


## **Ruin and Reconstruction Theory of the Earth** (Gap Theory of 1804 – The Earth is Billions of Years Old)

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Ruin and reconstruction remind me of my childhood days when I would fall off the bike and then must get up and start piecing myself together. Many people have asked me about this older

 **Re/Build**

view of the earth that has been embraced by many evangelicals. I want to take some time to develop this view. We sometimes say, “It’s logical” but we should ask, “Is it Scriptural?” (Rom. 4:3). This is how we should approach the Gap Theory. Gap creationism (also known as ruin-restoration creationism, or restoration creationism) is a form of old Earth creationism that declares the six-day creation, as described in the Book of Genesis, involved literal 24-hour days, but that there was a large gap of time between two distinct creations in the first and the second verses of Genesis.

This gap explains many, if not all the scientific observations, including the age of the Earth which is said to be billions of years old. It claims that an EARLIER creation, complete with dinosaurs and pre-Adamic hominoids lived and died before the "Genesis days of creation" or really RECREATION where God started a new earth with people and animals.

Before we begin a study of the gap theory, we can summarize that there is no valid exegetical support for extra time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 or Biblical indication of a previous creation, and because Scripture teaches that all creation happened within the six consecutive days of Genesis 1:1-31 (Exod. 20:11). The primary exegetical arguments for the gap theory are that the words “without form and “void” in Genesis 1:2 elsewhere describe places that have suffered God’s judgment (Isa. 34:11; Jer. 4:23), and since darkness can also be a sign of divine judgment (Zeph. 1:5; Joel 2:21; Isa. 13:9). It’s therefore teaches that a huge gap of time existed between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, consisting of millions and perhaps billions of years, which eventually ended in judgment, leaving the earth and universe “without form and void.” However, the expression “without form” occurs 19x and sometimes simply means empty without any implication of judgment (Deut.

32:10; Job 12:24; 26:7; Psa. 107:40) and “void” only occurs two other times - too few to draw lexical conclusions. The other verses used to support the gap theory (Isa. 34:11; Jer. 4:23; Isa. 45:18) are referenced to compare and illustrate the formless nature of God’s initial phase of creation to both historic and prophetic judgments to come.

Are you ready for a story? Get out some popcorn and a drink! The basic tenets and story of the Gap Theory go something like this.

### **Genesis 1:1**

Billions of years ago God created the heaven and earth in a state of perfection (Genesis 1:1) which was known as “the first creation.” God created everything in one day (the first day of creation). Everything was complete and perfect.

### **The Gap**

God placed Satan (then known as “Lucifer,” an angel of God) and the other angelic beings upon the earth. It was during this same time that God also created a pre-Adamic race of men, animals, dinosaurs and many other species of life upon the earth. During this time both God and the people declared Lucifer to be ruler of this planet. All was well.

Eventually Lucifer became filled with pride regarding his beauty and wisdom and desired the Throne of God. As a result, he attempted to ascend to Heaven (Isaiah 14). Satan sways one-third of the angels to revolt with him. Thus, there was a war in the heavens (Revelation 12) and Satan and his demons were cast back to earth and raised havoc on the earth and lead a race of people against God. Most postulate that Satan’s rebellion on earth with this alleged pre-Adamic race existed for a billion years (providing the allotted time for the Ice Age, the alleged billions of years needed for the astronomical and geological ages to occur and validate the fossil records of modern scientists).

### **Genesis 1:2**

The earth was eventually judged after billions of years. Here’s why. After a long period of undetermined time (likely billions of years) God sent forth a “Lucifer Flood” (or some other cataclysmic destruction) designed to punish Satan, the angels, and earth dwellers (II Peter 3:5,6 and "the deep" of

Genesis 1:2 is said to be evidence for a mythical Lucifer Flood). The earth was judged by this global flood or some other catastrophe of epic proportions and became an empty graveyard with no light. Only darkness covered the earth and it BECAME desolate – “without form and void” (Genesis 1:2; and Jeremiah 4:23). All life was destroyed upon the earth (Jeremiah 4:23-29). The previous catastrophic flood may have been accompanied by other dramatic phenomenon that devastated the earth, such as erupting volcanoes, asteroids falling on the planet, etc. (Gen 1:3 onward). In fact, even the entire universe was affected when looking at other planets such as Mars (they are still an empty wasteland)

### **Genesis 1:3**

After the global judgment, God immediately began to REMAKE life on the earth and REPLINISH it. But what seems to be a new creation is really only a reappearance of what was previously created except the animals and man. The story goes like this: the sun, moon, and stars are only REAPPEARING in the sky after the dust and debris from the previous world cataclysm begins to clear. So, there you have it, the Gap Theory, but not one shred of evidence to support it!



There are variations of this view and it's no wonder, this theory is not found in Scripture. But this view generally suggests that between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 there is a huge gap of time (perhaps billions of years which is where dinosaurs and other extinct creatures existed). Of course, the gap would be a time reference that accommodates the alleged findings of evolutionary scientists.

