

THE **GAP**  
*IS NOT A THEORY!*

By Jack W. Langford

*SECTION TWO—*

AN EXAMINATION OF  
THE SECOND VERSE OF GENESIS ONE

*ANSWERING THE QUESTION—*

ARE THE WORDS OF THE SECOND VERSE  
MERELY DESCRIPTIVE OF HOW GOD  
ORIGINALLY CREATED THE EARTH?

*OR*

ARE THE WORDS OF THE SECOND VERSE  
INDICATIVE OF A JUDGMENT?

This study should demonstrate very conclusively, to an unbiased and objective mind, that the words of verse two and the whole setting of verse two is indeed to be understood as indicative of a cataclysmic judgment having occurred. This fact was recognized by certain prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures, by the very definition of the Hebrew words used, by the apostle Paul and also by certain early Hebrew and Christian interpreters.

## GENESIS 1:2

**There is no other passage in the creation account which has stirred up more suspicion and controversy than this second verse.**

### *The Words*

It is generally agreed upon by Hebrew scholars and Bible teachers that the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis consists of three clauses. Obviously there are three separate thoughts expressed. By traditional translations they would read something like the following (KJV or the NKJV)—

- (1.) “And the earth was without form, and void;
- (2.) and darkness was on the face of the deep.
- (3.) And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

A quick investigation with a Hebrew Lexicon, such as that of Gesenius, would demonstrate a more literal translation of these three clauses which is advantageous to our understanding—

- (1.) “And the earth was waste and empty (*tohu wa-bohu*),
- (2.) and darkness was over the face of the abyss (*tehom*- an abyss, of watery depths and of that which is subterranean),
- (3.) and the Spirit of God was hovering (fluttering) over the face of the water.”

Actually, four important facts are to be immediately noted in these three clauses. I will be enlarging upon these facts as we move through this study—

- (1.) The physical earth was in a *waste or chaotic state*.
- (2.) The whole scene was shrouded in *darkness*.
- (3.) The earth was totally *submerged under water*. This is deduced from the facts that the “deep” is an expression most often used concerning a watery abyss, the specific mention of “water” in the third clause, and the fact that “dry land” does not emerge until the third day (verse 9) of this first chapter in Genesis.
- (4.) And lastly, the unusual and mysterious *activity of the Spirit of God*.

To these four facts we can add three others that are not specifically stated, but are obviously contextually realistic and important to remember—

(5.) In contrast to the six day activity of God, here in the second verse there is, as it were, a *deathly silence*. This scene is not introduced by any spoken word from God as are each of the six days that follow in the first chapter.

(6.) In addition, there is the *absence* of the concluding words—“*And God saw that it was good,*” like in the six days. At best, this is a very undesirable state of things.

(7.) And finally, there is *time—time* indefinite, and unchronicled. How long since the earth had been created and then continued in this condition is simply not stated.

When one stops and seriously considers these various facts and their relationship to the six day activity of God that follows, the scene herein described will actually become soberly and mysteriously interesting to say the least!

In other words, this is a description of the existing condition of the earth prior to the specific six day activity of God that follows. There is not a single one of these seven facts or ingredients that does not easily fit into a judgment scenario. Also, please remember that we have already demonstrated in *SECTION ONE* of *The Gap Is Not A Theory* that by correct Biblical hermeneutics (which has often been the understanding of Jewish sages for the last two thousand years and is now totally ignored by the Young Earth Creationists), the week of the six day activity of God was finally inaugurated by the action of the Holy Spirit here in the conclusion of verse two. The six days, therefore, begin with the spoken word of God in verse three. Consequently, the scene in verse two is not a part of the renewal of God that follows during the six days.

***What exactly does this chaotic condition consist of?***

In *SECTION ONE* we pointed out that at the time of verse two the earth consisted of at least the following—

- 1) There was the whole sphere of the earth itself.
- 2) The earth must have been somehow suspended in space, perhaps following a pathway in its relationship to other objects in the already existing “heavens.”
- 3) The earth was a unit of mass or substances. Obviously, the law of gravity had to be firmly securing it all in place. Also it must have had a magnetic field.
- 4) The immediate object of sight, if that were possible, would be the vast ocean of water surrounding the earth.
- 5) Immediately below the waters were the “wasted and emptied” land masses.
- 6) If we follow the geological composition of the earth, it was composed of an outer crust wherein are contained the various and sundry masses of rock.
- 7) Beneath this is what is called the “mantle” of the earth composed of heated rock and also some molten rock.
- 8) Beneath this are the “Outer Core” of the earth and also its “Inner Core.” All these layers compose “the foundations of the earth.”
- 9) The earth was revolving in a 24 hour time frame as understood in verse five.
- 10) And finally there is TIME—inexplicable, perhaps vast and mysterious—until the moving of the Holy Spirit of God brought about the spoken word of God, “Let there be light.”

With the establishment of “days” in verse three, *chronicled time actually began*. Thus mankind could collect the data the Bible reveals and understand the ages of history from this point forward. This, of course, is by no means to be understood as the age of the earth or of the universe—a classic mistake the Young Earth Creationists make.

***Spectators?***

Think about it! There is no human being present to witness this spectacle. Moses is writing about it by divine inspiration. The Holy Spirit of God is placing the words upon the consciousness of the human writer to place in script, and then the same Holy Spirit of God can enlighten the minds and hearts of those who read the account.

First of all, even if we were spectators positioned out in space and able to look upon this scene, we would see—*NOTHING!* There was a blackout! Now this is the first shock to our natural inclination to want to be able to see—especially a scene like this—but we can't. There is nothing but darkness. We must only believe what God's Word says. Perhaps if we were there and able to look through something like special "infrared sights," we might be able to barely perceive a convoluted planet submerged in water—*not a beautiful sight at all!*

Again, if we were allowed to be spectators of this scene, then we would still only be dependent upon intelligences like the angels standing with us. They could possibly explain to us the mysterious activity of the Holy Spirit of God brooding over the face of this darkened, watery chaos—*otherwise, we would never know anything!*

In addition, there is no introductory voice from God, as was true in each of the six days' work of God. Here there is only SILENCE—*actually a haunting silence!*

Furthermore, just think about this—there is obviously no statement or indication from God that this was "*GOOD*" as is done at the conclusion of most of the six day activity of God. *It becomes obvious that no one could pronounce this scene "good."*

Obviously, this is anything BUT a spectacular view of an unformed earth. Our astronauts would never relay pictures of this from their position in space. Even if the earth was slightly perceived, it would not be a scene any tourist guide would want to place before sightseers. Certainly, National Geographic would never place it upon the cover of their magazine. Those who display the spectacular scenes of the world in which we live would never want to slip this picture amongst their slide set, or to be printed in a beautiful book. Certainly, people would never frame this picture and place it in a prominent place in homes, halls, offices or museums. It had all the earmarks of being nothing more than a *darkened devastation*, and not a magnificent creation.

Now, someone might say, "Mr. Langford, you really have no authority to say this is the scene of a '*darkened devastation*'." Of course, it just so happens that I do have authority to make this statement, because there was, in fact, one man who actually was allowed to see this sight by means of a vision. His name is Jeremiah, a prophet of God! Not only was he allowed to see this sight in a vision, but as we shall see, he ABSOLUTELY designates what he saw as a horrible DEVASTATION! Furthermore a second prophet of prominence named Isaiah was inspired to use the very same two words, *tohu* and *bohu*, as virtual designations of DESTRUCTION. And these are the only three times these two words are used together—Gen. 1:2, Jer. 4:23 and Isa. 34:11.

#### *You can well see why—*

The second verse of Genesis One has long held a place of great consideration, interest and even suspicion. To many investigators the Mosaic account smacks of pagan contamination. This is because it spells "*chaos*" which, as is well-known, is the central theme of many ancient pagan accounts of creation. Out of the chaos caused by a titanic struggle between the gods, the supreme god began the actual formation of the elements into the present world. Of course, we should not immediately discount pagan stories; often it has been found that they are corruptions of actual historical facts. Many scholars and Bible teachers have long considered the Mosaic account to likewise give an opening

scene of absolute chaos. In fact, that translation of *tohu* as “chaos” is also offered in lexicons and translations where the word is sometimes used.

There are well-known stories in nearly every ancient society on the face of the earth of a flood of water destroying everything, and the preservation of a certain family and animals by means of some kind of floating boat. These all bear a remarkable relationship to the story in the Bible of the Noatian flood as carefully recorded in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> chapters of the book of Genesis. We simply recognize these various legends as ancient traditions which have passed through multiplied generations, sometimes accruing certain distortions along the way, but at the same time being clear reflections and records of an actual historical event of gigantic proportions. The fact that these stories are perpetuated in so many different societies on the face of the earth realistically points back to an original source common to them all.

In a similar way, investigators must recognize the importance in the stories coming from ancient civilizations, especially those surrounding the Hebrew people concerning the formation of the world after a gigantic cosmic struggle between the gods. These stories coming from the various Sumerian, Chaldean, Assyrian, Babylonian, Median, Egyptian, Grecian and even Roman civilizations all have two things that are very often common—a cosmic struggle and then creation out of a preexisting chaos. Even a civilization as far away as China partially bears the same story—

The Institute For Creation Research published an article in their “Acts @ Facts” magazine (November 2008) entitled *Uncovering Creation Truth In Ancient Cultures*. This is written by a medical doctor from China named Ava Ford. She wrote the following account of a tradition which supposedly traces back even further than the time of Moses (1500 B.C.) to at least the time of the Hsia Dynnasty in 2205 B.C.—

“Of old in the beginning, *there was the great chaos, without form and dark.* The five elements (planets) *had not begun to revolve, nor the sun and the moon to shine.* In the midst thereof there existed neither forms nor sound. Thou, O spiritual Sovereign, camest forth in Thy presidency, and first did *divide the grosser parts from the purer.* Thou madest heaven; Thou madest earth; Thou madest man. All things with their reproducing power got their being.” (Italicized words are mine, J.L.)

Then the comment was made by the author—“*Sounds remarkably similar to Genesis, doesn't it?*” (Emphasis mine, J.L.)

### ***Chaos followed by Formation***

And I would answer—that is exactly the point I wish to make—the Mosaic account also begins with the formation of earth in six days out of a CHAOS! In fact, as I previously stated, “chaos” is the word sometimes chosen by Biblical scholars to describe the second verse of Genesis One. This is especially true as it has reference to the words “without form and void” as is generally rendered in many Bibles. In addition, this ancient Chinese account indicates the planets and the sun were *in existence* but not functioning in relationship to the earth. Furthermore, this is identical to the Mosaic account in that the first three days’ work was the *dividing* of light from darkness, the waters below (oceans) from the waters above (clouds), and the land from the seas. Finally, the account is similar

in that the last three days were characterized by God actually *making* the heavens to function in relationship to the earth and the creation of fish, fowl, animals and man. Thus, the ancient Chinese account seems to have preserved the story in a great deal of accuracy. In this respect, the statement was made by the author of this account, “*Sounds remarkably similar to Genesis, doesn’t it?*” This should be taken careful note of by the very institution that published the account.

