

THE OLD EARTH (GAP) THEORY

To better understand what the Bible really says, about the age of the earth, we must critically inspect the translation accuracy of our modern Bibles. *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: And there was light”* (Genesis 1:1-3). The Hebrew word *hâyâh* translated to the first "was" in Genesis 1:2, can just as easily mean "became." Verse one is a general statement that depicts the creation: A perfect and complete work at the very time it was done.

God would not create an uneven, disorderly world. In verse two, we could say that, somehow, the earth "became" without form and void. Translated from the Hebrew, are the words for "without form" (*tôhûw*) and "void" (*bôhûw*). In their original tongue, both these words basically mean the same thing: Empty or desolate. Enter the "gap theory," which states: There could have been multiple thousands of years between the time "in the beginning," when God did the creating in Genesis 1:1; and Genesis 1:2, when the earth was (or became) empty and desolate. In essence then, the creation depicted in Genesis chapter 1, after verse 1, constitutes a re-creation. This is also called the "old earth" doctrine.

I believe in the gap theory, as it aligns with the true picture given us in other places in scripture. Satan had already fallen by the time he got to the Garden of Eden (see Ezekiel 28:12-16).

Also consider the following: *“And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, how hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: They break forth into singing. Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: It stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the*

sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: The seed of evildoers shall never be renowned” (Isaiah 14:3-20).

This Lucifer, turned evil, can be none other than Satan. God was, and still is, casting Satan out of His government. The earth became desolate through gross mismanagement. God had obviously given Satan charge over all the earth, but the devil's rebellious ways brought about a major catastrophe that made an absolute mess of the planet. God then re-created the world and removed Satan from his rulership and placed man in his stead. *“And God blessed them [mankind], 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” (Genesis 1:28).*

The devil still rules the world system, but he now does it in an indirect way—by influencing man. God had given us the history of the world, as recorded in Genesis, only from the time that man entered into the picture. What had taken place on the earth, before this time, is not fully revealed nor relevant to what God is doing with mankind. Once resurrected and immortal we will help God rule all the planets. He has a vast universe to manage. There are no limits on tomorrow.