Gap theorists actually oppose evolution but believe in an ancient origin of the universe which is supported by evolutionary scientists and inaccurate dating methods for the earth and universe. Good and godly men over the years have espoused this view like C. I. Scofield who promoted this theory in his famous Scofield Reference Bible. J. Vernon McGee also promoted this view in his famous commentary series (Thru the Bible). Dake's Annotated Reference Bible states this: "When men finally agree on the age of the earth, then place the many years (over the historical 6,000) between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, there will be no conflict between the Book of Genesis and science." Other well-known men who loves the Bible such as, Harry Rimmer, A. W. Pink, Donald Grey Barnhouse, and Clarence Larkin espoused this view.

We must remember that the Bible is inspired (2 Tim. 3:16) and not the notes of any man! I love Dr. Scofield's Bible and notes. I was born and raised on them! Someone wrote: "My faith is built on nothing less than Scofield's notes and Scripture Press."

Take this into consideration before passing too much judgment on the men who espoused this view in their day. These men were contemporaries of the day when all of this new scientific data was being poured into the public and claiming to be gospel scientific truth. These godly men truly believed the Bible but were attempting to accommodate the new claims of science, which everyone thought were true, with the creation account. It would not be until later until these alleged scientific claims were denounced by much of the Christian community.

Today these geological theories have been weighed and found wanting not only by some of the colleagues in the scientific world but also by Christian men like Henry Morris, John Whitcomb, and more recently Ken Ham and many others who have come back to the roots of the Bible.

I'm not excusing Dr. Scofield for these notes on the Gap Theory, but we must understand the era of time and how they were trying to accommodate what

was being scientifically taught for the first time regarding the geological ages. The initial response to these supposed scientific facts led to some Christians rearranging the Genesis record on creation in order to fit into the geological ages of billions of years.

The gap theory imagines billions of years of suffering and death occurring before the creation of animals and Adam. In this gap of time the alleged geological ages occurred which assign millions and even billions of years to the fossil record and rock layers in the earth's crust. The Bible explains all of these things in the "catastrophism" related to Noah's Flood within a period of 6,000-10,000 years. However, the whole concept of the geological ages is based on the evolutionary assumption that things have continued the same in the past as in the present (uniformitarianism). For this reason, there is no room in the geological age system for the cataclysm interrupting the processes that gap theorists need. This is why no geologist would accept the gap theory.

Scofield tried to accommodate the alleged scientific discoveries in his day by concluding in his notes. I've added some clarification statement to his notes to his quotes. "The first creative act (Gen. 1:1 - a previous earth age resulting in rebellion) refers to the dateless past (billions of years in a gap between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 (billions of years in a gap between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2, when Satan ruled the world, a world that was eventually judged), and gives scope for all the geologic ages" (supports the earth as being millions of years old according to pseudo-science).

Later Scofield adds that we can "Relegate fossils (formed in the gap) to the primitive creation (the first creation - Gen. 1:1 - and billions of years - the gap), and no conflict of science with the Genesis cosmogony (story of origins) remains." Gap theorists link fossil findings to a previous earth age, where people lived in rebellion with Satan (during a gap of time that existed for billions of years). Eventually the earth was judged (likely by a flood) creating fossils and bones that support the alleged dating of modern science.

A final note in the Scofield Bible says:

"Jer. 4:23-27; Isa 24:1; Isa 45:18 clearly indicate that the earth had undergone a cataclysmic change as the result of divine judgment. The face of the earth bears everywhere the marks of such a catastrophe. There are not wanting imitations which connect it with a previous testing and fall of angels."

A devastating water main break in Castro County, California caused a massive sinkhole to open up in the street, pulling in a fire truck. The break occurred at around 7 p.m., dispatchers told the site. Water flowed into houses, causing damage. The gap caused by the sinkhole was big enough to partially swallow the 40,000-pound emergency vehicle. A sink hole illustrates the gap theory. Everything on earth at one point fell into a hole and disappeared and then eventually reappeared! I'm not sure, but I don't think God works this way!



The opening mysteriously appeared in northern Siberia; a place already named by locals as “the end of the world.” A mysterious gigantic sinkhole has appeared in Russia - and nobody knows where it came from or how deep it is. It opened in the peninsula of Yamal. At 80 meters wide, the sinkhole is believed to be the biggest ever spotted in the country and could be one of the deepest ever recorded in the world. Speculation of what has caused the phenomenon include rumors of a crashed UFO, a meteorite hitting the earth, global warming or a sinkhole caused by collapsing rock. Experts are confident that there is a scientific explanation for the crater, which is large enough to fit several Mi-8 helicopters into it. This giant sink hole is one way to illustrate the Gap Theory which believes there was a gap of billions of years between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Everything that previously was on earth vanished into a giant hole only to reappear again in a new form.

The Gap theory assumes there were billions of years between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 where billions of people lived for billions of years and were eventually judged by God. However, there is absolutely no mention in Scripture of this previous creation. Isn't it difficult to imagine that the entire creation of the universe is passed over in only one verse of the Bible and the bulk of the record deals with a re-creation? Even according to many who espouse the Gap Theory, there is no clear word from God concerning the original creation. There are no Biblical verses can be honestly cited to back up the Gap Theory.

