-naledi-did-scientists-really-discover-a-human-ancestor-146381/>

shape well-suited to making basic tools.... It's fingers are curved, a feature seen in apes that spend much of their time in the trees."<sup>127</sup> The curve of the fingers is for hanging from tree limbs, like hooks to grasp branches. How can the hand with curved fingers more dominating than others in the ape kind be claimed to be used for making tools? Where does this claim come from? There were no tools found with the bones nor were there any reason to believe they used tools. This is evident of Berger's influence as he made the same assertion for his former find *Australopithecus sebida*. Speaking of the *A. sebida* discovery, Rich Deem mentioned "The creature has anatomy characteristic of tree-dwelling apes—long arms coupled with curved fingers and a heal designed for climbing, along with small body size. However, the creature had small fingers similar to humans and a longer thumb. Even so, the thumb is not intermediate between chimpanzees and modern humans, but actually *much longer* than that of modern humans relative to finger size... Why *Australopithecus sediba* had such long thumbs is unknown. Study author Lee Berger speculated that *Australopithecus sediba* had evolved its unusual hand in order to use tools, although no such tools have been recovered from the Malapa site."<sup>128</sup> How would a long thumb help (and not hinder) the making of tools?

Observe the image below closely, the comparison of the bones and of the fingers as well as the wrist and palms are not similar enough to mark *H. naledi* as *Homo* genus. The palms and wrist are

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<sup>127</sup> Ian Sample, "Homo naledi: new species of ancient human discovered, claim scientist," 10, September 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/sep/10/new-species-of-ancient-human-discovered-claim-scientists>

<sup>128</sup> Rich Deem, "*Australopithecus Sebida*: The Missing Link Between Apes and Human?," September 16, 2011; [http://www.godandscience.org/evolution/australopithecus\\_sediba\\_missing\\_link.html](http://www.godandscience.org/evolution/australopithecus_sediba_missing_link.html)

significant because Wikipedia expressed therein lays the homogenous structure justifying its being labeled *Homo*: “The thumb, wrist and palm bones are modern-like...”<sup>129</sup>



The scale bar on the top image = 10 cm., hands in the bottom image are not scale size. (Top image<sup>xvi</sup>) (Bottom image<sup>xvii</sup>)

## Feet

The foot of *Homo naledi* is the most significant factor of its being claimed for genus *Homo*. The focusing of the hype on the feet was

<sup>129</sup> Wikipedia, *Homo naledi*; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo\\_naledi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_naledi)

more than any other anatomical portion of the discovery. Wikipedia reported, “it’s legs, feet and ankles are more similar to the genus Homo.”<sup>130</sup> *National Geographic* relayed, “The feet were virtually indistinguishable from our own.”<sup>131</sup>

Despite what the media proclaimed, the technical paper gave quite a different story about the foot. “The foot of *H. naledi* can be distinguished from the foot of *H. sapiens* only by its flatter lateral and medial malleolar facets on the talus, its low angle of plantar declination of the talar head, its lower orientation of the calcaneal sustentaculum tali, and its gracile calcaneal tuber... The talar head and neck exhibit strong humanlike torsion; the horizontal angle is higher than in most humans, similar to that found in australopiths.”<sup>132</sup> This technical jargon may be difficult to understand, but to simplify it as a rational explanation; they listed a number of different things that distinguish the human foot and *Homo naledi*’s foot. It does not take a Ph. D. to realize that the foot bones are not “indistinguishable” from a modern human’s foot. Dr. Mitchell recognized, “described in the study as a lower arch with a different orientation than typical of the modern human foot.”<sup>133</sup> The Berger et al. paper stated, “The talar head and neck exhibit strong, humanlike torsion; the horizontal angle is higher than in most humans, similar to that found in

