

Without Form & Void

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Date: 01 June 2011

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[0:00] I'm going to go ahead and read verses 1 and 2.

That's what's going to be, or those verses will be our focus tonight primarily! as we kind of deal with one particular issue relative to those two verses.

Really, I guess the issue is relative to the supposed in-between, what may have happened in between these two verses. I've referred to the so-called gap theory, and we'll get to that in just a minute.

But let me read the verses. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep.

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Alright, so there it is. I heard about three men who were arguing over whose profession was first established on the earth.

[1:12] Mine was, said the surgeon. The Bible says that Eve was made by carving a rib out of Adam. So, you know, he's a surgeon. Hold on a minute, said the engineer.

An engineering job came before that. In six days the earth was created out of chaos, and only an engineer can make something out of chaos. You may be right, said the politician, but who do you suppose created the chaos?

Well, thankfully, there were no politicians on the scene when the earth was created.

Or we really would be in trouble. But, in fact, there was no need for any government at all when God first created the world.

No need for any government, because there was no need for a king. No need for a president. No need for Congress. Can you imagine a world like that? No need for lawyers.

[2:14] Can you imagine a world like that? Because, you know, God's original creation was perfect. Okay? And it was perfect, and it was governed by Him.

It was a theocracy when God first created this world. Now, the Bible says, as I've just read in Genesis 1.1, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and though in the original text there was no punctuation, grammatically it is right to put a period there.

And that's why in most versions of the Bible, those that are accurate translations have a period after the word earth. Alright? So it's a period. That's the end of the sentence in verse 1.

And so, I would say to you, kind of in preparation for what we're going to look at tonight, consider tonight, that this sentence, verse 1, this sentence, stands alone.

It stands alone. It's not dependent upon the next verse, which is verse 2. Alright? Verse 2 is not a continuation of the statement in verse 1.

[3:35] And you're already thinking, well, the what? Well, this is important. Important for our understanding of the meaning of the text. And so, I would say to you here in the front end, that it's not correct to translate verse 1, as some versions translate it, not correct to translate it, when God began to form the universe, comma, or when God began to create, comma.

For example, and I brought my devotional Bible with me here tonight, the Living Bible. So, I know that God is able to do anything with any translation of the Bible.

Even a New World Translation that the Jehovah's Witnesses live by. God can still speak through it. And I know He can speak through the Living Bible, but I'm not a fan of the Living Bible. Now, you may be, and I'm certainly not wanting to be ugly tonight.

Now, there is a next generation of the Living Bible called the New Living Translation, and it's a much better translation. Alright, it's not a paraphrase, though I don't prefer it, but it's not a paraphrase.

But the Living Bible is a paraphrase. You know what a paraphrase is? It's basically a Bible or a translation that represents a commentary, in a sense. And so, the convictions and theology of the

translator comes out in the translation.

[5:07] It doesn't mean that it's all wrong, but it is wrong in some places. For example, in chapter 1 of verse 1 in Genesis. Listen to this translation.

When God began creating the heavens and the earth, the earth was at first a shapeless, chaotic mass with the Spirit of God brooding over the dark vapors.

All one sentence. That's verse 2. Presented in one sentence. Now, I'm going to read it again. I want you to listen. In fact, I meant to put this in your notes so you'd have it before you.

Now, just, I didn't. I'm going to read it to you again. Listen to it very carefully. When God began creating the heavens and the earth, the earth was at first a shapeless, chaotic mass.

Now, that's as far as we need to go. Now, think about that. What that verse is saying. Now, on the face of it, just on the face of the reading of it, this translation opens a door for a number of fallacies.

[6:20] My son, by the way, was looking over my shoulder when I was typing out these notes and he said, Dad, don't use the word fallacy. Nobody knows what that means. I said, do you know what it means? Well, in fact, first he said, you ought to use the word error or it's wrong.

He said, because I don't know what the word fallacy means. Alright, if you want to just jot in there, error, or errors in theology, two fallacies.

The first one we've already dealt with. The first fallacy is this verse lends itself. I'm not saying that the translator believed this. I don't have any idea.

Or translators. I'm not saying that you would necessarily read that verse and come away with this error. But it lends itself to this error, the first error or fallacy, and that is the denial of absolute creation.

Ex nihilo. That is creation where God created everything out of nothing. The fallacy would be that God created everything described in verse 3.

[7:37] Then God said, let there be light and so forth. That God made everything described in verse 3 and following out of what existed in verse 2.

There's the fallacy at this translation. It at least opens the door for it. And so we're left then to speculate how that stuff came into being.