Genesis is NOT a cryptic or secretive account that is only understood by those who are the initiated or those who postulate certain things to have occurred between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Genesis 1 is written as a straightforward account of God's creation -- not some cryptic (secret) record. If God had meant to inform us of a gap between the first two verses, He could have clearly done that. There is nothing in the Genesis creation account that requires, or even hints at, a gap. Something has to be read into the account that is not obviously there. The Gap Theory is full of unsubstantiated assumptions.

The ruin and reconstruction view is not as popular today as it once was and it should be rejected for several Biblical reasons.

## **1. Misunderstanding of Bible texts**

All of the verses used to support an alleged judgment of a previous earth that became “without form, and void” are not conveying what gappists want then to convey. The phrase “without form and void” is describing God’s initial phase of creation – not a catastrophe of God’s creation. The writers use this initial phase of God’s creative work (unformed creation - a broken down state of matter, molecules, and darkness that needed to be energized) to illustrate God’s judgment upon His people.

The initial phase of God’s creative work (“form and without void” = shapeless, dark, barren, and unfruitful wasteland) was used as a symbol of judgment in Jeremiah 4:23-26, Isa. 24:1, and Isaiah 45:18 but it does not mean that there was a literal judgment on creation. None of these verses that use the phrase “without form and void” speak of a creation judgment (a judgment on God’s original creation). The initial creation of the earth (“without form and void”) is simply used as an illustration and way to express God’s judgment upon His people.

### **a. Jeremiah 4:23-26**

The verses used to support this cataclysmic destruction, such as Jeremiah 4:23-26, do NOT teach a historic catastrophic judgment in Genesis. Jeremiah pictured God’s coming judgment upon Judah and the land as a cosmic catastrophe. Using the creation of the earth as an illustration (Gen. 1), Jeremiah indicated that no aspect of life would remain untouched in the land. God would through the invading armies of Babylon make Judah

“without form and void” (Jer. 4:23), which is the same phrase used to describe God’s initial work in Creation (Gen. 1:2).

Gappists conclude that since the scene in Jeremiah’s day envisions judgment that Genesis 1:2 also speaks of God’s judgment and was being used to connote judgment of the earth because of a previous rebellion. But this is NOT the case at all. Jeremiah is using the creation account as an illustration to prove a point about Judah’s judgment. Jeremiah was referring to the initial state of God’s creation (not a judgment of God’s creation).

Initially (Genesis 1-2), God created the earth “without form and void” which means it was nothing more than a broken down state of matter, molecules, and darkness that needed to be energized. It was what we might call unformed creation. Jeremiah uses God’s initial creation as an appropriate ILLUSTRATION to convey the results of God’s judgment upon His people for their sins. However, the illustration of “form and without void” (Jer. 4:23) does NOT teach that the earth was judged prior to the Flood. He is NOT teaching or conveying that God’s creation was judged but that God’s foundational creation can be used as an illustration of judgment upon His people.

God created the heavens and the earth in its initial stage (without form or in an unformed state or broken down matter, molecules, misty darkness). Jeremiah now says that God’s judgment upon His people would be similar to this. It would result in his people being broken down, spread out, disorganized, and possess no appearance that they are really God’s chosen people. Therefore, initial creation (not a lost creation) is one way to picture God’s judgment upon His people. When we begin with the Biblical narrative of creation the poetic language regarding creation (as in Jeremiah) will not cause us to reinterpret the consecutive events of the creation days (Ex. 20:11).

#### b. Isaiah 24:1

Isaiah 24:1 depicts the judgment upon Jerusalem and ultimately God’s judgment over all the earth and cities during the coming Tribulation Period. Isaiah uses the initial phase of God’s creation (a wasteland of formless, emptiness and darkness) to illustrate and describe this coming judgment. Again, this does not mean that God’s brought a literal judgment upon His creation but that His initial creation (a broken down state of matter, molecules, and darkness = unformed creation) can be used to represent



judgment upon His people and the entire earth. The picture of God's initial phase of creation is being used to illustrate the coming judgment upon the earth. However, Isaiah is NOT teaching that the creation itself was judged.

c. Isaiah. 45:18

Isaiah 45:18 says: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." Gappers use this verse to conclude that God did not initially make the earth in vain (a formless state) but formed it immediately to be inhabited by life and people. The claim is then made that a catastrophic judgment of unprecedented proportions had to occur in order to meet the conditions of Genesis 1:2 which states the earth "was without form and void" (a formless wasteland of desolation).

This conclusion is missing Isaiah's point. In the context, Isaiah is speaking about Israel, God's people, and His grace in restoring them in answer to His covenant program with the Jews (Isa. 45:17). God did not choose His people in order to destroy them but that He should be their God and they should be His people forever ("world without end" – Isa. 45:17). God has a future for His national people.

Isaiah is relating the truth about God's creation to Israel's future destiny. God is teaching that He did not create the world in order for it to be empty; He created it so His own people (the Jews) might inhabit the earth for eternity in fulfillment of His covenant program to them. There is nothing in this text which indicates the earth was judged.