In *SECTION THREE* of this study, I will demonstrate, beyond any shadow of a doubt to any honest person, what many teachers have Biblically documented before: namely, that there was, indeed, a gigantic struggle between Lucifer and God, which brought about the “chaos” of Genesis 1:2, out of which God in six successive days re-ordered the heavens and the earth. As we all well know, the woman in the garden was tempted by an *already fallen spirit creature*, Satan, who merely used a subtle serpent as his medium of contact. So, before man’s rebellion and fall there was already a rebellious fallen spirit creature in existence. That also means “evil” and even “death” (separation from the life that is in God) were already in existence, yet it pertained to a different age and an earlier creation. Not a word about the origin, character or history of this person (Lucifer) and his influence is told us by Moses in the book of Genesis. Where did this spirit intelligence come from? When was he created? Why is he obviously against God’s will? Was he always that way? All this is the subject of later revelation in the prophets and is not to be found in the first chapters of Genesis. The actual history of the original creation of Lucifer, his functioning in perfection on a splendid magnificent earth, and lastly his rebellion and fall occupies an epoch of time entirely distinct from the epoch of man’s creation and fall. Just as the earth was in a waste condition before the six days, so Satan was in a rebellious existence as well—before the six days—long before!

### **“Without Form and Void”**

It is very sad to see some teachers of the Bible attempt to eradicate the evidence which would surely alleviate the predicaments which their own theories about a young earth have plunged them into. Such is the case with certain of those who refuse to believe that the second verse of Genesis One is descriptive of a judgment. They do everything in their power to eradicate any idea of such a thing.

However, it has long been pointed out that this second verse has all the appearances and earmarks of being a judgment. All the ingredients involved most surely could be interpreted that way. Note the following—1.) As stated earlier, and as we shall prove in a moment, the words “without form and void” are literally “waste and empty.” These words are indeed used together two other times in the Hebrew Scriptures; they positively are *judgment scenes*, in one case even directly envisioning the Genesis account. 2.) As we have already indicated, the earth inundated with water was also a clear judgment action in Noah’s flood and at the baptism of Jesus Christ for ritual purification. It is interesting, and we shall see more about this a little later, that some have even looked at Genesis 1:2 as the first *baptism* in the Bible! 3.) Darkness is a condition contrary to God, Who “is light,” and God’s environment, because “In Him is no darkness at all” (I John 1:5). 4.) In addition, the text does not say God spoke this condition into existence as was done during each of the six days that follows. There is only silence. 5.) That silence also marks the fact that there is no pronouncement that this condition “was good” as is done later. 6.) Again, as noted previously, there are three cases where the

Holy Spirit is either fluttering as a bird, or the dove appears at the conclusion of the flood, or the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove after Christ's baptism is given. This activity always spells a new beginning. This is what we know so far. In summary, it doesn't take a Sherlock Holmes to have his suspicions aroused by all these factors. So, let us take out our magnifying glass, so as to speak, and look at the words "waste and empty" very carefully. Do these words themselves imply a judgment?

### ***Contextual Definitions***

Lexical definitions are certainly important. Contextual definitions are often even more important. William White, Jr., who wrote the "Introduction" to the Hebrew section of *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, had this to say concerning context: "It has often been said that the best commentary on Scripture is Scripture itself. Nowhere is this more true than in Hebrew word studies. The best method for determining the meaning of any Hebrew word is to study the context in which it appears. If it appears in many different contexts, then the meaning of the word can be found with greater accuracy" (page xvi). We all should recognize this as good advice.

*Tohu* and *bohu* are the two Hebrew words used, which have been translated "waste and empty." Interestingly enough, as noted before, these two words are employed together in this fashion *three times* in the Hebrew Scriptures. The one word, *bohu*, is used only on these three occasions, whereas *tohu* is used some additional seventeen times.

The first time they are used together is here in Genesis 1:2. Now, in Genesis 1:2 there is really no extensive contextual information given, other than the simple statement of this being the earth's condition prior to the beginning of the six days of God's activity in making the earth habitable for man. At this time we can only speculate. We might speculate this is simply the condition of the earth as it originally came from the creative hand of God. And admittedly, that is what most have hastily assumed. However, many Bible teachers and scholars have admitted that the presumption that God actually created the earth in this chaotic condition is "not explicitly stated." Furthermore, we shall see positive evidences that this is not the way God initially created the earth. Therefore, in using caution at this time, we must recognize we certainly do not positively know this general assumption. The text merely says this was the condition of the earth, but this does not automatically mean that is the way God originally created it.

### ***Did God create the earth this way?***

To say that God created the earth this way is actually a conjecture which, as many have observed, has serious problems. Before we go further, let us review what these problems might be. First of all, it is obviously a fact that the first day was characterized by God bringing "*light*" into existence to illuminate the earth—Genesis 1:3. This is the way the first day is always illustrated in artistic pictures. *However*, if the second verse is to be understood as the way God actually began the creation on the first day, then the first thing God created was "*darkness*" and not "*light*." Now if this is actually the way God started the first day then that should properly be the first illustration used of the first day. This presents an obvious contradiction. I don't think anyone has ever seen an illustration of the first day by a totally black page. Why would God start with a condition contrary to His very being and environment?

It has been observed that the Hebrew word *bara*, which is normally translated “create,” in and of itself, and by its own nature, implies a “finished product” no matter what is its object. Though the lexicons will indicate the word is taken from a basic idea “to cut or carve out,” it does so to completion so as “to pare down, make smooth, to polish, to *produce*, hence to create.” In other words the word is understood as implying a *finished product*. This we can understand from the basic lexicons (Gesenius, Brown-Driver-Briggs, etc.). (The only way verse two could be described as a finished product is if it was a judgment from God.) The creation of the earth implies a “**cosmos**”—*orderly arrangement*—whereas *verse two* describes a “**chaos**”—*total disorder*. Therefore, the text appears to be careful in NOT saying—“In the beginning God *created* the earth *waste and void* and darkness over the face of the deep...” This is not the way God created it.

In Hebrew *bara* as used is a particular verbal form of the word that has been exclusively used of Divine activity. Everyone recognizes this. In the Hebrew Scriptures both man and God can “form,” “fashion,” “furnish” and “make,” but only God can and does *bara*—“create.” In addition, the basic translation of verse one is that of a completed thought or narrative. In other words, there is normally a period at the end of the first verse. This is the only way it has been translated from the Hebrew into other languages from very early times. It is so translated into Greek by the Septuagint translators (250 B.C); both Philo and Josephus (contemporaries of Christ) rendered it in that manner. Other Hebrew translations into Greek, such as that of Aquila (128 A.D.), Theodotion (180 A.D.), and Symmachus (200 A.D.), all translated it in that manner. In addition, that is the way it was translated into the various Latin translations including Jerome’s Latin Vulgate; Jerome was assisted by a Hebrew scholar. Finally, the Hebrew Massoretic texts (from 500 to 1000 A.D.), whose authors purposed to codify the Hebrew text, introduced the vowel system, which was not designed to change any traditional reading of the Scriptures, but only to fix and stereotype them. They manifested the same understanding as indicated in their marking system of Genesis 1:1. Therefore the traditional reading of Genesis 1:1, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,*” stands as a completed thought of a finished product—the original bringing into existence of the heavens and the earth—*ex-nihilo*, out of no preexisting material. And if this statement is not saying that, then there is actually no statement in Genesis that does.

Consequently, Genesis 1:1, on the face of it, stands alone as the original creation and very strongly implies a “*cosmos*,” an orderly universe. Whereas, verse two is clearly describing, by three separate clauses, a “*chaos*” or an earth of “desolation” and “darkness.” Therefore, to conclude that God starts off by creating a *chaos or desolation* shrouded in darkness may very well stand as a contradiction of terms as some believe. Now, as I indicated above with chaos, it is true that God can create “darkness” and even “calamity” (Isaiah 45:7), but never as a first or starting principle. These conditions always stand in contrast to “light” and “well-being.” In context, they automatically *follow* for negative reasons and do not *precede*. For instance, in the very passages that use *tohu wa-bohu* a second and third time (Jer. 4:23 & Isa. 34:11), it is clearly God Who brings this condition about, but in both cases it *follows* after many centuries and as a clear result of man’s sin and rebellion. In neither case, therefore, is *tohu wa-bohu* a positive *beginning* in God’s work. So we conclude the first case of Genesis 1:2 is similar. The earth in a state of chaos is a secondary and later condition. There remains, therefore, strong evidence that indicates God did not initially create the earth *tohu wa-bohu*.

So, let us look further for solid contextual evidence as to how these two words are used and their precise meaning. Indeed, and in contrast, the other two occasions where these two words are used together demonstrate clear and elaborate contextual information that positively aids in defining the words and their usage.

### *Jeremiah 4:23*

Many years ago I gave a Bible study in which I drew a large simple sketch on a drawing board of a disheveled ball, suspended in space and surrounded by darkness. Over this scene I wrote—“*The Earth...Without form and void,*” and underneath it I wrote “There was no light.” Then I turned to the audience and asked, “What passage am I quoting by this illustration and these words?” Several immediately answered with assurance, “The second verse of Genesis One!” To which I responded, “No! That is not what I am quoting!” Naturally, most had a surprised look on their faces because that is an easy verse to identify. Then I told them I was actually quoting from—*Jeremiah 4:23*.

Though I was not actually quoting from the second verse of Genesis One, yet it appears certain that Jeremiah actually reflected upon that scene in an apparent vision. In the midst of prophesying about a great “evil from the north, and great destruction” (4:6) which was soon coming upon Judah “to make your land waste, and your cities to be ruins” (4:7), Jeremiah seems to conclude with a scathing castigation of his own peoples’ ignorance as a result of their evil (4:19-22). At this juncture Jeremiah paused in his prophecy and, as it were, was stricken by a unique *vision* which forms a separate paragraph. Notice the words of Jeremiah 4:23-26 carefully (italics mine, J.L.)—

“I looked on *the earth*, and behold it was *without form and void*;  
And to the heavens, *and they had no light*.  
I looked on the mountains, and behold they were *quaking*,  
And *all the hills moved to and fro*.  
I looked, and behold, *there was no man*,  
And *all the birds of the heavens had fled*.  
I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a *wilderness*,  
And *all the cities were pulled (or cast) down—*  
*before the LORD, and before His fierce anger.*  
*For thus says the LORD, The whole land shall be a desolation.”*

What did Jeremiah behold? Jeremiah was obviously transported back in vision to the original event of Genesis 1:2, and consequently was inspired to use that language to foretell of the catastrophe that was coming upon the world because of their rebellion against God. Every commentator I read realizes this fact. For instance, I will simply quote from a few. The more recent *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, edited by Walvoord and Zuck, with exposition by the Dallas Theological Seminary Faculty—“Jeremiah pictured God’s coming judgment as a cosmic catastrophe –an undoing of Creation. Using imagery from the Creation account (Gen. 1) Jeremiah indicated that no aspect of life would remain untouched...” (Underlining is mine, J.L.). The older and popular *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary on the Whole Bible* says, “without form and void—[the land] reduced to *primeval chaos* (Genesis 1:2).” *The New Bible Commentary* pointedly says, “The imagery in vv. 23-26 is so stark that a shudder vibrates throughout. World *chaos* has overtaken the *cosmos*; mountains reel, man vanishes, birds have fled out of the

sky, and the fertile earth has become a desert. It is the blast of God, *the reversal of creation to the shapeless meaninglessness of Gen.1:2*" (italics & underlining mine, J.L.).

In further consideration of the passage, verse 26 expressly stated that this immediate vision of judgment is brought about "before the LORD, and before His fierce anger." What does this mean—"before the LORD"? Many give the understanding by translating it "At the *presence* of the Lord, and by His fierce anger." See as examples the Septuagint, the Douay, King James Version, Revised Version, Isaac Leeser, Jewish Publication Society (1917), The Jerusalem Bible (French) and The Jerusalem Bible (Israeli). In other words, this judgment is actually implemented by the personal presence of the LORD Himself. It now becomes clear that Jeremiah is superimposing upon this initial judgment of Judah the final world cataclysm that will occur at the second coming of Jesus Christ (the LORD). Several times in prophecies about Babylon's attack on Israel, the prophet is inspired to look further to "the great and terrible Day of the Lord."