That is the stuff out of which He made everything. Alright. Because it says here, at the first, or the earth was at first a shapeless chaotic mass. That is, it was that when God began to create.

Which obviously suggests that something existed before He created. And so it opens the door for God being able to take matter or materials or whatever that existed and created with those.

Like a painter would paint a beautiful portrait or a landscape scene using paints and canvas and things. You know.

[8:42] that apart from the artist are worthless. And so it just makes God an artist or an architect or something like that.

That's the first fallacy. The second fallacy is that there is the suggestion of the doors open here for a gap in creation between verses 1 and 2.

Now it's not just this translation that lends itself to that fallacy. In fact those who hold to this theory this gap theory really even out of the King James translation they see this possibility.

In fact I would maintain and we'll get to it here in just a minute that those who hold to this theory are not really considering scripture they're considering science and trying to reconcile the two.

Alright. So that's the second fallacy. And so basically we could say it this way this is to explain this gap so called gap is to explain how the earth became as some theologians put it became a formless or void place or a place of chaos which by the way would be an alternate meaning of the word or an obscure meaning of the word that's used in the text without form Tahu is the Hebrew word that it could mean and in some obscure places does mean a place of chaos.

[10:19] And so it's the theory to explain how it became that way. Alright. We'll get into that here in just a minute. Now as to the first fallacy and just kind of set it straight on this or remind us because we've already dealt with this.

first fallacy Hebrews 12.3 you can just jot that reference down there Hebrews 12.3 destroys completely destroys any idea that God is not the divine cause that is in the sense that He created everything out of nothing you just listen to it through faith that's the Christian faith we understand that the worlds that means everything universe all of it were framed by the word of God that means He spoke all things into existence so that things which are seen that's all things that exist that's that's meaning all things that exist all matter all material all things things which are seen were

not made of things which do appear that is things that already exist it's a clear perhaps the clear statement in scripture to support the doctrine of ex nihilo or God creating all things out of nothing alright so God did not start with a formless mass of water and other elements and turn it into the world we know today that's not what he did he created everything out of nothing the second fallacy the idea that there is a gap of time between verses one and two it is usually called I've already called it by this terminology the gap theory some use the term the ruin or the reconstruction theory jot that down too sometimes at least in the scholarly world they usually refer to it as the reconstruction theory because scholars have to use longer words gap three letter work come on no scholar worth this salt would use a three letter word alright so the reconstruction theory or the gap theory alright and here is what the theory says basically though there are some various kind of nuances of it out there but Genesis 1 describes the perfect creation alright verse 2 describes the results of some catastrophe alright usually they ascribe it to this the results of judgment which God brought upon the earth before Adam was created possibly because of the rebellion of Satan so it's basically the idea that as Jesus said I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven where he fall to the earth and so maybe Satan came to the earth and there was this big battle between Satan and God and the result was a devastated destroyed earth God made everything perfect and then Satan came along and it was all destroyed by some kind of cataclysmic war between these two supernatural beings it's ridiculous but anyway this is the view it's ridiculous primarily because there's nothing in scripture to describe it so it's all conjecture there may have been just kind of go on kind of lay out the view there may have been then this cosmic war possibly because of Satan and in verse 3 then we have God recreating the universe and the earth or primarily the earth as well as all life including

Adam and Eve so that's when Adam and Eve and man came along after in God's process of recreating alright that's basically the gap theory now the beauty of this theory that is according to those who hold to it is this think about it it could account for the apparent age of the earth it could I mean if you believe that since there could have been millions or even billions of years in the gap so God created the kind of the earth itself the planet and all of the beautiful things there and then it was destroyed but we still had that planet here and it may explain the billions of years it could explain the dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures that no longer exist because they were simply part of the first creation that was destroyed and maybe explain much of the fossil record and such and they kind of carry it out to be an explanation for a lot of other things as well and so therefore the huge fossil record could be accounted for their origin would date back before

[15 : 50] Adam before man when the world was destroyed by what many call by what some scholars call Lucifer's flood did you know there was a Lucifer's flood it wasn't a water flood it was this war and so it was the Lucifer's flood that destroyed the original creation rather than the Noah's flood that actually did that and accounts for all the fossil records best of all one could reject evolution believe in the genesis account of creation and still believe in an old earth and in the so-called geologic column you know that column that's in all the textbooks you know starts with the pre cambrian era age and then the paleozoic age and then the mesozoic era and then the cenozoic era remember that in school