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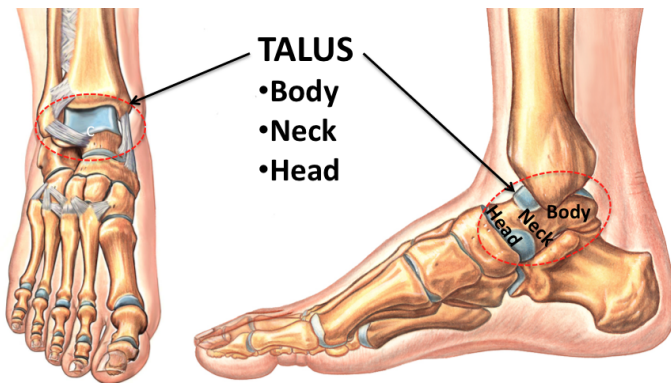
<sup>130</sup> Wikipedia, Homo naledi; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo\\_naledi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_naledi)

<sup>131</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>132</sup> Lee Berger, et al., “*Homo naledi*, a new species of the genus *Homo* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” Sep 10, 2015, <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560.full>

<sup>133</sup> Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell, “Is *Homo naledi* a New Species of Human Ancestor?” Sep. 12, 2015, <https://answersingenesis.org/human-evolution/homo-naledi-new-species-human-ancestor/>

australopiths”<sup>134</sup> This reveals that the creature was not bipedal (walking up right on two feet) but walked like an ape as Australopithecus. Matthew Buchanan, a medical doctor, referred to the effect of an injury to the talar. “Talar body fractures are serious injuries to the square-like bone that makes up the lower weight-bearing bone of the ankle joint.”<sup>135</sup> The talar indicates how the weight of the body will bear on the ankle/foot and identifies whether the creature was bipedal or not.

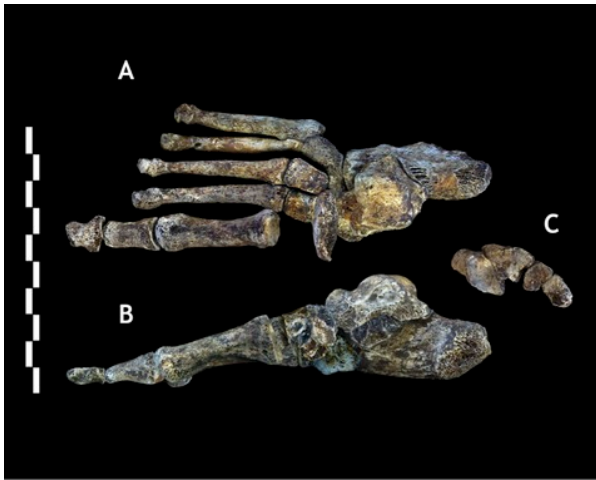


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<sup>134</sup> .” Lee R. Berger, et. al., “Homo Naledi, a new species of the genus Homo from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa,” September 10, 2015;  
<http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09560v1>

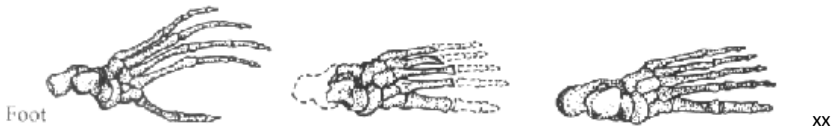
<sup>135</sup> Matthew Buchanan, MD (ed.), “Talar Body Fracture,” August 29, 2015;  
<http://www.fooeducation.com/foot-and-ankle-conditions/talar-body-fracture/?vm=r&s=1>





scale bar = 10 cm.<sup>xix</sup>

A comparison of foot bones: Chimpanzee (left), Australopithecus Africanus (middle), human (right).



Once again, we do not find any significant distinction of the *Homo naledi* and *Australopithecus*.

Evolutionists have long awaited a discovery that could be presented to the public as objective fossil evidence that apes developed human like feet to justify their propaganda from the Laetoli footprints.

The Laetoli footprints were most likely made by *Australopithecus afarensis*, an early human whose fossils were found in the same sediment layer. The

entire footprint trail is almost 27 m (88 ft) long and includes impressions of about 70 early human footprints.

