

# Mount St. Helens a Modern Day Catastrophe

When Mount St. Helens erupted on May 18, 1980 it showed dramatically how the earth could be shaped by catastrophes. The pictures on the left show the results of the eruption (Tarbuck 1996). During the Genesis flood the earth went through various tectonic and geologic upheavals (Psalm 104:5-9). **Mt. St. Helens shows how strata can be formed and eroded very quickly.**

- The height of Mt. St. Helens was reduced from 9500 ft. to 8150 ft. a reduction of more than 1350 ft. This occurred in a few moments (Chernicoff 1999).
- The resulting ash fallout and pyroclastic mudflow created more than 400 ft of sediment in a few days.
- The energy released was equivalent to 400 million tons of TNT - approximately 20,000 Hiroshima-size atomic bombs.
- A mudflow on March 19, 1982, eroded a canyon system up to 140 feet deep in the headwaters of the North Fork of the Toutle River Valley. This canyon is a 1/40<sup>th</sup> scale model of the Grand Canyon. It is called the Little Grand Canyon of the Toutle River (Austin 1986).
- Spirit Lake was filled with logs, these logs are settling, in an upright position on the bottom of the lake. Many geologists believe that these logs will eventually form a Petrified Forest.
- The vegetation in the lake bottom is beginning to form peat/coal.