### ***The vision of the Sons of God versus that of Jeremiah***

If you remember, I pointed out in *SECTION ONE* that the initial creation of the earth was viewed by the angelic hosts according to the LORD'S words to Job. This is recorded for us in Job 38:1-7. There the LORD asked Job—

"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?  
Tell Me if you have understanding!  
Who determined its measurements?  
Surely you know!  
Or who stretched the (measuring) line upon it?  
To what were its foundations fastened?  
Or who laid its cornerstone,  
when the morning stars sang together,  
and all the Sons of God shouted for joy?"

According to this revelation from the LORD Himself, the original establishment of the earth, that is, the formation of its very "foundations" and "cornerstone" (what geologists call the Inner Core, Outer Core, Mantle and Lithosphere) and its size and position in space were viewed as a spectacularly beautiful event, so as to arouse a chorus of praise from the starry heavens (a metaphor), and a shout of joy from the Sons of God. That means it was an orderly (cosmos) creation.

In the book of Job, "the Sons of God" has reference to angelic beings, including Lucifer himself (see Job 1:6 and 2:1). Therefore, in all probability, it is understood that Lucifer (later, Satan) was also present at the time of the initial creation of the earth. No doubt Lucifer was jubilant along with all the other Sons of God. The Scriptures tell us Lucifer "was perfect in all his ways from the day he was created" (Ezek. 28:15). We also will find out later that Lucifer had a *special relationship* with the earth as a place of residence, occupation and governance (see *SECTION THREE*).

By every expression, this must have been a beautiful sight! And even more obvious is the fact that this is most certainly NOT the same scene Jeremiah beheld. Jeremiah did not shout for joy! As demonstrated above, Jeremiah saw a horrible

catastrophe—a catastrophe so great as to warrant terror in the heart and soul of anyone, including even the angels.

Now, if I was an infidel, who wanted to point out contradictions in the Bible, and I heard these Young Earth Creationists say that Genesis 1:2 is the same scene that both Lucifer and Jeremiah saw, then I would say that there is a disparity almost beyond belief. After all, the one Scripture says what the angels saw brought a shout of jubilation and praise, whereas what the prophet Jeremiah saw horrified him! Perhaps Jeremiah and the angels had a different artistic evaluation of things. (No! I don't think so, either!) So, what is the answer to what could be a real disparity or contradiction? Very simply, it does not say the angels and Jeremiah saw the same scene—obviously, they did not see the same scene! The scenes were dramatically different!

If you remember the perimeters of the “six days,” then you will realize that nowhere during the specified “six days” of God's activity (Genesis 1:3-31) in preparing the earth for man's habitation does it say “God formed the foundations of the earth.” The earth as an already existing globe covered with water is the starting place for the “six day's” work. Therefore, what the angels beheld must have been earlier at the actual creation of the earth as recorded in Genesis 1:1—and it was a beautiful sight!

The one was a scene of original, beautiful creation, whereas the other was a scene of darkened catastrophe. The time between the two events is not disclosed. As a result, once again we have clear evidence of a catastrophe in Genesis 1:2.

Consequently, here in Jeremiah we have the words “without form and void” (*tohu wa-bohu*) in explicit context. This context unmistakably takes us directly back to the scene of Genesis 1:2, and superimposes that original scene upon the future event of destruction described by Jeremiah. As a result the identification and association is positive. *Tohu wa-bohu* is clearly the stark language of desolation and judgment. Not only is it judgment, but *tohu wa-bohu* is clearly implemented as by the “fierce anger of the LORD” (verse 26).

As Jeremiah transposed Genesis 1:2 upon the future destruction of “the earth” (Jer. 4:23), so may we transpose Jeremiah 4:23-26 upon the scene of Genesis 1:2. In doing so, this is obviously a positive indicator that the events described in Genesis 1:2 are likewise a judgment scene brought about by the “*fierce anger of the Lord.*” This conclusion is going to be further *ratified* by the third occasion these words were used together—

### **Isaiah 34:11**

In this passage the prophet Isaiah called upon “the *whole earth* and all that it contains to hear” (34:1). Take note—this is a message to the whole world. Isaiah is prophesying the “LORD'S indignation against all nations, and His wrath against all their armies” (34:2), and yet at the same time it will be “the day of recompense for the cause of Zion” (34:8). This great event is commonly called “The Great and Terrible Day of the LORD” in other places in the Hebrew Scriptures. This final climactic judgment will also involve the heavens as well—“All the host of heaven will wear away, and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll” (34:4). Herein it also said, “The LORD has a Day of vengeance” (34:8). The context spells out catastrophic judgment everywhere. However, the

“judgment” and “destruction” will reach into “Edom” so that “it shall be desolate,” and no one “shall pass through it forever and ever” (34:5 & 10). Furthermore, concerning this destruction upon Edom—

“And He (the LORD) shall stretch over it the line of desolation (*tohu*)  
and the plumb line of emptiness (*bohu*).

We all know that certain instruments are normally used in measuring and leveling for building in construction projects. As it is true in our day, so it was true in Isaiah’s day. Herein, however, Isaiah told us there are instruments designated by God for measuring the grand DESTRUCTION project of the last days. Through the prophet Isaiah, God tells mankind by metaphor that the measuring instruments of destruction are identified as, “the line of *tohu* (desolation)” and the “plumb line of *bohu* (emptiness)”. In other words, God considers the measuring instruments for destruction as “*tohu* and *bohu*” as used in Genesis 1:2. When God brings ultimate catastrophe over Edom during the final Day of the Lord, it will be similar to Jeremiah looking back to Genesis 1:2 in vision to behold total cataclysmic devastation by the “fierce anger of the LORD.”

If Isaiah is telling us that the ultimate devastation of Edom is measured by “*tohu* and *bohu*,” then obviously, “*tohu wa-bohu*” (Gen. 1:2) are apropos words for describing ultimate devastation. And if Jeremiah is telling us that the horrible destruction of Judah is best described as a repeat of the original “*tohu wa-bohu*,” then once again “*tohu wa-bohu*” are words with the connotation of total devastation. There is no escaping the contextual usage and meaning of these words. Furthermore, there is no escaping the obvious fact that both these prophets are alluding to the scene in Genesis 1:2. In borrowing language from Genesis 1:2 in order to illustrate destruction of unprecedented magnitude, they are defining for us the language of judgment. By applying these words to a future judgmental scene, we may thereby understand that the original event of the earth being *tohu wa-bohu* was indeed a judgment.

### ***Painting—tohu wa-bohu!***

Now these are the three times these precise words were used together. And I might ask just here—if you were an artist, how would you paint the picture described by Jeremiah? Think about it! And then, how would you paint the picture described by Isaiah? Think again! To say the least, in both cases it would be an awful scene, would it not? And then I would ask, how you would then paint the scene in Genesis 1:2 ???

Now the reason I ask this is because back in 1976 a (supposedly) bright young scholar named Weston W. Fields published a rebuttal to the “Gap Theory” as it had been presented by the Canadian scholar, Arthur C. Custance. Custance had presented a book entitled “*Without Form and Void*” in 1970, which clearly gave linguistic value to the idea of what has been commonly called “the Gap Theory.” Of course, Custance’s book had a representation of a chaotic, darkened earth scene upon the cover with those words of Genesis 1:2 superimposed upon it. The artist made an accurate representation of what the two Hebrew words actually convey—a scene of darkness and desolation or chaos. However, when Fields published his book he was obviously totally set on repudiating “The Gap Theory.” So, when first published he used for the cover of his book what was actually a very nice photo of the sun setting through a line of somewhat colorful, low

lying clouds over a placid, tranquil body of water, with dark rocks and mountains protruding out of the water in the background horizon. And then he entitled it “*Unformed and Unfilled*.” Now which of these two authors accurately portrayed, at least by the covers of their books, the meaning of the two Hebrew words in the contexts of which they are found?

When I read the book by Fields, I thought, “How can this smart young fellow make such a glaring misrepresentation?” There is not a Hebrew Lexicon in existence that would warrant placing such a comfortable scene over Genesis 1:2, nor mean the same by the words “unformed and unfilled” in the translation of *tohu wa-bohu*. The words *unformed* and *unfilled* can be understood as placid words which can still allow something to be perfectly beautiful and good, in and of itself, yet the subjects or objects simply may not yet be shaped or filled. For instance, Michelangelo might have had a large block of perfectly chosen white marble cut out from a mountain quarry, exquisitely beautiful as it stood, yet *unformed* and *unfilled* by his artistic genius. Is that what Isaiah, Jeremiah or Moses are saying? Most certainly not! Obviously Jeremiah is not painting that picture! Certainly, Isaiah is not so inclined! And, lastly, neither is Moses! In addition, it is basically understood by all commentaries and lexicons that the words of Genesis 1:2 are at the very least describing a *primordial chaotic earth* and most certainly not a *cosmos* (which means an ordered earth). You can be assured that Moses was not intending to portray a scene especially designed where some might like to spend their vacation fishing. It may be a good picture to place on the front of some lake front resort handout, but this is most certainly not what Moses was advertising.

The Septuagint translators (250 B.C.) translated it “*unsightly*” in Genesis 1:2. The Jerusalem Targum (also called The Palestinian Targum or even the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum, which contained interpretations from the first century, though not redacted until the seventh century C.E., see the Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 11, page 313) translates the second verse of Genesis One—“And the earth was *vacancy and desolation*, solitary of the sons of men and void of every animal, and darkness was upon the face of the abyss; and the Spirit of Mercies from before the Lord breathed upon the face of the waters.”

So I say again, Fields’ picture and arguments are just the opposite of the native meanings of the words as understood by the Jews themselves, and would make one think of a *cosmos* instead of a *chaos*. I do not mean to be disrespectful towards Mr. Fields, but his representation of how these words of Genesis 1:2 should be translated and understood, and about several other crucial facts as well, is *absolutely distorted*.

As an example of accuracy on the translation of *tohu wa-bohu*, and the whole second verse of Genesis One, the Hebrew scholar Edward J. Young, though he made no claim to be a “Gap Theorist” (which means he had no ulterior motive), was fully honest and objective to give what is lexically and contextually accurate as the translation of Genesis 1:2—“and *the earth was desolation and waste, and darkness*—upon the faces of abyss, and the Spirit of God—brooding upon the faces of the waters” (*Studies In Genesis One*, 1964, page 7, emphasis mine, J.L.). In addition, Young repeatedly admitted, “It has already been stated that we are not told how long the threefold condition described in verse two had been in existence before God said, ‘Let there be light’” (page 11). I might also add that Mr. Fields was perfectly aware of Young’s careful work on this subject because he alluded to his work and listed it in his Bibliography. Why he did

not choose to quote this critical part I do not know, other than the plain fact that it most certainly does not support his theological agenda.

### *Isaiah 24:1*

There is one other passage, and though it does not use precisely the same words *tohu wa-bohu*, it says virtually the same thing. Isaiah 24:1 (see the whole chapter)—

1. “Behold, the LORD makes the earth **empty** (Hebrew- *bahkak*) and makes it **waste** (*bahlak*), and distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants...
5. The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants...
6. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth...
19. The earth is violently broken. The earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly...
23. Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed;  
For the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem...”