Yes, God did create the earth "without form and void" (Gen. 1:2) but this was creation in its early or initial stages. Isaiah is simply teaching that God did not create the earth to remain in the "without form and void" state but ultimately created the earth, as seen in His final creation, to be inhabited by man and ultimately and forever by the children of Israel ("world without end").

As we've seen, the repeated phrase ("without form and void") is found only in a few places and each time God was using the Genesis creation account to illustrate something or teach a practical lesson and promise (Isaiah 34:11; 45:18; Jer. 4:23). Actually, this phrase does not describe chaos, but rather emptiness (wasteland and barrenness). A better translation would be that

God did not create the earth to be “unformed and unfilled” since His sole purpose was for habitation.

## **2. Manner of God’s creative work**

On our local news station children can draw or create pictures and send them into the weather center so they can be seen over TV. They can also win a free news 8 umbrella. When these children draw these pictures they are creating them originally and uniquely. This is the manner in which God created.

How did God create? In what manner did God create? The Bible teaches that God called into existence and created everything which had no previous existence (“so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” - Hebrews 11:3). The implication is that NOTHING existed before God began creating everything. Nothing means nothing!

This means there could be no previous earth age of billions of people, animals, Satan and angels. There is no mention or room for a first creation, a gap, and then a second creation in the explanation of God’s creation account. This defies the sense of Hebrews 11:3 and God creating from nothing that existed before. The only recreation that the Bible speaks of is the new heavens and earth (Revelation 21).

## **3. Misuse of words**

Remember silly putty? I don’t know if they still make this stuff but this was really neat putty. You could put it on pictures and it would take the picture on to the putty and you could stretch it and do anything with it. Well, changing, distorting, and stretching the meaning of words in the Biblical texts is another error that is committed by the gap theorists. All of them create this mythical gap of time by stretching the meaning of words and misusing them in the context in which they appear.

### ➤ “and”

The conjunction “and” (vs. 2) is viewed by gap theorists as a word that speaks of the “result” of God’s judgment taking place on earth. God created everything (vs. 1) “and” (indicating result) judgment came. However, Genesis

1:2 creates a direct flow of thought from Genesis 1:1 and indicates no gap of time.

Verse one is an independent clause describing the “beginning” or first day of creation, when God created the universe of space (foundational creation). Verse two is a series of circumstantial clauses describing the condition of the earth before God completed His creation (finished creation). Hebrew grammar itself will not allow for a chronological gap between verses one and two.

Verse two describes the *condition* of God’s created earth - not a *catastrophe* of the earth. In fact, by the end of God’s six days of creation, the earth would no longer be “without form” and “void.” It was with form and filled!

➤ “was”

Gap theorists convey that the verb “was” (should be translated “became”) and this indicates a change of being and is looking back to an already created earth. However, the verb “was” (verse 2) is the regular Hebrew verb of state of being, not the word “became” which is normally used to denote a change of being. In 98 percent of its occurrences, it is properly translated “was” and not “became” (to indicate a change of being). The gap theorists try to force the word to mean “became” to indicate the earth became something other than what God created it to be.

"In Genesis 1:2a the verb (“was”) is perfect. It indicates a fixed and completed state (not a changed state). In other words, original matter was in a state of chaos when created: it came into being that way" (Hebrew scholar W. C. Watts, *A Survey of Old Testament Preaching*, p.16).

The verb “was” is the correct interpretation in this creation context. The first three examples in Genesis have it rendered "was", "be" and "shall be" ... but NOT "become" or "had become." You may review them below.

Genesis 1:2  
“And the earth WAS [hayah = fixed state of being = the way God made it] without form, and void; and darkness as upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

Genesis 1:3

“And God said, Let there BE [hayah – fixed state of being – the way God did it] light: and there was light.”

Genesis 1:29

“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it SHALL BE [hayah – fixed state of being – the way God gave it] for meat.”

These verbs and verses do not indicate a change of being but a fixed state of being because of God creating it in this way.

➤ “without form and void”

Gappists teach by this expression that this is the result of God judging the previous earth and creation (first creation). As already mentioned above, the expression “without form and void” (vs. 2) does NOT reference a judgment that occurred on the earth (catastrophe of the first creation) but the actual manner in which God initially created the earth (condition of His original creation). The earth was created by God without shape and content. This can be understood as God’s foundational creation but in the next five days He would add shape and content to the earth. The gap theorists want to hurry up God’s creation instead of allowing Him to finish what He started!

➤ “darkness”

The “darkness” (Gen. 1:4-5, 18) mentioned in the creative account does not signify sin and judgment. The gap theory holds that God originally created the world in light and only later plunged it into darkness. Darkness resulted from God’s judgment of Satan and his angels. This is pure conjecture. The Bible clearly says that God said everything He created - including darkness was good (Gen. 1:31). God created the evening full of darkness for man’s good. It was looked upon as a positive blessing. Psalm 104:19-24 makes it quite clear that physical darkness itself is not inherently evil or the result of divine judgment. The making of darkness is a revelation of God’s wisdom and riches. God created darkness (Isa. 45:7) for man’s good. God does not create evil.

