

The 'gap' theory, on the other hand, would require that only the surface of the earth was reconstituted in the six days. The earth's core, the basic structure, the great fossil beds containing the remnants of the dinosaurs, and so on, all of this would predate the six days of Creation. But God says specifically that everything in the earth and in the heavens and in the sea was made in the six days.

Death Before Sin?

Theologically, there is also a very grave difficulty with the 'gap' theory. The Bible says there was no sin or death until man brought them into the world. According to the 'gap' theory, however, there had already been billions of years of suffering and death in the world, represented by the fossils and the sedimentary rocks of the earth's crust, which are supposed now to identify the geological ages. According to the 'gap' theory, at the end of the geological ages Satan sinned and was cast to the earth and then there was a great cataclysm, so that the geological ages with billions of years of suffering and death took place before Satan sinned and certainly before man sinned.

The Bible, on the other hand, says specifically that 'by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin' ([Romans 5:12](#)), so that there was no death in the world until man brought sin into it. The 'gap' theory would require billions of years of suffering in the world before man or even Satan had sinned, and that means

that God Himself would be directly responsible for sin in the world. God could not be the author of sin. So the 'gap' theory is precluded theologically.

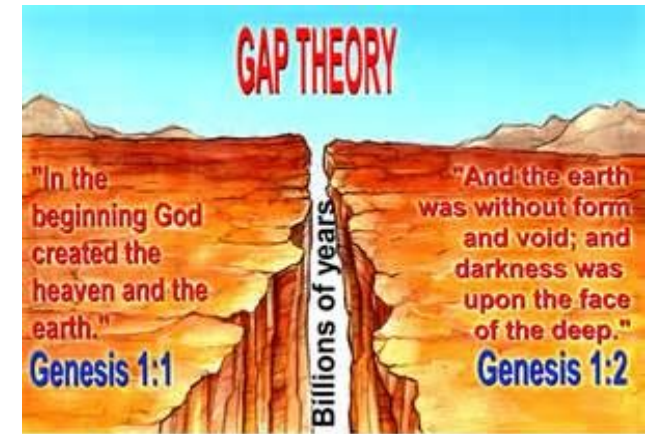
Non-Science

The very structure of the geological age system is based on the assumption that present rates and processes are the same as those that took place in the past. There is no room for a world-wide cataclysm interrupting those processes in the system of the geological ages.

That is why no geologist would ever accept the 'gap' theory. In order to have a world-wide cataclysm that would destroy all the pre-cataclysm mountains and cast them into the sea, so that there was the deep everywhere, and then blow billions of tons of debris up into the sky so that there was darkness over the deep everywhere, as [Genesis 1:2](#) describes it, it would have to be a world-wide nuclear explosion, or volcanic explosion, or something which would literally disintegrate the crust of the earth where the fossils and the sedimentary rocks are that identify the geological ages. So the 'gap' theory would destroy the evidence for the geological ages in order to accommodate them! It is a self-negating theory scientifically; it creates overwhelming scientific problems. No geologist would ever accept the 'gap' theory.

Therefore, we have to reject the 'gap' theory as an interpretation of [Genesis 1:2](#).

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(Written by Dr. Henry M. Morris)

The Gap Theory

'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth' ([Genesis 1:1](#)).

'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.' ([Genesis 1:2](#)).

Many people assume there is a great gap in time between [Genesis 1:1](#) and [Genesis 1:2](#). Most of these do this to accommodate the geological age system of billions of years of supposed earth history in the Genesis record of creation. Then the geological ages took place over billions of years of earth history. The different forms of life developed that are now preserved in the fossil record. These life-forms represent those ages - the invertebrates of the Cambrian Period, the dinosaurs of the Cretaceous Period ... finally the mammals, birds and 'ape-men' of the Tertiary Period - just before the recent epoch.

Then the idea is that, at the end of these geological ages, a great cataclysm took place on earth, with Satan having rebelled in heaven and many of the angels following him in that rebellion. God, therefore, cast him to the earth, and the earth underwent a great cataclysm, leaving it finally without form and void, and with darkness on the face of the deep, as described in [Genesis 1:2](#).

Subsequently, according to this idea—usually known as the ‘gap’ theory—God then re-created or reconstituted the earth in the six literal days of creation recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. The argument for this theory makes verse two read, ‘The earth became without form and void’ (some would render it ‘The earth became waste and desolate’), as though it had previously been a beautiful world. But now, because of the cataclysm, it was a devastated remnant of a world, so that there was a change of condition. It became without form and void.

‘Was’ Means ‘Was’

A significant problem with this idea is that the Hebrew word for ‘was’ really should be translated ‘was’. It should not be translated ‘became’. On some occasions, in an unusual situation if the context requires it, the word can be translated ‘became’. There are some instances like that in the Old Testament.

By far the tremendous majority of times, however, when the verb is used, it is simply

translated ‘was’. In the absence of any indication in the immediate context that it should be rendered by a change of state, where it became something which it wasn’t, one would normally assume it was simply a declarative statement describing how the situation existed at the time. The earth was, in response to God’s creative fiat, initially without form and void.

Some people use [Isaiah 45:18](#) as an argument for the use of ‘became’ in [Genesis 1:2](#). In this verse, Isaiah says that God created the earth not in vain. He formed it to be inhabited. The word ‘in vain’ is the same as *tohu*; that is, the same word translated ‘without form’ in [Genesis 1:2](#). So ‘gap’ theorists say that since God did not create it that way, it must have become that way. But again, the context is significant. In Isaiah, the context requires the use of the translation ‘in vain’. That is, God did not create the earth without a purpose; He created it to be inhabited. [Genesis 1](#) tells us then how He brought form to the unformed earth and inhabitants to the empty earth. It was not really finished until He said so at the end of the six days of creation.

Sequence

Furthermore, it is important to note that the verse begins with the conjunction, ‘and’ (Hebrew *waw*), and this same conjunction introduces every single verse of the first chapter of Genesis, so there is a sequence of actions implied. There was this happening, and then this happened, and then this happened, and then this ... each following directly upon

the other. When it said that God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, the implication is that this was immediately following the creation.

Another argument of those who advocate the ‘gap’ theory is that the word ‘darkness’ suggests that something is wrong with the creation. But [Isaiah 45:7](#) says that God created the darkness. In order for there to be day and night, which was necessary for the further activity of God and man upon the earth, there must be day and night. So God actually had to create darkness. Thus there is nothing implicitly wrong with it being dark. God created it that way. Darkness later came to represent, in some contexts, a symbol of evil—as opposed to light—since ‘God is light and in Him is no darkness at all’ ([1 John 1:5](#)). But in the context here there is no evil connotation suggested.

On the other hand, there are many overwhelming difficulties with the ‘gap’ theory, and we really should not accept this as the interpretation of [Genesis 1:2](#). The idea that the geological ages took place in between [Genesis 1:1](#) and [1:2](#) is precluded by the plain biblical statement in the Ten Commandments, where God said, ‘In six days, the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is’ ([Exodus 20:11](#)). That is, He was telling man that he must work six days and rest one day because God worked six days and rested one day. The context goes on to say that everything in heaven and earth and in the sea was made in six days. There could have been nothing left over that was not made during the six days.