This whole passage is describing the cataclysmic judgments that are coming upon the entire earth in the last days because of man’s sin and defilement. Making the earth *empty* and *waste* is once again used in relationship to the “Day of the Lord.” It is noteworthy again that this judgment also involves distortions in the heavens. In other words, at a climactic stage of man’s probation on earth, and just before the reign of Messiah, God will bring the earth into the condition as described in Genesis 1:2. This would be the third time this destruction is compared to Genesis 1:2 (Jer. 4:23; Isa. 34:11 and Isa. 24:1). This is further confirmatory evidence that Genesis 1:2 can actually be understood as descriptive of a judgment—a judgment that came as a result of Lucifer’s sin and rebellion—and would mark a climactic phase in the epoch of Satan’s career.

### *Lexical Definition*

I should state that the early (1835) standard work by William Gesenius was done originally in German and was the basis for the later work by Brown, Driver and Briggs (1907). Today there is an edition of both Gesenius and Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicons in English, coded to *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible (With Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words)* which is very convenient for lay use.

### *Bohu*

The Lexical works state concerning the word *bohu*, (which is used only three times), generally the following—

**Gesenius**, “emptiness, voidness”;

**Brown-Driver-Briggs**, “emptiness, Gn 1:2 of primeval earth; Je 4:23 *of earth under judgment*; Is 34:11, the line of wasteness and stones of emptiness, i.e., *plummets, employed not as usual for building, but for destroying walls*”;

**Strong**, “root (meaning to be empty); a vacuity, i.e. (superficially) an *undistinguishable ruin*.” (Italics mine, J.L.)

### *Tohu*

Concerning the word *tohu*, (which is used some twenty times in all)—

**Gesenius**, “(1) *wasteness*, concr. *that which is wasted, laid waste*, Genesis 1:2; Job 26:7; hence—(a) *a desert*, Deut. 32:10; Job 6:18; 12:24.—(b) *destruction*, Isaiah 24:10, “*a desolated city*,” 34:11. (2) *emptiness, vanity*, and concr. *something vain*, Isaiah 41:29; 44:9; 49:4; 59:4; I Sam. 12:21; *nothing*, Isa. 40:17,23. (3) Isaiah 49:4; and acc. Adv. *in vain*, Isa. 45:19.”

**Brown-Driver-Briggs**, “1. *formlessness, of primeval earth* Gn 1:2, *of land reduced to primeval chaos* Je 4:23, *city of chaos* (of ruined city); *nothingness, empty space* Jb 26:7, *of empty, trackless waste* Dt 32:10, 2. *of what is empty, unreal*, as idols 1 S 12:21, *a thing of naught* Is 40:17, *worthlessness* Is 49:4, *empty, to no purpose* Cf. 29:13.

**Strong**, “*to lie waste, a desolation, worthless, vain.*”

**Young**, “*a ruin, vacancy.*”

Other than the three occasions it is used with *bohu*, it is used seventeen additional times in the Hebrew Scriptures—nearly always in a strong negative content (NASB).

1.) The times *tohu* is most often translated as “waste” or a “chaos”—

Deut. 32:10, 11, “He (the LORD) found him (Israel) in a desert land,  
And in the howling waste (*tohu*) of a wilderness;  
He encircled him, He cared for him,  
He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.  
like an eagle that stirs up its nest,  
That *hovers* (same as the Spirit of God in Gen. 1:2) over its young,  
He spread His wings and caught them,  
He carried them on His pinions.”

Job 12:24, “He (God) deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth’s people,  
and makes them wander in a pathless waste (*tohu*).”

Psalms 107:40, “He (God) pours contempt upon princes,  
and makes them wander in a pathless waste (*tohu*).

Isaiah 24:10, The whole context of this passage is the Day of the LORD when  
He will “lay the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface,  
and scatters its inhabitants...” (verse 1).  
(The context shows there will be destructions everywhere.)  
“The city of chaos (*tohu*) is broken down.”

Isaiah 45:18, “For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens—  
He is the God Who formed the earth and made it,  
He established it and did not create it a waste (*tohu*) place,  
but formed it to be inhabited.”

Isaiah 45:19, “I have not spoken in secret, in some dark land;  
I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,  
‘Seek Me in a waste (*tohu*) place’;  
I, the LORD, speak righteousness,  
declaring things that are upright.” (All bold and underlining mine, J.L.)

2.) The times the word is used of the “empty, futile, or confusion” of idolatry—

I Sam. 12:21, “And you must not turn aside, for then you would go after

**futile** (or vain-*tohu*) things which cannot profit or deliver, because they are **futile** (or vain-*tohu*).”

Isaiah 41:29, “Behold, all of them are false; their works are worthless, their molten images are wind and **emptiness** (or confusion-*tohu*).”

Isaiah 44:9, “Those who fashion a graven image are all of them **futile** (or confusion-*tohu*), and their precious things are of no profit.” (All bold and underlining mine, J.L.)

3.) The times the word is used of “vain, confusing, worthless or meaningless arguments and wasted effort”—

Isaiah 29:21, “And defraud (turn aside) the one in the right with **meaningless** (or of confusion-*tohu*) arguments.”

Isaiah 40:17, “They (the nations) are regarded by Him (the LORD) as less than nothing and **meaningless** (or void, vanity or confusion-*tohu*).”

Isaiah 40:23, “He (the LORD) it is Who reduces rulers to nothing, Who makes the judges of the earth **meaningless** (void or confusion-*tohu*).”

Isaiah 49:4, “But I said, ‘I have toiled in vain, I have spent my strength **for nothing** (*tohu*) and vanity.’”

Isaiah 59:4, “They trust in **confusion** (or vanity-*tohu*), and speak lies.”

Job 6:18, “(Job’s friends are like the snow water which in the heat melts and runs along the ground in little streams) The paths of their course wind along, they go up into **nothing** (or waste-*tohu*) and perish.” (All bold and underlining mine, J.L.)

Up until this point there is one thing that is common to every occurrence. I do not think any sensible person would deny that this word has been reserved by God for an exclusive, strong “negative” content. So far in the listings above there has never been a “constructive” or “positive” use of the word. In fact, there has not even been what one could call a “neutral” use of the word. Every single instance, so far, has had an unglamorous, repugnant, certainly derogatory application for this word.

Concerning the use of the word *tohu* in [Job 26:7](#) there may be some debate. Therefore I have reserved this statement for last. However, please keep in mind that chapter 26 of this book is given by Job as a rebuke to Bildad. Job starts off with a series of rebukes—“What help are you to the weak?” (v. 2); “How have you saved...?” (v. 2); “What counsel have you given...?” (v. 3); “To whom have you uttered words...?” (v. 4) and “Whose spirit was expressed through you?” (v. 4). If we therefore remember that the whole chapter is set from a negative posture, we will better understand that in verses 5-13 Job is demonstrating the same negative view, even if expressed from principles in the created world. Notice the context immediately before verse 7—

Verse 5, “The departed spirits *tremble under the water* and their inhabitants.

6, *Naked* is Sheol (Hell) before Him and

- Abaddon (*Destruction*, a synonym for Hell or Sheol) *has no covering*.
- 7, He stretches out the north over **empty** (*tohu*) *space*,  
and hangs the earth upon *nothing*.”

As you can see, this can be construed as a derogatory statement as it is found in the same context as “departed spirits under the water,” the “nakedness of Sheol,” and “the lack of covering for Abaddon.” It is not absolutely certain what the “north” has reference to. Most think it must be what we perceive as the north part of the starry heavens. However, the north part of the heavens is no more over empty space than the southern part, or the east or the west. Some think it has reference to the wind out of the north. Yet that does not entirely make sense, either. I think the translators of *A New Translation of The Holy Scriptures*, by the Jewish Publication Society of America, made an interesting rendering of the passage in context and in light of an ancient concept—

“He stretched Zaphon over **chaos**...”

When I first saw this I wondered how they came up with this very literal translation. After a little research I found this was done because the word “north” (*zaphon*) in the Hebrew actually meant that which is “hidden, obscure, inasmuch as the ancients regarded the north as obscure and “hidden, dark” (B.D. & B. Lexicon). The south, on the contrary, is construed as clear, and lighted by the sun” (Gesenius). In addition, “*Zaphon*” is also actually used as the name of God’s abode, whether in heaven (Isa. 14:13) or on earth at Mount Zion (Psalm 48:3). It is also a fact that, in rebellion against God, Lucifer wanted to sit “on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the North (*Zaphon*)” (Isa. 14:13). Satan wanted to assume God’s position. Yet, in final judgment Satan will be brought down to Sheol, even the lowest depths of the pit” (Isa. 14:15), which is also specifically mentioned by Job in verse six. This is also why the translation of *tohu* in Job 26:7 literally as “chaos” is very interesting. Apparently “the sides of the North (*Zaphon*)” represented an ambitious desire for great prominence by Lucifer. However, the end result would be “chaos,” such as is immediately seen in Genesis 1:2, and eventually seen in the Hell of Sheol and Abaddon (destruction).

### *In Conclusion*

In conclusion, the lexical definitions and uses of *tohu* are in perfect accord with the contextual definitions and uses, and in further accord with the overall theme of devastation or destruction envisioned in the words of Genesis 1:2.

Consequently, at this stage, I offer the translation of Genesis 1:1 & 2 by Arthur C. Custance, first of all because of its obvious accuracy concerning the use of *tohu wa-bohu*. Secondly, Custance’s translation “But the earth had become” is certainly in accord with the doctrinal teaching and clear implication that the earth was not originally created a desolation and ruin. I think I have demonstrated that fact so far in this study. In addition there are translations that now give the alternate rendering “became” in their margins, as does the NIV. So, here is Custance’s rendering—

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.  
**But the earth had become a ruin and desolation;  
and darkness was upon the face of the deep,  
and the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.”**

If any would think Custance's translation is flavored towards the idea of a gap between verses one and two because he personally believed that there was such a gap, then I would again offer the translation of Edward J. Young, who did not personally want to be classified as a "Gap Theorist"—

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

**And the earth was *desolation and waste,*  
and darkness—upon faces of abyss,  
and the Spirit of God—brooding upon faces of the waters."**

In both cases the two men, who were deeply knowledgeable of Hebrew, made accurate renderings of *tohu wa-bohu* according to all the evidences. The translation by Weston W. Fields (Unformed and Unfilled) can be shelved as a relic of misinformation due to a prejudicial attempt to eradicate the fact of a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:3.

### ***II Corinthians 4:3-6***

Further evidence of a destruction occurring in Genesis 1:2 is actually given by the Apostle Paul through the spiritual application he made of the account in Genesis One where God called the light to shine out of darkness. I have alluded to this in the earlier *SECTION ONE*, but now I want to examine it very closely. So, I am issuing a WARNING!—you must read the following material where I chart out this explanation very SLOWLY or you simply won't get the full force of the analogy!

Many years ago (about 1967) when several other ministers and I were together examining this subject of a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 3, an older minister who was leading in the discussion made a statement somewhat like the following—"I don't know of any stronger evidence of a Satanically caused destruction in Genesis 1:2 than that offered by the Apostle Paul in II Corinthians 4." So we all turned there in our Bibles and carefully read where Paul made an inspired analysis, or we might say, an allegorical application of the events recorded in Genesis 1:2-3, with the present contrast between those who accept the gospel of salvation and those who reject that very same gospel message. It really "stuck" in my mind at that time and I have since given even more careful consideration to it.