#### 4. Missing the flow of the text

You have heard the expression, “Go with the flow?” Well, the gappists are not willing to go with the flow regarding the text of Scriptures and what it is actually teaching. Those who hold to the gap theory have a strained and forced exegesis for the flow of the six solar days of God’s creative work in Genesis. Instead of a normal flow of consecutive days they interrupt the 24 hour cycle of the days by introducing billions of years between day one and day two departing from a normal 24 hours. This is an oddity but they need to stretch the 24 hour cycle into billions of years because they actually believe God created the earth billions of years before Genesis 1:3-18. So, instead of believing in one creation they actually teach that there are two creations (the animals and man were created a second time). However, according to their theory not everything was created a second time; some things like the plants and luminaries (planets and stars) were only reappearing from the first creation.

This theory denies what the Bible actually teaches. The Bible teaches that in six natural (24 cycle) days God created the earth. In the summaries of God’s creative work there is no mention of a gap of time (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:11).

Exodus 20:11 teach a continuous flow:

“For in six days (literal days) the Lord made heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1), the sea, and all that in them is (Genesis 1:2-31), and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day (indicating a normal weekly cycle established for mankind), and hallowed it.”

Exodus 20:11 covers both Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 without inserting a gap of time. In six days God made "heaven and earth" (Genesis 1:1), and "the sea, and all that in them is" (Genesis 1:2 onward). There is no room for a gap of billions of years because this statement in Exodus covers both Genesis 1:1 and the verses after it (Gen. 1:2 and forward), placing them all within the framework of six, consecutive, solar days!

Since the “heavens” were created in Genesis 1:1, it is necessary to conclude that Genesis 1:1 is part of the six natural days of God’s creation (Day One of creation). Thus, there could be no gap between the verses. The clarity and flow of the days expressed in Exodus 20:10-11 is utterly devastating to the

gap theory since it portrays the seven days as one consecutive week which would work in connection with Israel's cycle under the Mosaic Law.

God was telling people that the pattern He set at creation, of six days work, which is followed by a day of rest was to be the pattern for mankind's working pattern for a literal day week. In case you have not noticed, we don't work billions of years between Sunday and Monday! We would be awfully tired by the time Monday morning rolls around!

There is no time for a gap. God declares this to be so by the clear revelation of His Word! The idea that the geological ages took place between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 is refuted by the clear revelation of God's Commandment, in which God finally states, "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Exodus 20:11).

Don't play around with the Ten Commandments! They mean what they say.

## **5. Meaning of creation changes**

The gap theorists want us to somehow believe that everything was created in Genesis 1:1 and then everything was lost between verses one and two in a time period of billions of years. However, they must conclude that mostly everything was lost since they teach that the luminaries and lights were only reappearing in Genesis 1:3 after the catastrophic judgment and the plants germinated and were now reappearing after the previous judgment of the earth.

### **a. Reappearing instead of creation**

The claim is made that Genesis 1:3 and verses 14-18 do not refer to the actual creative act of God. Scofield again remarks in his notes: "Neither here (verse 3) nor in verses 14-18 is an original *creative* act implied. A different word is used. The sense is, made to *appear*; made *visible*." \*\*\*\*In saying the gap theorist is changing the meaning of the word "creation" to the word "reappearing."

The Scofield Bible also claims that the life-germ seeds did not perish in the catastrophic judgment which overthrew the world and claims that the restoration of land actually caused a prior plant kingdom to only germinate once again and be restored from its original creation state. Scofield remarks:

“It is by no means necessary to suppose that the life-germ of seeds perished in the catastrophic judgment which overthrew the primitive order. With the restoration of dry land and light the earth would "bring forth" as described.” This is an extremely bizarre and forced exegesis of the creation account. Things that were previously created were now said to be only reappearing.

Of course, these theorists make some exceptions to the “reappearing rule” and believe that animals needed to be recreated along with Adam (man) but the rest of God’s creation was only reappearing after the effects of the judgment. The claim is made that seeds would remain for plants to germinate and the sun, moon, and stars created billions of years prior to this (the geological ages) were only reappearing after the smoke of the previous judgment lifts from the atmosphere.

In other words, God was NOT actually creating the light, stars, sun or the moon after Genesis 1:1. What really happened was this; God merely removed all the clouds of dust and debris still remaining from the great previous judgment. Now the sun, moon and stars could once again reappear on the earth from the previous creation which took place eons ago.

The problem with such a fanciful interpretation as this is rather obvious. You must take it all the way. If the sun, moon and stars were only reappearing, then the animals such as birds, lions and whales within the sea should also follow the same pattern and only reappear. This of course is almost too silly to even comment upon. The entire idea that the heavenly bodies (sun, moon and stars) were already in existence on the first day, but only “appeared” on the fourth day (by a removal of clouds) is erroneous.