I didn't that's why I have it printed in front of me and so this could account for that see with this gap it might be interesting for you to know that the gap theory was developed by a preacher a Scottish preacher by the name of Thomas Chalmers back in 1814 and his purpose was to reconcile Genesis with what was believed at the time and it was a fairly new kind of enlightened you know thing during the enlightenment science which was believed to be true about the earth's geological record so the reconciliation of the two so you know you want to be a full blown evolutionist and so we want to believe in the bible and believe in evolution believe in the bible and believe in an old earth and so forth so we come up with kind of this theory of a gap between verses 1 and 2 it's all of course contrived now since that time though some pretty popular theologians and preachers have promoted this theory you might recognize some of these names donald great barnhouse i don't know if that name is familiar to you i have his commentary set on romans probably do too tom it's an excellent one you know these guys could be wrong about one thing he'd be right about most everything else but i'm not saying he's right about everything else but donald great barn how about g morgan campbell or campbell morgan g campbell morgan you've heard of him probably and if you haven't heard of these two guys you certainly have heard of c.i.

scofield anybody have a scofield bible c.i. scofield believed in the gap theory and there are a lot of others now there are not very many conservative bible scholars today preachers today who hold to the theory still held by some of the laity and still some preachers as well but it has kind of fallen out of favor especially with kind of the revival of strong expository preaching and the desire hearts a good desire hearts of god's people to take god's word literally which is the best way the right way so could this theory be true does it line up with the rest of the bible and I say I say no not surprised by that give you just a few reasons why and I have reproduced those on your notes you'll have to fill in some of the blanks or not blanks but the description of them alright number one the gap the gaps yeah there's no theory there are gaps in your notes number one the plain reading of scripture in the hebrew grammar and there are going to be still some gaps in this because it's quite complicated but genesis 1-2 where it says the earth was without form the key word there is was without form and void or empty those who hold to the gap theory and those who have translated some have produced some versions translations of the bible believe that the word could be became rather than was and indeed the word can be translated that way

I mean if you just take the word out of the text without any context without any grammar and if you take the word and not consider the form of the word and that's where it gets quite complicated getting into the grammar and the linguistic analysis of words but it doesn't mean that this phrase in verse two represents an outline of the verses that follow that's that's the point here so what God did on days one two and three was to form its formlessness so you have those two words side by side form and void or form and empty emptiness and so that verse represents kind of a two part outline to the days of creation days one two and three form the form

God formed the formlessness of the earth so that life could exist on the planet what God did on days four five and six was to fill so the first three days he formed well and then on the other days he filled formed then filled and that's exactly how it's presented in verse one the earth was without form and it was empty or it was void so he formed it then filled and that's what you see very clearly laid out not in in great extensive detail the days of creation are not extensive details about the creation but they do give us the progress of it alright so that's that's what we have here as to the

[23:12] Hebrew grammar of the word meanings we're not going to be able to explain that unless some of you well versed in Hebrew and I'm not at all a little more in Greek but not in Hebrew I have to read understand it's like the preacher said I think he said I know a little Hebrew and a little Greek Hebrew makes my suits and the Greek owns the restaurant that I go to that leads to a second reason the assumption that humans lived on the earth before Adam that's part of the theory not all those who hold to a gap theory believe this but many of them do so that Adam was not the first man but he was the man God created when he recreated things the man who sinned all right so there's one of the problems but in the Bible Adam is always referred to as the first man the first man

Genesis 5:12 you can jot these references down where it says the Bible says this is the book of the generations of Adam in the day that God created man now those two phrases together are just to whatever the word is juxtaposition they're parallel thoughts so Adam goes with the day man was created so he was the first man it's even more clear in 1 Corinthians 15:45 so it is written the first man Adam became a living being which man he was the first man not the one who ultimately came along through processes of evolution or after the destruction of all those who came before him but the first man first man number three a denial requires a denial of a perfect creation genesis 1:31 said and god saw everything that he had made and indeed it was very good perfect now we're not reading into the text or making some kind of overstatement when we say that there is no way that god would have said that his creation is perfect if adam and eve were living on a virtual graveyard planet graveyard of death and destruction over accumulated over millions of years unless

I guess if you want to add to the gap theory that god just wiped all of it away and then recreated you have to go further and further and further add more and more to the theory to make it work number four it minimalizes the significance and worldwide results of Noah's flood Genesis chapter 6 to 9 describes a worldwide flood in which all the air breathing land animals that were not on Noah's ark died they all died the only ones that were saved preserved were those who were brought onto the ark in pairs mamas and daddies boys and girls so forth all the rest died that's what we understand from the account there in Genesis 6 through 9 now those who hold to the gap theory assign usually assign the fossil record to what some have called