At that time we were all reading the passage from the King James or Authorized Version. It starts in verse three of chapter 4—"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." One does not get the full power of this unless he checks the words used, either by the Greek lexicon or by newer translations. For instance, most newer translations will make two changes. First, there is a minor change with the word "hid." Some newer translations changed it to "*veiled*," which simply means that the lost person has his spiritual sight hidden as by a "veil" so that he cannot see so as to understand the truth of the gospel. This is expressed in other places as the unbelievers having "*darkened*" hearts and eyes (see Rom. 1:21, 11:10 and Acts 26:18). And secondly, the word "lost" should more properly be translated "*perishing*." In other words, the ones rejecting the gospel are not merely lost as to direction or from obtaining eternal life, but they are actually in a state of "perishing," or even more literally, being "destroyed." This is a much stronger word. W. E. Vine gives the Greek word used, *apollumi*, the meaning "*to destroy, destroy utterly.*" Strong says, "*to destroy fully.*" Therefore most newer

translations (New King James Version, NASB or the NIV) will read in the following manner—

“But even if our gospel is *veiled*, it is *veiled* to those who are *perishing*,” (4:3).

First, I want to emphasize this word “perishing” (literally, “*being destroyed*”), because the foremost point that I am making in this analogy is that this present “destruction” of the lost is a reflection of the condition of the earth as described in Genesis 1:2 (i.e., an actual “destruction”). As Paul further leads up to this analogy we will clearly see that he is inspired to use the events of Genesis 1:2 & 3 to typify, among other things, the present “destruction” of the lost. In other words, we shall see that the present spiritual “destruction” of the lost is a reflection of the earlier physical “destruction” of the earth.

Paul continues in this passage by the words in verse four (literal translation)—

“Among whom the *god of this age* has *blinded the minds* of the unbelieving ones, so that *the light of the gospel* of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, does not *shine on them*.”

We have here in verse four more reinforcement and additions to what was initially stated in verse three. Secondly, Paul introduces us to the fact that the whole problem in the world today is caused by none other than “*the god of this age*.” This, of course, is a clear reference to Satan, whose chief design is to cause blindness, confusion and spiritual darkness in the souls of mankind. Thirdly, there is enlargement upon the word “veiled” as previously used. Paul adds the expression “*blinded the minds*” to complement the idea of people who simply cannot see and understand the gospel. Fourthly, Paul likens the gospel to “*the light...of the glory of Christ*” which is intended to “shine upon them” just like the light of the original first day of what we commonly call “the creation week.”

Now we can begin to chart this out. I am doing this for the sake of looking at the whole picture and the relationship of all these statements together. In addition, there will be other statements that Paul will be adding to fill the picture. On this chart we are going to have a total of 12 positions indicating each of the statements Paul is making. The chart will be divided in half by a top half and a bottom half. Six positions will be on the top side indicating the *Physical Events* in the original action of Genesis 1:2 & 3. On the bottom half of the chart we will have another six positions indicating, as in a reflection of the physical events, the *Spiritual Analogy* Paul is making. This means that the physical events above will be reflected in the spiritual analogy below. Originally, I made the background of this chart from a beautiful photograph of a darkened mountain on the left side with the sun shining on the right side, and then the whole scene reflected perfectly in a mountain lake on the bottom half. In addition, I will call one side of the analogy the “*Dark Side*,” and the other side I will call the “*Light Side*.” This analogy includes both darkness and light reflected in the lost and the saved on earth today.

To begin with, in verses three and four we have at least four distinct positions we can fill in this analogy Paul is using. I will temporarily place a small number after each word of the analogy to only indicate the order in which Paul gives these words. However, I will place a different set of numbers—No.1, No.2 and No.3—in front of each word to indicate its proper order or position as it sits in each section of the total analogy.

So then on the *Dark Side*, we start off having the unbelievers “*perishing*,” or more literally “**being DESTROYED**”<sup>1</sup>; then, “**the god of this AGE**”<sup>2</sup>; next, the lost whose “**MINDS** are blinded, **DARKENED** or veiled”<sup>3</sup>; then on the other side of the analogy, the *Light Side*, we have “**LIGHT** of the **GOSPEL** of the glory of Christ”<sup>4</sup>. Here is how I placed these four positions (No.1, No.2, No.3, etc) on the chart below—

	<i>Dark Side</i>	<i>Light Side</i>
<i>Physical</i>	No. 1	No. 1
<i>events</i>	No. 2	No. 2
( <i>Gen. 1:2, 3</i> )	No. 3	No. 3
<hr/>		
<i>Spiritual</i>	No. 3 <b>being DESTROYED</b> <sup>1</sup>	No. 3
<i>application</i>	No. 2 <b>MINDS DARKENED</b> <sup>3</sup>	No. 2 <b>LIGHT of GOSPEL</b> <sup>4</sup>
<i>or reflection</i>	No. 1 <b>god of this AGE</b> <sup>2</sup>	No. 1

Finally, in verse six Paul gives to us the full picture that he is taking from the Genesis account. Verse six says—

“For it is *God* Who commanded *light* to shine out of *darkness*,  
Who has shone *in our hearts* to give the *light* of the knowledge  
of the glory of *God in the face of Jesus Christ*.”

Herein Paul adds at least five other ingredients to this important analogy. As to the actual creation account, each of these ingredients is separated in the following manner: it is “**GOD**”<sup>5</sup> Who commanded the “**LIGHT**”<sup>6</sup> to initially shine “out of **DARKNESS**”<sup>7</sup>. Then by spiritual application it is “**GOD in the face of Jesus CHRIST**”<sup>8</sup> Who has authored the gospel to be “*shone in our HEARTS*,”<sup>9</sup> effecting regeneration by “the **LIGHT** of the knowledge...” which is actually the same as <sup>4</sup> earlier placed.

#### *More positions filled on the Chart*

I say again, this chart is designed to give us the total picture, altogether, of what Paul is inspired to reveal. If we were to take the additional five ingredients from verse six and position them out on the chart, so as to depict the actual Genesis account and what it is typical of in this analogy, it would look like the following—

	<i>Dark Side</i>	<i>Light Side</i>
<i>Physical</i>	No. 1	No. 1 <b>GOD</b> <sup>5</sup>
<i>events</i>	No. 2 <b>DARKNESS</b> <sup>7</sup>	No. 2 <b>LIGHT</b> <sup>6</sup>
( <i>Gen. 1:2, 3</i> )	No. 3	No. 3
<hr/>		
<i>Spiritual</i>	No. 3 <b>being DESTROYED</b> <sup>1</sup>	No. 3 <b>New HEARTS</b> <sup>9</sup>
<i>application</i>	No. 2 <b>MINDS DARKENED</b> <sup>3</sup>	No. 2 <b>LIGHT of GOSPEL</b> <sup>4</sup>
<i>or reflection</i>	No. 1 <b>GOD of this AGE</b> <sup>2</sup>	No. 1 <b>GOD in CHRIST</b> <sup>8</sup>

From this chart we can see that there are four *cross comparisons* made by the Apostle Paul in this analogy. First, there is the contrast between “**DARKNESS**”<sup>7</sup> on the **Dark Side** and “**LIGHT**”<sup>6</sup> on the Light Side. Second, there is the contrast between those “**being DESTROYED**”<sup>1</sup> on the **Dark Side** and those with “**New HEARTS**”<sup>9</sup> on the Light Side. Third, there is the contrast between those whose “**MINDS (are) DARKENED**”<sup>3</sup> on the **Dark Side** and those who accept the “**LIGHT of the GOSPEL**”<sup>4</sup> on the Light Side. Fourth, there is the contrast between the “**GOD of this AGE**”<sup>2</sup> on the **Dark Side** and “**GOD in CHRIST**”<sup>8</sup> on the Light Side.

From this chart we can also see three more direct comparisons between the Genesis account in the physical creation and their *reflections* by *spiritual application*. These three are what we may call the *up and down comparisons*. These three are also fully given directly by the Apostle. Continuing from the *fourth* contrasting comparison above—we have a Fifth comparison—there is the *reflection* or *spiritual application* of the physical “**DARKNESS**”<sup>7</sup> in the Genesis account above by the spiritual “**MINDS DARKENED**”<sup>3</sup> in the unbeliever below. Sixth, there is the reflection of the “**GOD**”<sup>5</sup> of the physical creation above by the “**GOD in CHRIST**”<sup>8</sup> in the *spiritual application* below. And Seventh, there is the reflection from the “**LIGHT**”<sup>6</sup> above in the Genesis account in the physical creation by the “**LIGHT of (the) GOSPEL**”<sup>4</sup> below in the *spiritual application*.

To state these same comparisons in a simple manner we would say, “**MINDS DARKENED**” below, is a reflection of the Physical “**DARKNESS**” above. On the other side, the “**GOD in CHRIST**” below, Who authored the Gospel is a reflection of the “**GOD**” above Who authored the physical Creation. Then there is the “**LIGHT of (the) GOSPEL**” below, which is a reflection of the Physical “**LIGHT**” above in the physical Creation when God brought light into existence to shine upon the earth.

### *The Final Chart*

This leaves three other blank positions that are only implied by the Apostle. Yet I must say, the answers are clearly given by the context and relationships in the total Spirit inspired analogy. We ourselves must fill in the blanks and this becomes the critical part. It is as if God has allowed us the privilege of honestly completing the analogy. Of course, God has already given all the clues as to what to place in each of the three blank spaces, but we must place the answers there—

As we had on the bottom of the *Light Side* the “**GOD in CHRIST**” as a reflection of the “**GOD**” of the physical creation above, so now on the other side, the *Dark Side*, we have an Eighth comparison. The “**GOD of this AGE**” below must be a reflection of the one who is “Prince of the power of the air” and of “the power of darkness” (see Eph. 2:2 with Col. 1:13)—none other than “**god-SATAN**”<sup>10</sup>—whom we can place in the first space. As you can see, this is the only possible person one could put into that position, because that is the only person who reflects the “**GOD of this AGE**” below. In addition, the apostle Paul himself, by a later statement that is recorded in Acts 26:17 & 18, firmly places SATAN in this position when he uses two of the same contrasts as in the II Corinthians account. Paul related Christ’s words, “*to whom (the Gentiles) I (God) now send you (Paul), to open their eyes, in order to turn them from DARKNESS to LIGHT, and from the power of SATAN to GOD.*”

Continuing to fill in the last two blank positions, we have the Ninth comparison on the physical side, representing the condition of the earth in Genesis 1:2 as “waste and empty.” As we have stated before, these words represent a destruction on the earth, so it must here be a “**DESTRUCTION**”<sup>11</sup> since it reflects those who are “**PERISHING** (literally, *destruction*)” below. This really should not disturb anyone because we have already seen how those words are interpreted by Jeremiah and Isaiah. Thus the apostle Paul is placing his stamp of approval on that understanding. In addition, we will see further in at least three other ancient Jewish commentaries which describe Genesis 1:2 as a “*destruction*.”

A Tenth comparison is taken from the spiritual truth of “**New HEARTS**,” also called “regeneration,” “renewal” or even the “New Creation in Christ” (II Cor. 5:17). This is a reflection of the original “**RENEWAL**” or regeneration of the physical earth. Therefore I will place the word “**RENEWAL**”<sup>12</sup> as No.3 on the Light Side.