If Moses wanted to use the verb “to appear” for the sun, moon and stars he could have easily used it as he did in Genesis 1:9 (“And let the dry land appear”) when the previously created land was formed under the earth and then appeared as a result of the dividing of the waters.

As stated above, gap theorists see a difference between the words “created” (referring to the animals - Gen. 1:1, 21, 27) and “made” (referring to the luminaries - Gen. 1:16) in order to create a distinction between what was actually created and what only reappeared after the alleged judgment of a previous creation. However, these verbs are used interchangeably, along with other synonyms, to illustrate God’s creative hand. The words “bring forth”, “created”, “made”, “brought forth abundantly” (swarm) and “formed”

are all used interchangeable throughout God's creative acts. They are ways to express God's creation and are not to be strained as meaning something else like recreation.

Scofield tries to make a case for the reappearing of the planets and sun by saying: "Neither here (referring to verse 3) nor in verses 14-18 (referring to the planets) is an original *creative* act implied. A different word is used. The sense is, made to *appear*; made *visible*. The sun and moon were *created* "in the beginning." The "light" of course came from the sun, but the vapour diffused the light. Later the sun appeared in an unclouded sky.

In Genesis 1:31 God seems to give a summary statement of everything that He had "made" throughout the six days of creation. God uses the term "made" and applies it to "every thing that he had made" (heavens, earth, light, land and continents, plants, trees, stars and all planets, animals, and man – the crown of His creation). The term "made" references God's creation of everything in the universe. Genesis 2:3 also uses the words "created" and "made" interchangeably when explaining all of God's creative wonders. To assume the distinction between "create" and "made" is to assume too much which the Bible never addresses.

#### b. Replenish instead of creation

Gappers also make something out of the word "replenish." "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen 1:28). The idea promoted by gap theorists is that Adam and Eve were told to refill and remultiply life on earth because it was destroyed by a previous flood (Lucifer's Flood). Of course, this is mere conjecture – not Bible. The concept of the word "replenish" means to "fill" the earth and does not suggest that they were repopulating the earth but initially populating the earth with people. Only after the Biblical Genesis Flood were they repopulating the earth (Gen. 9:1).

## 6. Miscalculating the fall of Satan and man

#### a. Satan's fall



The gappists want us to believe that Satan fall into pride and sin in a previous earth age sometime after God's first creation. The Bible does not specifically tell us when Lucifer and the other angelic order were created. It does teach that the angels had not yet sinned but were present at the time of the earth's foundations (Job 38:4-7) which is a reference to Day Three and Genesis 1:9-10. This would mean that some time prior to the third day of creation (Gen. 1:9-10), a multitude of angels had been created and they were now rejoicing in God's creation. The point is this; Satan and the angelic realm were NOT created billions of years before Adam in some unknown time period that is not revealed in the Bible. They were created within the timeframe of the original six days of creation mentioned in Genesis chapter one. This means Satan could not lead a rebellion of billions of people against God prior to the creation account recorded in Genesis 1:3-31.

The angels were not *sinning* at the time of creation but *singing* (Job 38:4-7). This means they could not have been involved in a previous earth age leading a rebellion against God. In Genesis 1:31, God said all His creation (including the angelic world) was good. This means Satan could not have fallen before this time. Since all of God's creation was good at this point, Satan's sin and fall must have occurred sometime AFTER Adam's creation and not BEFORE Adam's creation as the gap theory postulates. The angels, as well as the rest of creation, were seemingly still in a state of perfection at the end of the sixth day. Everything was perfect everywhere. This means that angelic rebellion did not occur until AFTER the creation of everything in Genesis 1:31. To assume that is occurred billions of years before is to reject the clear Biblical revelation.

Satan obviously fell after Genesis 1:31 (when the creation days were finished - Gen. 2:1) and before Genesis 3:1 in an undetermined time frame between Adam's creation and the fall. We simply can't be sure how long a time frame this involved.

We must remember that God had originally given the earth to Adam and Eve to rule. Genesis 1:26 states: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. Genesis 1:27-28: "So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it:

and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Psalm 8:4-6: “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet”

Scripture clearly reveals that Adam was originally given dominion over the earth – not Satan. There is not one scrap of Scriptural evidence to prove that God made Satan in charge of the earth in some kind of preexisting earth age. To conclude that Satan had dominion over the earth before Adam existed defies the clear teaching and revelation of the Bible. How did Satan get the control of man's kingdoms as shown in Luke 4:5-6 and other verses (John 16:11)? The Bible clearly reveals when Satan took control of the earth. It was in the Garden of Eden when he usurped the role of man as leader and controller of the earth. This was the time period of Satan's fall and sin.

#### b. Man's fall

The Bible teaches that Satan's deception and man's rejection of God's will, resulting in man's fall, occurred in the Garden of Eden. This resulted in the Genesis curse being inflicted upon mankind and nature (Genesis 3:14). In other words, the Bible clearly reveals that sin and judgment upon the earth is the direct result of the Edenic curse which came AFTER Adam's fall.