3.6 million years ago in Laetoli, Tanzania, two early humans walked through wet volcanic ash. When the nearby volcano erupted again, subsequent layers of ash covered and preserved the oldest known footprints of early humans....

The shape of the feet, along with the length and configuration of the toes, show that the Laetoli Footprints were made by an early human, and the only known early human in the region at that time was *Au. afarensis*.<sup>136</sup>

With this discovery of footprints, evolutionists would have had to either acknowledge: a) humans existed 3.6 million years ago and they would then be forced to adjust all the dating of evolutionary thinking, b) the rock layer they found the footprints in are not accurately dated and then be forced to adjust all their dates based on evolutionary thinking, c) identify these footprints as Australopithecus with human feet and claim that they walked up right as bipedal creatures contrary to all the evidence that they were knuckle walkers. Jonathan Sarfati stated, “A good example of reworking is the famous footprints at Laetoli, Africa, of an upright walking biped – the University of Chicago’s Dr. Russell Tuttle has

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<sup>136</sup> “Laetoli Footprint Trails,” Smithsonian Institution, updated June 3, 2016; <http://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/behavior/footprints/laetoli-footprint-trails>

shown that these are the same sorts of prints as made by habitually barefoot humans. But since they are dated at millions of years prior to when evolutionists believe modern humans arrived, they are regarded as australopithecine prints, by definition, even though australopithecine foot bones are substantially different from human ones.”<sup>137</sup> Notice that it is known that Australopithecine “foot bones are substantially different than human ones,” and yet the Berger et al. paper repeatedly compared *H. naledi*’s foot bones to australopithecine while calling it human like in structure.



xxi

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<sup>137</sup> Jonathan Sarfati, Ph.D., *Refuting Evolution 2*, Master Books, 2002, p. 129

## Dr. Lee Berger

Creationist Marc Ambler wrote, “Professor Lee Berger from the University of Witwatersrand, paleoanthropologist and leader of the team that researched the find at the so-called ‘Cradle of Humankind’ is a ‘celebrity’ scientist who knows well how to extract maximum publicity, something even the evolutionary sympathetic media acknowledge.”<sup>138</sup> Indeed, *NBCNews* stated, “Berger, a jocular American with a flare for showmanship...”<sup>139</sup> *National Geographic*, who have the most invested in this discovery and the claims made by Berger, confessed, “Berger is a tireless-fund raiser and a master at enthralling a public audience.”<sup>140</sup> How much of what the media has reported is Dr. Berger’s natural flare for raising funds and raising his own name to fame?

Discussing a lecture Lee Berger gave at the Perot Museum, Dallas Morning News reported,

Scientist Lee Berger used to believe the odds of finding the fossils of man’s primitive ancestors were 10 million to 1.

But after unearthing his second major discovery, he has changed his mind.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Marc Ambler, “What to make of Homo Naledi? More pseudo-scientific claims of human ancestry” Sep. 22, 2015; <http://creation.com/homo-naledi>

<sup>139</sup> Themba Hadebe “Critics Question Homo Naledi Fossil Find in South Africa” Sep. 16, 2015, *NBCNews*; <http://www.nbcnews.com/science/science-news/critics-question-homo-naledi-fossil-find-south-africa-n428401>

<sup>140</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>141</sup> Annan Kuchment, “Scientist Lee Berger details discovery of primitive species in Perot Museum lecture,” Sep. 29 updated Sep. 30, 2015, *Dallas Morning News*; <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/dallas/headlines/20150929-scientist-lee-berger-details-discovery-of-primitive-species.ece>

His first claim to fame fizzled out because the controversy about his find being a new species. Mark Johnson writes:

Once a fruitful area for fossils, the South African caves had not yielded significant discoveries for many years. That changed roughly a decade ago when Berger, a paleoanthropologist at the University of the Witwatersrand, undertook a systematic re-examination of the area, studying images from Google Earth and walking the land.