I mentioned a while ago Lucifer's flood and so they are forced to conclude that Noah's flood left virtually no trace or that it was just a local event by the way there are those who believe that the

flood was just a local event not a universal flood I say if it was a local event then Noah and his family could have walked out not had to spend 120 years building some ark you know but nevertheless there are those who would hold to that now think about it a flood surely a flood which is explicitly described in the Bible is a better source more tangible source of the fossils than some cataclysm that may have happened between verses 1 and 2 would you agree I mean a better source a clear source one clearly stated in the

Bible would account for the fossil record why do we have to make up some other kind of flood luciferous flood or whatever it may have been to account for the fossil record just you know it's kind of gymnastics mental gymnastics it's idiocy come up with some theory to explain these things when the Bible says it very clear why not just believe the Bible all right number five that makes certain absolute statements in the Bible to be half truths Exodus 20 verse 11 for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and said and the sea and all that in them is everything in the heavens everything on the earth everything in the sea he made in six days that makes it kind of a half truth because maybe you know the planet was here you know all he did was recreate some things you know to put on it and so

[29 : 29] I think that verse states categorically that God created everything in six days not everything in some day prior and then millions of years later through processes growth all that was destroyed and then recreated but he created everything in six days number six the gap theory contradicts the clear biblical teaching of the origin of death and destruction which is sin Romans 5 12 therefore just and we've kind of covered this but just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin in this way death spread to all men because all sin all right so Adam when was he created which day sixth day great on sixth day but the classical gap theory says that there was a whole lot of death during the gap before day one as recorded in the

Bible but the apostle Paul says no way this verse plainly says that death entered the world because of and therefore after Adam's sin not before but after there was as we've already discussed in here there was no death prior to Adam's sin no death because death comes through sin as a result of sin now someone might say you know this is just a reference to human death only you've got to come up with a well now maybe this death that the Bible is speaking of in Romans 5 12 is just human death and not the death of other things well what does the Bible say Romans 8 20 I'll read that and I'll read it from this Bible in Romans chapter 8 verse in fact I'll start with verse 18 for I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us for the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of

God for the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him who subjected it in hope what he's talking about is God's judgment for sin and death now who was subjected to this futility or was affected by this judgment not just man but all of creation but he says here and translations do the punctuation differently here but still the same meaning comes out he says because of him who subjected it in hope what hope the hope of deliverance which is the next verse because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God for we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now which means that this death that was a result of sin not only came upon human life but all creation all life and so death spread to this entire planet to this point that even in a kind of a metaphorical way or however you want to put it even the creation itself is groaning longing for the coming of

Christ for the end of this particular age alright so and then someone will also object the death of which the bible speaks is spiritual not physical alright so alright alright so death did come upon all creation but the death that the bible is talking about as a result of sin is a spiritual death not a physical death for some who would argue that well it is that but it's also physical bible says in a number of places in fact I'll just give you a few verses Genesis 2 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for on the day you eat of it you will certainly die alright alright we're okay so far so about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said you must not eat it or touch it or you will die kind of added a little extra there alright so far so good but what else does the bible say listen to the judgment described by God himself

Genesis 3 19 you will eat bread this is the judgment as a result of them breaking that command they ate of the tree and God says you will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground since you were taken from it for you are dust and you will return to dust Genesis 3 22 the

Lord God said since man has become like one of us knowing good and evil he must!
[35:01] not reach out and also what's the implication here? It's more than just an implication that prior to them disobeying God they were living forever no death no death God said you eat that tree you'll die now they did die spiritually they became minus God but they also from that point on and eventually Adam and Eve would die physically and everyone since then now we've already talked about those passages that deal with death coming on the creation as well this is not just spiritual death it's physical death as well now here's how we should and I'll just wrap it up this way how we should understand the relationship of verse 1 with verse 2 and I think I did put this in your notes verse 1 stands alone remember that it stands alone it's not continued after a comma on into the next verse it stands alone it is an overall statement of absolute creation in the beginning
God created everything period it's an absolute statement alright then verse 2 is simply some and following some of the details of how that creation progressed from nothing to everything do you understand God gives us some of the details of the progress not the process other than to say you know God said that's all the process we need to know creation God spoke but the progress of it day 1 day 2 day 3 day 4 day 5 day 6 and then on the seventh day he rested about the seventh day but we're going to rest