The curse and judgment over the earth was NOT the result of Satan's fall in some prior earth age. Sin, death, and destruction began in the Garden of Eden – not billions of years before when Satan fell and allegedly led another race of people astray. The fact that the Bible states sin and judgment began in the Garden of Eden makes the alleged gap and death of millions of people and animals between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 a total impossibility.

### **7. Making sin and death occur before the Genesis Fall**

The only revelation we have in the New Testament is that sin came into the human race through Adam (Rom. 5:12) – not through Satan's fall. The Bible states that man's rebellious actions led to death and the corruption of the universe. The simple teaching is that Adam and Eve were created at the beginning and not some pre-Adamic race or group of people (Genesis 2:4-7, 24, 27; Matthew 19:4, 5; Mark 10:6).

Adam is called the first man (1 Cor. 15:45) which excludes billions of people existing before him. To say he was the first man after a prior race of billions of men would be severe eisegesis (reading into the Scriptures something that is not there).

Lastly, to believe there was death before Adam's sin destroys the basis of the Christian message that Jesus died for Adam's race and all of humanity (1 John 2:2) to free mankind from the penalty of sin. The Gap Theory assumes that billions of people in a previous earth age, either had no souls or were part of some kind of weird experiment, where people lived on earth BEFORE grace and the Gospel was presented to the earth.

If there was a previous race of pre-Adamic people who sinned and were judged by God (before the second race of people came into existence through Adam), then what happened to these people? How could they be saved if atonement was not yet presented to mankind? The fact is they would all go to hell without every knowing about God's grace and mercy unless another Gospel plan was given prior to the first one and another Savior came prior to the first one. Of course, all of this is pure conjecture and refutes God's purpose to bring salvation to all mankind through Christ's death (Romans 3:25-26). Romans 3:25-26 declares that there was only one group of people that existed and lived on the earth before the cross (not two different groups of people) and Jesus died for these people to complete their salvation and justify them before God.

One of the theological blunders of the Gap Theory is that it puts death, disease, and suffering BEFORE the Fall of Adam which is contrary to Scripture (Rom. 5:12). The Bible clearly reveals that sin, death, destruction, and suffering occurred because of Adam's sin and fall (Genesis 3) – not because of Satan's sin and fall. It was not until man deliberately rejected God's commandment that sin first appeared on earth.

The gap theories misunderstanding regarding the starting point of sin destroys the basis of the Christian message of salvation for the human race that God created. A human race that existed prior to Eden would not and could not have part in God's plan of salvation and grace since this was only instituted after man sinned in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:21).

In his book, "Earth's Earliest Ages," gap theorist, George H. Pember, suggested that the fossil record was "clear and compelling evidence of

death, disease, ferocity, and even sin" all of which had occurred before Adam and Eve existed. He wrote: "For, as the fossil remains clearly show not only were disease and death "inseparable companions of sin" then prevalent among the living creatures of the earth, but even ferocity and slaughter." ... Since, then, the fossil remains are those of creatures anterior to Adam, and yet show evident token of disease, death, and mutual destruction, they must have belonged to another world, and have a sin-stained history of their own" (*Earth's Earliest Ages*, George H. Pember; 1876, p. 35).

It's very clear that the Bible NEVER speaks of a pre-Adamic race of people, or billions of people that were created and lived in another earth-age before Adam, who missed out on God's redemptive plan.

Jesus spoke of the "beginning" ("from the beginning it was not so" - Matt. 19:8) as the only beginning and not a second beginning after a first beginning. To assume that sin, death, and destruction occurred prior to the Biblical "beginning" of all things is unscriptural and promotes error. "What saith the scripture?" (Rom. 4:3). We should believe in the Biblical beginning of all things.

## **8. Minimizing the Genesis Flood**

This speculative catastrophe of Satan's Flood (a judgment upon Satan and his followers before Genesis 1:2) will often result in gappists minimizing the Genesis Flood to only a localized flood. This is because a universal flood had already occurred after Satan rebelled and before Genesis 1:2. You can't have two worldwide floods occurring since the second flood would wipe out the alleged geological fossil records that claim to be millions and billions of years old.

Of course, denying a global flood after man's sinful degradation has spread throughout the earth denies the purpose for Genesis Flood (Gen. 6:17; 7:19-24) which was to judge the entire earth which was in some measure affected by sin. Gappists remove the evidence of God's judgment over the earth (2 Peter 3:2-14) by supporting only a local flood – not a global or worldwide flood.

I remember, as a little boy, watching a thunderstorm pass through. I was at my grandmother's house and a black pocket book washed down the gutter. I saw it with my own eyes. Water can wash away anything. Why do most gap

theorists reject the GLOBAL Flood of Genesis 7? The reason is obvious. If a worldwide flood occurs AFTER the geological ages (after millions and billions of years when fossils were formed during this alleged gap of time), then this global flood would logically wash away and wipe out all the geological fossil records of billions of years that allegedly support modern science.