On one of these walks in 2008, Berger's 9-year-old son, Matthew, stumbled upon a fossilized collarbone almost 2 million years old inside a block of breccia, an assortment of rock and mineral fragments cemented together. Further excavations uncovered parts of two skeletons belonging to a new species called *Australopithecus sediba*. The new species appeared to walk on two legs, but also climb through trees, making it a possible bridge between ape-like creatures and humans.<sup>142</sup>

Marc Ambler recognized, "To regain the spotlight, Berger needed a *Homo*. *H. naledi* appears to have enough anatomical overlap to be at least tentatively accomplished in that genus for now."<sup>143</sup>

However, secular scientists are not convinced. "University of Zurich anthropologist Christopher Zollikofer told the Guardian

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<sup>142</sup> Mark Johnson, "Our family tree grows," Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sep. 10, 2015, 6A

<sup>143</sup> Marc Ambler, "What to make of Homo Naledi? More pseudo-scientific claims of human ancestry" Sep. 22, 2015; <http://creation.com/homo-naledi>

many of the bone characteristics used to claim the creature as a new species are seen in more primitive animals and thus by definition cannot be used to define a new species.”<sup>144</sup> Tim White from University of California Berkeley, stated, “From what is presented here, they belong to a primitive *Homo erectus*, a species named in the 1800’s.”<sup>145</sup> Actually it falls more in line with australopithecine as we have seen.

Christopher Zollikofer, an anthropologist from the university of Zurich, agrees, “The ‘new species’ and ‘dump-the-dead’ claims are clearly for the media. None of them is substantiated by the data presented in the publications.”<sup>146</sup> Others have indicated Berger’s actions with this discovery seem to be mere publicity stunts.

One said: “There are many male cavers who could get in there, but that would have spoiled the publicity stunt.”<sup>147</sup>

Dr. Berger character is questionable and we should question whether his discoveries are trustworthy.

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<sup>144</sup> Sara Nelson, “Homo Naledi: New Species Of Ancient Human Discovered In South African Cave,” October 9, 2015; [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave\\_n\\_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/09/10/homo-naledi-new-species-human-discovered-south-african-cave_n_8115120.html?vm=r&s=1)

<sup>145</sup> Ian Sample, “Homo naledi: new species of ancient human discovered, claim scientist,” 10, September 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/sep/10/new-species-of-ancient-human-discovered-claim-scientists>

<sup>146</sup> Ian Sample, “Homo naledi: new species of ancient human discovered, claim scientist,” 10, September 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/sep/10/new-species-of-ancient-human-discovered-claim-scientists>

<sup>147</sup> Robin McLie, “Scientist who found New Human Species accused of playing fast and loose with the truth” 24, October, 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/oct/25/discovery-human-species-accused-of-rushing-errors>

## Suspicious Factors

Dr. Berger's character presents us with reasons to be suspicious of his findings as well as his conclusions that are force fed the public through the media. Secular reporters acknowledge further aspects of Berger's criticism: "Meanwhile, some in the field have criticized Berger's inability to date his find, while others are challenging Berger's claims that the remains in Rising Star Cave had been buried deliberately."<sup>148</sup> Surely if Berger had these bones planted there, he would attempt to avoid any dating of them in order to not have them proven to be of a young date. Remember CMI made the public challenge and offered to pay for Carbon 14 dating. Berger insists his discovery is 2 million years old and has encouraged that date to be promoted in all the secular papers written on the subject. Why? Because he needs the public convinced by him before they are confronted with all the suspicious factors that might convince them to the contrary.

