

Neanderthal Men—Cave Men?

One of the strongest evidences that the Neandertals were fully human relates to their reputation as ‘Cave Men’. Since so many of their remains have been found in caves, it was assumed that they lived in caves because they had not evolved enough to invent more sophisticated dwellings. The public is unaware that Neandertal dwellings have been found. Nor is the public aware that thousands of people across the world live in caves today. When Ralph Solecki (Columbia University) excavated Shanidar Cave, Iraq, he discovered that about 80 Kurds had lived in that cave until 1970, during a time of political unrest (*Discover*, January 1997, p. 33.).

The Neandertal fossil evidence shows that the Neandertal practice is in complete accord with the Genesis record. At least 345 Neandertal fossil individuals have been discovered so far at 83 sites in Europe, the Near East, and western Asia. Of these 345 Neandertal individuals, 183 of them (53 per cent) represent burials — **all of them burials in caves or rock shelters**. Further, it is obvious that caves were used as family burial grounds or cemeteries, as the following sites show:

- Krapina Rock Shelter, Croatia — 75 (minimum) Neandertals buried.
- Arcy-sur-Cure caves, France — 26 Neandertals buried.
- Kebara Cave, Mount Carmel, Israel — 21 Neandertals buried.
- Tabun Cave, Mount Carmel, Israel — 12 Neandertals buried.
- La Freesia Rock Shelter, France — 8 Neandertals buried.
- Shanidar Cave, Iraq — 7 Neandertals buried.
- Maude Cave, Galilee, Israel — 7 Neandertals buried.
- Gutter Cave, Monte Circa, Italy — 4 Neandertals buried.
- Tsar 'Ail Rock Shelter, Lebanon — 3 Neandertals buried.