The Bible does NOT speak of a mythical Lucifer's Flood but the Biblical Flood recorded in Genesis 7 (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 3:6). Amazingly, the gappists REJECT the Global Genesis Flood so fossils that are allegedly billions of years old fit into the Book of Genesis. However, the same gappists ACCEPT this mythical, global, Lucifer Flood that allegedly occurred billions of years before the creation of man and resulted in fossils that are millions and billions of years old. Of course, neither true science nor the Bible is on the side of those who embrace the Gap Theory.

## **9. Masking God's creation**

My wife makes a wonderful apple crisp. I tell everyone that it's very good! When I say good, I mean good! When it comes to creation the gappist cannot really say it was very good! In Genesis 1:31 it declares that everything God created was good. However, the gap theorists must actually mask or cover-up the true meaning of this term and actually redefine the "very good" of Genesis 1:31. Out of necessity, they must generally theorize that the term "good" means "better" but "not perfect" since there was sin, death, suffering, and destruction billions of years before this alleged second recreation and reappearing from an original judgment. The Gap Theory builds our present world on the ruins of a former one.

Even if the gappists don't do this in their writings, the reasons are rather obvious why they must redefine the word "good" to only "better." First, a fallen pre-Adamic race, marred by sin between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, would not be good. Second, God's statement of a "very good" world would contradict the Gap Theory premise of Satan's fall along with his angels. According to their view, the world would have already become the domain of a fallen and wicked being who is described as the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). However, the Bible clearly reveals that everything God was created was "good" (Gen. 1:31) which actually contradicts and exposes the error of the Gap Theory. Not everything was good if Satan was running ramped over the earth and billions of people and animals had already died. It could only be relatively good.

Certainly God would never call a satanically controlled and satanically judged world that which is very good! It would be strange for God to declare the sedimentary rocks under the feet of Adam and Eve to be good if they were filled with the fossilized remains of billions of years of suffering and death in a prior earth. God would never call a fossilized grave yard of a dead pre-Adamic race to be good.



In summary, although there are Christians who accept the Gap Theory there are some very serious problems with this point of view which should make it difficult, or truly impossible, to accept. I must repeat: "We are to measure science by the Bible; not the Bible by science." This will keep us from adopting and adapting the claims of "science falsely so called" (1 Tim. 6:20) to the inspired

Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16) and committing the error of eisegesis which means to read into Bible texts (and in this case between Bible texts!) something that is imaginary and not present). Don't fall into the gap or hole between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 for in doing so you will fall into error. Close the Gap and stay Biblical.

A mother reveals this story: I was the new teacher for the toddler-age Sunday school class, which included my 14-month-old daughter. During a lesson on creation, I'd ask questions like, "Who made the trees?" or "Who made the sun?" and the children would respond, "God did." I was pleased the children learned quickly that God made everything. However, she then shared how teaching lessons at home was more of a challenge. I had tried hard to teach my daughter to pick up her toys, and she wasn't learning very quickly. One day I walked into the living room to find toys scattered everywhere. In exasperation I asked, "Who made this mess?" My daughter looked at me with a proud smile and said, "God did!"

Well, we can be sure that God did not make a mess of His original creation and then redo it after millions of years. The Genesis record is very clear about this. If we will just believe what God said and the way he said it, we will keep ourselves from accepting unbelieving and skeptical views of our God and His creative purpose and power.

The gap theory plays into the old earth theory for it needs millions of years to appear in the alleged gap of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. They are twin theories that intersect. Today there are basically two ideas about the age of the earth.

A. Old Earth Creation (OEC) - mixture of evolution and God

B. Young Earth Creation (YEC) – direct creation by God

Scripture presents the truth that the universe and all that is in it was created by God between six and ten-thousand years ago. **There is only way to understand the creation account and that is to take the days, genealogies, and events that are recorded in Genesis literally.** When we do, we will arrive at the Biblical conclusion that the earth is only around 6,000 years old and that the Genesis Flood supports the findings in the fossil records. In short, we live on a young earth – not an old earth that is billions of years old.

## Young Earth Creation (YEC)

Age of earth (6,000 – 10,000 years)

**CATASTROPHISM (Flood Theology)**

- Explains fossil record
- Geography and geology of land masses



Science is on the side of “young earthers” (not the gappists) because the young earthers embrace what is called “catastrophism” (Global Flood Theology). In Genesis 7:17-24 the word “earth” is mentioned seven times indicating that the Flood recorded in Genesis was global.

Catastrophism teaches that there was a world-wide biblical catastrophe which was the Genesis Flood, and this global calamity sufficiently explains the fossil records and the geographic and geological phenomenon which otherwise might point to an old earth. In the Biblical view, Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, snake talking, and the world-wide flood are all literal events which cannot be denied without huckstering the Bible, disbelieving in God’s record of creation, and limiting God’s power and plan of the ages.

In conclusion, the gap theory does not fit into the facts of a young earth. It also does not understand the process of a creative earth which in its early stages “was without form, and void” (Gen. 1:2). It also ignores the contexts of the verses that allegedly teach a previous earth destruction. The gap theory can very easily play into the hands of an evolutionary process which the Bible categorically condemns for God created all things – He did not evolve all things (Prov. 16:4; John 1:3; Acts 17:24).