Consequently this chart, as a finished product, would look like the following—

	<i>Dark Side</i>	<i>Light Side</i>
<u>Physical</u>	No. 1 <b>god-SATAN</b> <sup>10</sup>	No. 1 <b>GOD</b> <sup>5</sup>
<u>events</u>	No. 2 <b>DARKNESS</b> <sup>7</sup>	No. 2 <b>LIGHT</b> <sup>6</sup>
(Gen. 1:2-3)	No. 3 <b>DESTRUCTION</b> <sup>11</sup>	No. 3 <b>RENEWAL</b> <sup>12</sup>
<hr/>		
<u>Spiritual</u>	No. 3 <b>PERISHING (destruction)</b> <sup>1</sup>	No. 3 <b>New HEARTS</b> <sup>9</sup>
<u>application</u>	No. 2 <b>MINDS DARKENED</b> <sup>3</sup>	No. 2 <b>LIGHT of GOSPEL</b> <sup>4</sup>
<u>or reflection</u>	No. 1 <b>GOD of this AGE</b> <sup>2</sup>	No. 1 <b>GOD in CHRIST</b> <sup>8</sup>

Two remaining *cross comparisons* can now be made to complete all on the chart. There is as the Eleventh on the **Dark Side** above—the contrast between the “**god-SATAN**” and on the Light Side, the “**GOD**” of Creation. And Twelfth, on the **Dark Side** is the contrast between the “**DESTRUCTION**” of the earth, and on the Light Side is the “**RENEWAL**” of the earth. No one should object to calling the activity of God in the original “six days’ work” as a “renewal” or “regeneration.” The Psalmist of old referred to the Holy Spirit as “*renew(ing)*” the face of the earth (Psalm 104:30). Furthermore, Christ Himself spoke of the future restoration of the world into its original edenic condition in the Kingdom Age as “*the regeneration*” (Matt. 19:28). And finally this description is demanded as the object from which the “**New HEARTS**” or regeneration below is a perfect reflection.

In addition, remember that the “regeneration” of the earth in the Kingdom Age comes after the world was in a state of being *tohu wa-bohu* according to Isaiah and Jeremiah’s prophecy. So it is in Genesis 1:2 & 3. The earth was under destruction and the six days of activity by God brought it into a condition of renewal or regeneration.

### *In Summary*

In summary, there is perfection and harmony in this spiritual analogy that the Apostle Paul has made. From *side to side* there is one contrast in each line: the “**god-**

**SATAN**” on the **Dark Side** in contrast with the “**God**” of Creation on the Light Side. Next, the original “**DARKNESS**” is in contrast with the “**LIGHT**” that God called into existence. Then the earth under “**DESTRUCTION**” as a chaos is in contrast to the earth’s “**RENEWAL**” as a cosmos. Then on the bottom half of the chart, those who are “**PERISHING**” on the **Dark Side** are in contrast to those being “**Regenerated**” on the Light Side. Next, the minds of the lost being “**DARKENED**” on the **Dark Side** are in contrast to those whose minds are “**Enlightened**” on the Light Side. And finally, the “**GOD of this AGE**” on the Dark Side is in contrast to the “**GOD in CHRIST**” on the Light Side. Each contrast is perfectly suitable by the truths in their doctrinal content.

As to the *up and down* comparisons, in this case they are not in contrast, but each is a suitable and fitting *reflection* as types and anti-types should be. On top from the Genesis account would be the actual or physical condition and on the bottom would be the spiritual application of each that Paul is making. On the **Dark Side** there is “*god-SATAN*” above, which is reflected as the “**GOD of this AGE**” below. Next, there is the physical “**DARKNESS**” above, reflecting below as the “**MINDS DARKENED**” in the life of the unsaved. Then, there is the “**DESTRUCTION**” in the physical earth above, as seen by the “**Destruction**” of the lost immediately below. Then on the opposite side, the Light Side, there is the “**GOD**” of the physical creation reflected below by the “**GOD in CHRIST.**” Then, there is the “**LIGHT**” of the physical creation above, reflected in the “**LIGHT of the GOSPEL**” below. And finally, there is the regeneration or “**RENEWAL**” of the earth above, immediately reflected in the regeneration or “**New HEARTS**” of those who believe the Gospel below.

In further summarizing Paul’s inspired analogy, one must recognize there are ingredients of importance which are consistent with the theme of this particular Bible study. Paul made spiritual applications from the physical events in the Genesis account of chapter 1, verses 2 & 3. By our examination of those spiritual applications or reflections, we can also make a reverse analogy concerning the physical conditions described in Genesis 1:2. In other words, the physical phenomena must bear, in and of themselves, the characteristics that would allow justice to this spiritual application. Consequently, the DARKNESS of Genesis 1:2, by the nature of its characteristics and contextual association, serves as an example of departure from the God of light to the DARKNESS of Satanic subversion. The wasteness and emptiness (*tohu wa-bohu*) of Genesis 1:2, by the very nature of its own characteristics—a DESTRUCTION—serves as an example of the DESTRUCTION upon the nonbelievers. As SATAN is ultimately responsible for the sin-darkened condition of the nonbeliever, so SATAN is responsible for the cataclysmic judgment described in Genesis 1:2. That the earth itself can be described as a RENEWAL or even a regeneration is demanded by the fact that its reflection in the believer’s change of HEART is a regeneration or new creation itself. These are the unforced applications and deductions that are made from Paul’s Spirit-inspired analogy. Each and every one of the twelve comparisons and contrasts perfectly balances and harmonizes. The idea of “DESTRUCTION” is counterchecked from both directions in this analogy—both *horizontally* and *vertically*. I sincerely believe this inspired analogy is not only consistent and accurate in the handling of the Word of God, but it also places the Holy Spirit’s stamp of approval upon the conclusions we have drawn on this subject—i.e., this is what the Holy Spirit is leading and teaching us.

It has been clearly demonstrated that the earth coming to exist in a condition of *tohu wa-bohu*, as described in Genesis 1:2, was interpreted by Paul as exemplifying a condition of *Destruction* brought about by *Satanic* rebellion. Both Jeremiah and Isaiah understood this and it is now Paul's understanding by spiritual application. In addition, it demonstrates a Renewal of the earth by the reflection of Regenerated believers. To argue against the testimony of these evidences is to reject a lot of Biblical revelation.

### *The Testimony of Others*

Just as there are those today, though perhaps few in number compared to the Young Earth Creationists, who point out that the second verse of Genesis One is descriptive of a judgment, so it is actually known among researchers that there were those from very early times who made some of the very same observations that I have made in this study. The Biblical evidences that we have so far reviewed were observed by other teachers and commentators on the Scriptures, both Jewish and Christian, in ages past. Their testimony from many centuries past becomes valuable.

As stated in *SECTION ONE* of *The Gap Is Not A Theory*, I mentioned the fact that Genesis 1:2 can be viewed as a *judgmental* baptismal scene, especially with the presence of the Holy Spirit hovering over the waters. This is comparable in certain similarities to the flood in Noah's day which was also referred to as a baptism in type by the apostle Peter (see I Peter 3:20, 21). The inundation of the earth by water in the days of Noah was clearly a *judgmental* baptism to clean the world of sinners and begin with a new generation. The dove being released over the waters was a sign of peace. Surprisingly enough, the baptism of Jesus Christ was first of all a mere ceremonial cleansing or purification of the flesh. John the Baptist did not want to baptize Christ lest it appear as a moral *judgment* against Him. However, as a mere fleshly ritual, Christ as a man could submit to it. Remember, Christ submitted to circumcision as a fellow member of the Jewish race who were heirs of the Abrahamic promises. At Christ's baptism the Holy Spirit was likewise present as a dove to inaugurate Christ's public ministry, and the voice of God made it clear that God found no fault in His Son.

### *The judgmental baptism of Noah's day*

The classical and definitive work on Baptism by James W. Dale records for us in volume II, *Judaic Baptism*, certain of the early church "Father's" commentary on the baptism of Noah's day (page 148 & 149). It is important to note their observations—

"For as after the waters of the deluge, by which the *old iniquity was purged*, after the baptism (as I might have said) *of the world*."

**Tertullian**, I, 1209. (Italics mine in this and all following cases).

"For as in that baptism *of the world*, by which the *old iniquity was purged*, he who was not in the ark of Noah, could not be saved, so, now, neither can he be saved who is not baptized in the church."

**Cyprian**, 1136.

"That a figure of baptism, in the deluge, also went before, we began to argue yesterday. What is the deluge, but that by which the righteous is preserved as a seed of righteousness, *while sin perishes*?...Is not

this deluge the same as baptism, by which all sins are washed away, and the soul of the righteous, and grace alone, preserved.”

**Ambrose**, iii, 423.

“Not so much a deluge, as a *baptism*, occurred. *Baptism* it clearly was, because, with sinners, *iniquity was taken away*; with Noah, righteousness was preserved.” **Ambrose**, iv, 650.

“ ‘The Lord inhabiteth the flood.’ (Ps. 28:10) A flood is an overflow of water, covering all that is under it, and *purifying every defilement*. Therefore he calls the grace of baptism a flood; so that the soul *washed from sin*, and *cleansed from the old man*, may be, afterwards, *a fit habitation of God, by His Spirit*.”

**Basil**, I, 304.

“The deluge foretold the *purification of sins*.”

**Didymus Alexandrinus**, 696.

When the Flood is referred to as a “baptism,” it is important to remember three things they held in common. They are: 1.) the flood in Noah’s day was a *judgment* against the evil world; 2.) baptism as a judgment *purges from sin*; 3.) so that God and/or the righteous can *repopulate* the world in purity. Indeed, the Jewish purifications or baptisms must have these ingredients as a ritual figure in their physical cleansings.

### ***The baptism of Genesis 1:2***

Now some of these same “Fathers” and others acknowledged that the scene in Genesis 1:2 *is also a baptismal scene having some of the very same connotations*.

**Tertullian**, I, 1203.

“But it is sufficient to have premised these things, whereby also many recognized that the prime nature of *baptism*, by which even then, by its very dress, was *foreshown by a figure of baptism*, that the Spirit of God, which from the beginning was *upborne above the waters*, would *transform* the imbued. But, indeed, the holy was borne above the holy, or that which bore received sanctity from that upborne. Since whatever substance is beneath, receives, of necessity, character from that which rests above, especially is a physical substance pervaded by a spiritual, through the subtlety of its nature. So the *nature of the waters was sanctified* by the Holy, and itself received the power to *sanctify*.”

(Italics mine, J.L.)

This statement by Tertullian is no doubt difficult to understand. Perhaps a little commentary on this statement by Tertullian will make it clearer what he is contending for. Tertullian was the first to propagate the doctrine of “*water baptismal regeneration*” — the doctrine that water baptism is necessary for the salvation of a lost soul. There is no question that “baptism” is descriptive of salvation such as in Romans six. However, in Romans six you won’t find a drop of water; the baptism that saves is spiritual. (That this salvation baptism is a baptism of ceremonial water is not taught in the Bible and was mocked from the very beginning in the Hebrew Scriptures: see Job 9:30, 31; Isa. 1:14-16; Jer. 2:22 & 4:14, etc.). Nevertheless, herein Tertullian advances an argument from the

passage of Genesis 1:2, where the Holy Spirit was hovering above the waters, to propagate his doctrine that this was also a type of the water baptismal regeneration of new converts to Christianity. In Tertullian's thinking, just as the Holy Spirit would change the nature of the physical water in Genesis 1:2, so the Holy Spirit in the baptismal waters of the ritual fount would change the nature of the water to effect *regeneration* in the new convert. Thus Tertullian calls Genesis 1:2 a "figure of baptism" just as he had done of Noah's flood. Therefore, theologically he must place all the ingredients of the baptism in Noah's day in this baptism of Genesis 1:2. It would be a judgmental cleansing to effect regeneration.

**Didymus Alexandrinus** (692) used the very same argument with almost the very same words of Tertullian so that it is not necessary to quote it. The important thing to remember is that these men see in Genesis 1:2 the emblem of the ritual in Christendom which effected *cleansing* and *regeneration*. Though I do not believe for one second that water baptism effects regeneration, nevertheless this is similar in nature to the inspired observation of the apostle Paul, that the gospel light (not water baptism) shined out of the darkness to effect *regeneration* in the life of the believer. And contrarywise, the rejection of that gospel light effected *destruction* in the lives of the nonbelievers.