The possibility of these bones being planted is indicated by the way they were "arranged." *National Geographic* reported, "(It was clear from the arrangement of the bones that someone had already been there, perhaps decades ago.)"<sup>149</sup> The dump the dead theory does not hold to much weight when we find the confession of the bones being arranged. The Dirks et al. technical paper relates, "The avian specimens were part of a group of bones that had been 'arranged' on rocks by an unknown caver prior to discovery by our caving team... We, therefore, interpret the

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<sup>148</sup> Klona Smith-Strickland, "The Controversy over Homo Naledi Is Actually a Good Thing," 10/25/15; <http://gizmodo.com/the-controversy-over-homo-naledi-is-actually-a-good-thi-1738572110>

<sup>149</sup> Jamie Shreeve, "This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?" Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

observed dry-bone fracture patterns to be due to post-depositional sediment movement within the chamber as Unit 2 and 3 are reworked, as well as unintentional damage by cavers or others entering the chamber..."<sup>150</sup> So they claim the bones were fractured by sediment movement and unknown cavers that were not a part of their team recovering the bones. But if sediment movement caused the breakage, that would have taken place over long periods of time which does not fit the evidence.

Dr. Berger said in an interview with the *Observer*:

"Before we started the dig, we could see the white patches on the bones and realized they had been caused by recent breakage," he [Berger] told the *Observer* last week.<sup>151</sup>

This was said as a response to the criticism of quick work causing the breaks. Perhaps it was not the quick dig but the recent planting of the bones down this chute which caused the brakes and being "white patches" means these brakes were recent not millions of years. It definitely was not sediment movement causing the breaks, as they claimed, since that would have caused staining on the white patches to an equal degree of the surface of the bones. Again, it is obvious they are not fossilized as *National Geographic* tells us:

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<sup>150</sup> Paul Dirks, et al., "Geological and taphonomic context for the new hominin species *Homo naledi* from the Dinaledi Chamber, South Africa," Sep. 12, 2015; <http://elifesciences.org/content/4/e09561>

<sup>151</sup> Robin McLie, "Scientist who found New Human Species accused of playing fast and loose with the truth" 24, October, 2015; <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/oct/25/discovery-human-species-accused-of-rushing-errors>



They weren't stone heavy, like most fossils, nor were they encased in stone—they were just lying about on the surface, as if someone had tossed them in. They noticed a piece of a lower jaw, with teeth intact; it looked human."<sup>152</sup>

Recent breaks in the bones that are not fossilized being evident in the fact of white patches where they were broken as well as the indication that they were “arranged,” unburied, not deteriorated by bugs gnawing on them can hardly allow even a decade of them being placed there. Yet the scientists allow no other option than the burial theory, which is not reasonable, so we are left with no other option than to believe the bones were planted. The fact that the chamber was known about before this discovery and the bones were never noticed in any significant way—the avian bones being arranged shows the former cavers aware of these bones found more interest in the bird bones—seems to offer us reason to believe the *Homo naledi* bones were not present much earlier.

Creationists Tim Carey from Institute for Creation Research points out, “All the unusual sizes and mixtures of human and apelike traits indicate the bones may not even match.”<sup>153</sup> He follows this with his suspicion, “Could the paleontologists have fabricated a new species by cobbling together parts from unrelated kinds? Did they use their imagings of their expectations—to put the pieces together? If so, it wouldn't be the

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<sup>152</sup> Jamie Shreeve, “This Face Changes the Human Story. But How?” Sep. 10, 2015, *National Geographic*; <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150910-human-evolution-change/>

<sup>153</sup> Tim Carey, Ph.D., “Homo Naledi: New Claims of a Missing Link,” December 2015, *Acts & Facts*. 44 (12). p. 17; <http://www.icr.org/article/9005>

first time.”<sup>154</sup> This he wrote in light of an early article in which he criticized, “Also, the cranium pieces didn't seem to fit the jaws. Despite what artistic depictions show, no substantially complete skulls were found with jaw and cranium attached.”<sup>155</sup> Such criticism is not only from the Creationists community.

As for the Dinaledi finds, Schwartz and Tattersall point out that although the foreheads of some of the new skulls are gently sloped, one skull has a taller forehead with a distinct brow ridge – suggesting two species are present. “Putting these fossils in the genus *Homo* adds to the lack of clarity in trying to sort out human evolution,” says Schwartz. Berger disagrees, saying this can be explained by differences between males and females of the same species.<sup>156</sup>

Berger will always defend his claim to fame because the only other option is his complete disrepute as a scientist, utter shame, and embarrassment to the evolutionary community for presenting another fraud as evidence for a foolish philosophy. Different skulls cannot be explained by different genders. Human skulls do not morph in different forms for the distinct genders. Why would some extinct creature that is allegedly a transitional form of the *Homo* genus?

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<sup>154</sup> Tim Carey, Ph.D., “Homo Naledi: New Claims of a Missing Link,” December 2015, *Acts & Facts*. 44 (12). p. 17; <http://www.icr.org/article/9005>

<sup>155</sup> Tim Carey, Ph.D., “Homo Naledi: Geology of a Claimed Missing Link,” October 2015, <http://www.icr.org/article/homo-naledi-geology-claimed-missing/>

<sup>156</sup> Collin Barras, “New species of extinct human found in cave may rewrite history,” September 10, 2015, *New Scientist*; <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22730383-700-new-species-extinct-human-found-in-cave-may-rewrite-history/>

## Conclusion

This specimen of assorted bones that make a mosaic of mostly ape appearing and, perhaps, somewhat with human illusions seems to be of a recent deposit of bones stained but not fossilized. It seems upon examination to be predominantly Australopithecus. The discovery will always remain obscure because of the presupposition of the discoverer and slanted reporting of the mainstream media. A fair trial will never have its day in court.

The attempted transparency of the discovery is what can be appreciated though with the majority of the individuals involved with it were young—having recently completed their studies with no field experience; they were simply using the opportunity to jump start their careers and followed the flow from the professionals so they could be dragged along the ride on coat tails. These young individuals were not in the position to question much, nor would it have been profitable for them to do such. Berger surely picked them for that purpose. For future discoveries, it would be much more transparent, and a better media stimulating publicity stunt, if there was an equal team of professional evolutionists and creationists to examine the discovery and offer reports.

As it stands with the current information, *Homo naledi* does not seem to offer any solid evidence for evolution, the claims are unsubstantiated when assessing the actual technical papers written about the discovery, as well as the contradicting information the scientists involved with the discovery have offered to reporters during interviews. It hardly deserves the hype it has received, but that could be said for every alleged missing link that

get exalted temporarily just to be forgotten as a misunderstanding. Few missing links have been claimed and even fewer have held up to the test of time, and it is surprising that any have. Only time will tell if *Homo naledi* will.

### **Made in God's Image**

The Bible tells us that God created man in His image “So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27) God created man distinctly different from the beast which is self-evident in the surrounding context of this verse which stated God gave man dominion over these animals. In Genesis 9, God gives Naoh and his sons the command that these animals are for food (Genesis 9:3) but mankind is unique in being in God's image and should not be killed (Genesis 9:6). This is because “the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth” (Ecclesiastes 3:21). The spirit of man going upward is later defined as “the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” (Ecclesiastes 12:7) Ever man's spirit will return to God as the Bible says, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). Man—not animals—are created in the image of God and will be held accountable for the things he does in this life.

Scripture tells us, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12), “There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God” (Romans 3:10-11), “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:21), “the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4, 20), and “the wages of sin is

death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, took the punishment we deserve for our sins so that we can receive forgiveness. “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us...” (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10); “in whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:14). This forgiveness of sins can be receive as a free gift from God through placing your faith in Jesus Christ who died for your sins, was buried and rose from the grave. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9) “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...” (Titus 3:5); “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)

Clearly God views man quite differently than the animals and desires a personal relationship with His most beloved creation. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16-18) God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9), and “now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30). So He tells us “that if

thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Roman 10:9-10, 13) “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12). Have you received that most precious gift God can offer, salvation through His Son Jesus Christ.

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