**Jerome**, ii,161. Jerome was the famous translator of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures into the Latin (383-405 C.E.). This was eventually called the Vulgate, or the authoritative translation of the Roman Catholic Church. Jerome was another who also understood that "The Spirit of the Lord was borne above the waters" (Gen 1:2), prefiguring the washing or cleansing baptism which has the power "*to change the condition of the soul.*" Jerome went so far as to distinguish empty water baptism, as practiced by the heathen and other religious groups, as having no power at all, whereas the baptism which has soul-sanctifying power imparted to it, is that practiced by the "True Church" because it has the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. Thus he looked very positively at Genesis 1:2 as a baptism scene to *effect a changed condition*.

**Ambrose**, ii, 1583, also spoke of Genesis 1:2 as being emblematic of that baptism in Christendom where, by virtue of the divine influence of the Spirit, the waters were invested with the power of *regenerating* the candidate.

Sad to say, these "Fathers" had come to substitute, in place of the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ as taught by Paul in II Corinthians 4:3-6, their ritual water baptism to do the work of regeneration. Nevertheless, even in their error they do demonstrate by their theology the Biblical truth that I am bringing out in this study, that the moving of the Holy Spirit over the waters in Genesis 1:2 was, indeed, a vital event that in and of itself can be associated with the idea of a death, burial and resurrection in the physical creation. There was a judgment, burial of the earth under water and there followed a regeneration in the physical earth as a result of the moving of the Holy Spirit of God effecting six days of renewal.

In their effort to bring redemptive value to water baptism, they interpreted the passage as if the Holy Spirit was giving His power to the sanctification of the water, whereas in reality the Holy Spirit was merely hovering over the desolation, with the aim of a *regeneration* in the physical creation which had been darkened and lay as a "desolation." Let us remember again that even our Lord Jesus Christ referred to the

blessings of the Kingdom age upon this earth as “*the regeneration*” (Matt. 19:28). Remember also the passage from Psalm 104:30—“You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You **renew** the face of the earth.” This is what the Holy Spirit of God was doing during the “six days” of restorative work that followed.

### *A Jewish application of the same event*

In his book *Without Form And Void*, Arthur C. Custance gathered many quotations from ancient sources to illustrate the fact that, in spite of the common assumption that the whole universe originated during the six day activity of God, there were many who indicated the Scriptures, when studied closely, actually testify that this was not the case.

In this regard Custance found *A Rabbinical Commentary On Genesis* (by Paul Isaac Hershon, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1882, page 336) which gave the following quotation on this same issue concerning the activity of the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:2. It is very interesting to note from the Jewish perspective their thoughts on this event—

“ ‘*And the earth was desolate and void.*’ The earth will be desolate, for the shekinah will depart at the *destruction* of the Temple, and hence it is said: ‘*And the Spirit of God hovered upon the face of the waters*’: which intimates to us that even although we be in exile (after the destruction of the Temple) yet the Torah shall not depart from us; and therefore it is added: ‘*And God said, Let there be light.*’ This shows us that after the captivity God will again enlighten us, and send us the Messiah...” (All in italics are mine, J.L.)

In the Jewish mind there is a parallel between the Shekinah (Holy Spirit) rising and moving out of the Temple, hovering over the court of the Temple and then over to the mount of Olives according to the vision of Ezekiel (Ezek. 10:3, 4, 18-20 & 11:22, 23) and the Holy Spirit “hovering over the face of the waters” as recorded in Genesis 1:2.

There is actually a clear logic to their parallel. The prophesied *destruction* of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem because of the corruption and apostasy of Israel meant that the Spirit of God would remove Himself from the place of *His former glory*. This is actually a logical and realistic comparison to the events in Genesis One, if one understands the earth “was” and/or “came to be *desolate and void*” because of a judgment. And thus, “*the Spirit of God hovered upon the face of the waters,*” just as the Shekinah moved out of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem, is indicative of the earth being the place of the Spirit’s former glory. And yet God promises a restoration. In the Genesis account “*God said ‘let there be light.’*” This speaks to the Jewish mind the similar promise to Israel of a coming Messianic age.

This would likewise mean that in a Jewish contemplation upon the Genesis account, they could envision the work of the six days as a restoration, or a regeneration of the earth, to make it habitable not only for the new man who will have dominion, but also habitable once again for God. In addition it would mean that in the Jewish contemplation the original earth, like the Temple of Israel, was the place of a former glory and dwelling place for the Spirit of God. And actually when we come to study the subject of Lucifer and his glorious dominion on a paradisiacal earth, this will make better sense.

### *Other quotes indicating judgment in Genesis 1:2*

Custance pointed out that in the *Revised Edition of Chamber's Encyclopedia*, published in 1860 under the heading "Genesis," the view becoming popular that there was an interval of time of unknown duration between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 was already found in the Midrash (Jewish commentary on the Hebrew Scriptures from 100 B.C.E. to 400 C.E.). Then Custance quoted one such commentary recorded by Louis Ginsberg in his book *The Legends Of The Jews*, published by the Jewish Publication Society of America, Phila., 1954, Vol 1, page 4 & Vol. 5, in reference to The Great Midrash on "The Beginning," 3:7; 9:2 & Koheleth 3:11 & Tehillim 34. 245. Here is the statement—

"Nor is this world inhabited by man the first of things earthly created by God. He made several other worlds before ours, but He destroyed them all, because He was pleased with none until He created ours." (Italics and underlining mine, J.L.)

The only response to this statement in early Jewish tradition by Weston W. Fields in his book was to ridicule what he thought as weird Jewish thinking and to state that this has no resemblance to the present "Gap Theory." Of course, not every observation is ever expected to fit perfectly all the ideas in the present so-called "Gap Theory" as defined by Weston Fields. Weston Fields thus turns a blind eye to the fact that such a statement would totally annihilate his own position.

Custance also quoted from *The Zohar* or *Book of Light*, which was a multivolume collection of Jewish traditions and interpretations. They supposedly date from the late first century to the early second century and are traditionally said to be written by Simeon Ben Jochai. However some scholars say these are actually medieval forgeries, possibly written as late as 1300 C.E. So, whether from the second century or the 13<sup>th</sup>, here is the commentary—

"These are the generations (i.e., this is the history of) of heaven and earth... Now wherever there is written the words 'these' the previous words are put aside. And these are the generations of the destruction which is signified in verse 2 of chapter 1. The earth was Tohu and Bohu. These indeed are the worlds of which it is said that the blessed God created them and destroyed them, and, on that account, the earth was desolate and empty." (Italics and underlining mine, J.L.)

Again, the only response made by Weston Fields was to ridicule such a statement as being so "fanciful that it is difficult to take seriously." Of course the question is not how "fanciful" the statement may seem to a present day Young Earth Creationist. The statement clearly indicates there were those who believed Genesis 1:2 was indicative of a cataclysmic judgment upon the original world that God had created. In other words this doctrine is not something "new" that was designed as an answer to the modern geologists. This observation had existed long before the modern science of the long geological ages. This fact most Young Earth Creationists don't want to admit.

**Origen.** It is also well know that Origen, a very popular early church "Father" (185-254 C.E.), much like the Jewish commentators above, taught that there were several

other worlds before ours. He likened these to “heavenly worlds” under angelic rule. In support of his position he would quote Ecclesiastes 1:9 & 10—“*That which has been is what will be. That which is done is what will be done. And there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, ‘See, this is new?’ It has already been in ancient times before us.*”

Origen further asserted that the fall of certain angels prompted God to abandon these previous worlds and replace them by our present world. In further support of his position, he translated the Greek word *katabole* (normally translated as “foundation”) according to its literal meaning as a “casting down.” Though the word is normally translated as “foundation,” Origen said that several times it is used in the sense of the “*casting down*” of the former worlds (Ephesians 1:4 and Hebrews 4:3 compared with Romans 8:20, 21).

Once again Weston Fields simply ridiculed this as an obvious perverse belief, without at least admitting it substantiates the fact that Origen believed, from very early times, the fact that there were earlier creations which came under judgment because of Satan’s rebellion and that Genesis One contains the account of another creation, distinct from previous creations. Origen was not alone as a Christian in this belief—

**Caedmon** (650 C.E.) was a poor English herdsman who was supposedly inspired by an angelic vision to sing out in poetic form the various stories of the Bible and in particular the Creation account. His works were so good that many of them were preserved till this very day; certain music and poetry organizations were named after him. For references as to Caedmon’s actual poetry from Genesis see *Without Form and Void*, by Custance, pages 18-20.

Somewhat similar to the views of Origen, Caedmon envisioned a heavenly world ruled by angelic hosts. This world which God had created was beautiful and perfect in every way. This continued until a rebellion occurred which was led by a Prince of the angels who in pride wanted to wrest control of the very mansions of God Himself. Instead, God expelled these rebellious angelic hosts.

According to Caedmon, while all this was going on, the earth itself lay in a wasted and empty condition as described in Genesis 1:2. He said, “This earth stood...idle and useless, alien even to God Himself.” Caedmon further stated—

“Our Lord bethought Him, in meditative mood how He might again people, with a better race, His high creation, the noble seats and glory crowned abodes which the haughty rebels had left vacant high in heaven. Therefore Holy God willed by His plenteous power that under the circle of the firmament of the earth should be established with sky above and wide water, a world-creation (as opposed to a heavenly one) in a place of the foes whom in their apostasy He hurled from bliss.”

Caedmon’s poems were originally popularized in the English world. It is obvious to all that Caedmon saw a break in the original creation due to the rebellion of the angelic hosts, and that God decided to create a new race of people to replace the rule of the fallen angels, and to place them upon the earth. It is at this point that Caedmon began the account of the six days as described in Genesis 1:3-31.

Though the expressions manifest in this poetry may seem fanciful by some peoples' standards, nevertheless it characteristically follows the pattern of those who believe in the Gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:3. In addition, if Caedmon's poetry were still popular to this day, it is quite obvious that it would have a devastating effect on the theory of the Young Earth Creationists. Caedmon separated the creation account into two separate stages. He placed the rebellion of the angelic hosts prior to the establishment of the second world. During this rebellion the earth remained wasted and emptied. The age of mankind upon this present earth could be dated after the six days began, yet by no stretch of the imagination could the total age of the earth be known.

Weston W. Fields, like the proverbial ostrich, simply buried his head in the sand as to the reality of Caedmon's perceptions and made a pitiful plea—"this cannot and must not be construed into a support for the Gap Theory." This actually demonstrates the superficial prejudice and desperation against the doctrine of a Gap in past ages.

***More quotes from Custance's collection which  
demonstrate an age for the earth far greater than 6000 years***

**Hugo St. Victor** (1097-1141). This was a Flemish scholar and a member of the Augustinian Monastery of St. Victor who later became Prior of the monastery in Paris. He stated the following—

“Perhaps enough has already been debated about these matters thus far, if we add only this, *how long did the world remain in this disorder before the regular ordering of it was taken in hand?* For the fact that the first substance of all things arose at the very beginning of time—or rather, with time itself—is settled by the statement that, ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’ But how long it continued in this state of confusion, Scripture does not clearly show.”

This is a very interesting statement and shows several things. First, his statement indicates this subject had been debated many times in the past. Therefore, it is not something new for the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century Christians. Second, Hugo St. Victor clearly saw the work of the six days as a separate event beginning in verse three of the first chapter of Genesis. Third, the second verse was indicative of a “disorder” in the arrangement of the earth. And fourthly, how long the earth remained in this disorder the Scriptures do not state.

Such a position, of course, would again be totally devastating to our modern Young Earth Creationists.

**Thomas Aquinas** (1226-1274). Thomas Aquinas is regarded as one of the greatest theologians and philosophers of the “Christian Church”. Many rank him with Saint Augustine in importance.

Interestingly enough, Aquinas lived in a century of great intellectual controversy provoked by the recovery of Aristotle's writings. The ancient Greek contentions about science or knowledge were again plaguing many Christians. Aquinas insisted there was no conflict between the revealed faith of the Bible and human reasoning. In this very setting he reiterated the views expressed by Hugo St. Victor—

“but it seems better to maintain (the view) that the creation was prior to (or literally, before any) any of the days (the six days).”

Thus, at a time when it was popular among the Greek philosophers to believe that the age of the earth greatly antedated the age of man as indicated in the Mosaic record, Thomas Aquinas simply pointed out that the original creation was separate and before the six day activity of God in preparing the earth for man’s habitation. Aquinas was not compromising in order to accommodate the Greek philosophers by this understanding. Rather, he was stating in clear terms what he and many others already believed. Aquinas did not confuse the original creation with the activity of God during the six days.

As Custance correctly observed, Hugo St. Victor and Thomas Aquinas could never have believed what Bishop Ussher wrote many years later, that creation occurred in 4000 B.C. We can rightfully surmise that if this was what the great Thomas Aquinas believed, then there were most certainly many others who believed likewise.

**Dionysius Petavius** (1583-1652). Custance says, “Dionysius Petavius was a French Roman Catholic Jesuit Theologian who was first Professor of Philosophy at Bourges and later Professor of Theology at Paris.” Addressing the same subject he said—

“The question of ‘*How great an interval there was,*’ it is not possible except by inspiration to attain knowledge of. Nor, indeed, do I judge those basic components of earth and water, which I have taught originated first of all, to have been fabricated the same day on which had occurred the appearance of daylight, as it pleases certain persons (to believe), but by no means with sound enough reason.”

According to Petavius it was only “certain persons” who believed the basic components of earth and water were created on the first day. And they, he argued, were “by no means with sound enough reason.” In addition, he contended there was not expressly stated “How great an interval (of time) there was,” between the initial creation of the heavens and the earth and the account of the six days.

**Pereius** (1535-1610). This individual was considered “the most learned of all medieval commentators on Genesis,” according to Custance (see page 23 of his book).

“Even though before the first day, the heavens and the elements were made subsequent to the substance (i.e., basic essence of creative activity) nevertheless they were not perfected and completely furnished until the period of the six days: for then was given to them (their) furnishing, (their) fulfillment (filling up), and (their) completion. However, just how long that darkened state of the world lasted, i.e., whether it lasted more than one day or less than one day, this is not clear to me, nor (I hold) is it clear to any other mortal man unless to one to whom it has been divinely made so.”

Pereius, as did those listed before him, distinguished between the original creation of the heavens and the earth and the six day account of the Lord furnishing the earth for man’s habitation. How long an interval of time existed between the darkened state of the

earth and the final furnishing God made during the six days, he did not know and did not think could be proven by mortal man.

**Johann August Dath**, a German professor, oriental scholar and Biblical critic, published his six-volume work on the books of the Old Testament between 1763 & 1781. Concerning Genesis 1:2, he made this statement—

*“Waw before ‘the earth’ cannot be translated ‘AND,’ for it would then refer back to verse 1, where the narrative has ‘the earth and heaven were created by God.’ Whereas verse 2 proceeds to tell how that the earth, at some uncertain time, had undergone some remarkable change. Therefore waw stands for ‘afterwards’ and is so to be interpreted, as it so often is—for example in Num. 5:23 and Deut. 1:19.”* (Italics mine, J.L.).

It is clear from this account that professor Dath would be regarded as some kind of a Gap Theorist by today’s Young Earth Creationists. He considered Genesis 1:1 to be a statement of the original creation of the heavens and earth. He also considered the second verse to be a description of some “remarkable change” in the condition of the earth “at some uncertain time.” Naturally, the six days would subsequently terminate this “remarkable change” in the earth. These ingredients are the basics of the Gap teaching.

***In Summarizing this Testimony—  
How Old is the Earth?***

All these testimonies are before the science of the geological ages even came into existence. None of these teachers would ever claim that the Scriptures teach the earth is only 6000 years old. They knew better than to make such a blunder.

Sad to say, there is the fable today which has been propagated many times by critics of the Biblical record that “the Bible says the earth is only 6000 years old.” Of course the Bible says no such thing. There is no such statement to be found anywhere in the Bible to this effect. Nor is there any combination of verses that give this evidence. Further sad is the fact that critics of the Bible rarely read it and so they take their cue from the Young Earth Creationists who avidly affirm that “the Bible says or indicates the earth is 6000 years old.” On the basis of this faulty affirmation, the critics of the Bible confidently proclaim that the Biblical record is not trustworthy.

The modern Young Earth Creationists not only blunder with faulty hermeneutics in their interpretation of Genesis One, but in addition they quite often turn around and falsely say the Gap Theology is a recent invention to accommodate the long ages of evolutionary geologists. The fact is—this is an absolutely blatant lie! And in light of all the testimony above, there is absolutely no excuse for it. The dishonesty in this regard is disgustingly flagrant and totally inexcusable by professing “God fearing Christian men.” In addition, these same men often claim that they take the Scriptures literally, as if nobody else who disagrees with them does!

All the testimonies above—and I am sure many more could be made—concerning the observation that the second verse of Genesis One indicates a judgment, and/or that there is an unspecified amount of time to be allowed in the Mosaic record, are not the

invention of latter day apologists who are trying to accommodate the science of modern geology which tells us the earth is very old—much more so than the 6000 years from the date of Adam’s creation.

Indeed, the Biblical record itself by Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the apostle Paul pre-dates the modern science of geology by up to nearly 3300 years. The Bible is very careful not to say that the earth is only 6000 years old. Therefore, a correct interpretation of Genesis One indicates that the actual age of the earth is so far in the past as to not even be calculated by the pages of Scripture. In the Mosaic account the actual age of the earth is simply, “in the beginning,” which is far beyond our comprehension. This is the testimony of the Biblical record long before the modern science of geology.

### ***The man who supposedly “Found Time”***

A recent example of the claim of evolutionary geologists is the book by Jack Repcheck, *The Man Who Found Time*. This is an account of the life and first clear discovery of the ancient age of the earth by **James Hutton** of Scotland, who wrote in 1788 proof that the earth was hundreds of thousands of years old, if not millions. Thus, Stephen Jay Gould would say of Hutton in a 1977 article, “He burst the boundaries of time, thereby establishing geology’s most distinctive and transforming contribution to human thought—Deep Time.”

Of course, I have just listed what some of the human writers of the Scriptures actually said. In addition, I have just listed the testimony of at least ten different witnesses who confidently explained their belief that the earth was much older than the period from Adam to the present. These witnesses lived from the first century of the present era right up to a few years before James Hutton wrote his conclusion about the age of the earth. Therefore, the actual fact is there was an abundance of evidence published about the great age of the earth long before James Hutton published his work. If anything can be factually stated, it would be that James Hutton merely concluded by the observance of evidence in the geological record what many Bible students had known for the last two or three millennia.

### ***Enter—Thomas Chalmers***

Arthur Custance traces very carefully what happened next after James Hutton’s declarations in 1788 (*Without Form and Void*, pages 25-30).

Due to traditional assumptions in Christendom, many people thought that the Bible teaches that the earth is only about 6000 years old. The chronology of Bishop Ussher had even been assigned a place in the side column of the King James Bible. The Bishop had stated unequivocally that the earth was created on a specific date in 4004 B.C. Thus, many devout Christians took the new conclusion of more and more geologists to be an attack against the Biblical record and the Christian faith.

On the other hand, certain other Bible teachers did not believe for one second that the conclusion of Bishop Ussher was accurate. They believed that the date of some 4004 B.C. could only be assigned to the history from Adam and NOT to the creation of the heavens and the earth. Some of these men were well aware of the long held understanding that Moses did not assign a date to the creation of the heavens and the

earth. Thus, they did not believe there was actually a conflict with the new thoughts about the geological record in the earth.

Dr. Thomas Chalmers was one such teacher. He was a clergyman of the Scottish Church, a fellow countryman of James Hutton, a lecturer at St Andrews and one who had a keen interest in certain scientific developments. In addition, he was an avid Bible student who was well aware of the fact that Moses did not date the creation of the heavens and earth. As the conflict began developing, Dr. Chalmers issued this word of caution for the Christians in 1804—

“There is a prejudice against the speculations of the geologist, which I am anxious to remove. It has been alleged that geology, by referring the origin of the globe to a higher antiquity than is assigned to it by the writings of Moses, undermines our faith in the inspiration of the Bible, and in all the animating prospects of the immortality which it unfolds. ***This is a false alarm. The writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe.***”  
(Bold italics are mine, J.L.)

Some ten years later (1814) Dr. Thomas Chalmers produced a more elaborate explanation of the Biblical facts about the creation account and why it does not conflict with the modern assumptions of the geologists.

In later years this has come to be called the “Gap Theory.” In addition, the modern Young Earth Creationists think nothing of parroting the accusation that Thomas Chalmers was the first to give this view; they said he did it only to accommodate the atheistic evolutionary assumptions of modern science. I sincerely believe that these Young Earth Creationists who parrot this blatant lie will one day answer to God at the judgment seat of Christ. There is absolutely no excuse for it, especially in light of the excellent historical background which was done by Arthur C. Custance in his book *Without Form And Void*, which was written back in 1970.

**William Buckland** was another Bible teacher who made careful explanation of what the Genesis account is actually saying. He most certainly reinforced Dr. Chalmers’ position. His paper was submitted in 1836.

**J. Harris** in 1847 published a work in London entitled, *The Pre-Adamic Earth*. He clearly believed that the initial creation recorded in Genesis 1:1, on the basis of exegetical considerations, must be kept separate from the work of God during the six days of activity in preparing the earth for man’s occupancy. He stated the following—

“Now, that the originating act, described in the first verse, was not meant to be included in the account of the six Adamic days, is evident from the following considerations: first, the creation of the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth days begins with the formula ‘And God said.’ It is only natural, therefore, to conclude that the creation of the first day begins with the third verse where the said formula first occurs, ‘And God said, let there be light.’ ***But if so, it follows that the act described in the first verse, and the state of the earth in the second verse,***

***must both have belonged to a period anterior to the first day.”***  
(Bold italics mine, J.L.)

### ***In Conclusion***

Now I am going to close this particular *SECTION* with this quotation above because this is actually where I initially began this whole study back in 1952, as I stated in *SECTION ONE*. In 1847 Mr. Harris articulated the very same conclusion I came to in my dormitory room at a Bible School in the fall of 1952, before I even knew of any theories about the creation account. Therefore I know personally I did not come to this conclusion in an effort to accommodate the modern evolutionary geologists. This is the very same conclusion many have come to for the last two thousand years.

Weston Fields in his book *Unformed and Unfilled* has the audacity to say on page 45, “The Gap Theory was not generated by compelling exegetical considerations.” In light of all the facts I have presented in these two *SECTIONS* so far, and in light of all the excellent information presented by Arthur C. Custance, even involving some of the greatest Hebrew scholars of the last two centuries who expressed this same view, this statement by Fields amounts to another totally inexcusable, blatant falsehood!

When one uses the proper Biblical hermeneutics, the fact of a Gap or Gaps of unspecified duration is the only possible conclusion one can come to. For those who believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, this is where the discussion of any interpretation must ultimately find its solution, that is, in the proper exegesis or handling of the Word of God.

***The End***

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