

Six-Day Creation vs. Gap Theory by Pastor Stan Seigler

I would like to take you on a journey that I took some years ago. If you're taking the time to read this, you're probably in the same place that I was some years ago. Let me remind you of a few verses of which we as Bible believers are very fond. In II Timothy 2:15 the Bible says "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I would encourage you to study this topic even if you disagree; maybe especially if you disagree. Many of us in our past have not been able to exercise patience or show grace with people who disagreed with us because we just knew we were right. But hopefully the Lord has shown you, as he has shown me, that I need to change some things that I was taught. I had been very diligently taught the Gap Theory, and I taught it for years. I knew all the verses to use, and I used them diligently. One of the verses that I used to teach the Gap Theory was Genesis 9:1 where God told Noah to "replenish (or refill) the earth". I would take my students, just like I had been taken years before, to Genesis 1:28 where God told Adam to "replenish the earth". So if God was telling Noah to refill the earth, and he was telling Adam to refill the earth, then there must have been something before Adam, just like there was something before Noah. This was one of the main thoughts that launched us into a search for what must have been before Adam's creation. I'm sure that you're very familiar with the verses that we would then study. We'll take a look at most of them later.

In the summer of 1985, I took a course on creationism in San Diego at the Institute for Creation Research. The late Dr. Henry Morris was teaching the course. As most of you may know, he taught a literal six-day creation. He mentioned a few creation theories with which he disagreed. One of them was the Gap Theory. He gave a very simple explanation as to why he disagreed. The thing that got my attention the most was the word to which he called our attention. This was the word that was used to teach the Gap Theory to us in Bible school. In Genesis 9:1, it says, "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth". The word he called attention to was the word "replenish". He told us that the definition of this word did not mean "to refill" but "to fill". He said the definition "to refill" was used in the Gap Theory. That's exactly what I had been taught, and what I was teaching. If indeed what he was saying was true, then I had been taught wrongly, and I was teaching wrongly. So, I had to do some studying.

I went to my Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary and looked up the word "replenish". I use this dictionary because the words in it are defined with meanings that were contemporary with our old Bible, and a lot the definitions of the words are used in Bible verses to give the reader an example of its use in scripture. Mr. Webster gives two definitions for the word "replenish". The first definition has the letters "v. t." beside it, and the second definition for the word "replenish" has the letters "v. i." beside it. I have found out that these little letters mean a lot. They tell us whether a word is used as a transitive verb or an intransitive verb. Now don't let all little English grammar stop you from following the

explanations for these words. I will try to give a thorough explanation for transitive and intransitive, because if we do not understand this one little point of grammar, we can be way off base in getting the right meaning from these verses and from many others.

A transitive verb is an action verb in a sentence that has a direct object. An intransitive verb is an action verb in a sentence that does not have a direct object. Let me illustrate what I'm saying. In this sentence,

“The cat ate the rat”,

the word “cat” is the subject, “ate” is the action verb, and “rat” is the direct object. Because this subject has a direct object, the verb is called a transitive verb. It transfers the action from the subject to the direct object. The cat is acting upon the rat. We could diagram the sentence like this:

cat | ate | rat
\The \the

Now, let's illustrate an intransitive verb. In this sentence,

“The cat stands on the table”,

there is no direct object. The word “cat” is the subject, “stands” is the action verb, and “on the table” is a prepositional phrase used as an adverb. So, the verb in this sentence, “stands” is called an intransitive verb. Let's diagram this sentence.

cat | stands
\The \(on the table)

As you can see, there is no direct object, and the verb “stands” is intransitive.

Before we return to the word “replenish”, let me address another word that may have given us some problems in the past. It's the word “cleave”. The Bible says the man is to leave his father and mother and to cleave unto his wife. Then the Bible says a man takes an axe and cleaves wood with an axe. The first time the word “cleave” is used it seems to have the meaning of bringing together, but the second time it's used, it has the meaning of dividing. So these two uses of the exact same word have exactly the opposite meanings. There is a pastor in Canada who is writing a series of dictionaries on the words in our A.V. 1611. When I pointed out this situation of the two meanings of the word “cleave”, he said that the only way to determine the correct meaning would be from the context of the sentence. As you and I know, determining the context of a verse of scripture can sometimes be very subjective, and this is what we must strive to stay away from (II Peter 1:20). I pointed out to him that the transitive and intransitive structure of the sentence is the only accurate, objective way to determine which definition to use. He said that he understood transitive and intransitive usage. After some studying, he contacted me and

thanked me for my assistance for clarifying this situation. He agreed that the use of the verb, determined by the sentence's construction, was the only way to determine the correct definition.

When we check the definition of the word "cleave" in the Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary, this is exactly what we find. When the Bible says to "cleave unto" it is the intransitive usage of the verb. When the Bible talks about "cleaving wood" that is the transitive usage of the verb. Transitive and intransitive have to do with whether there is a direct object or not. Be careful that you don't mistake the object of the preposition for the direct object. So the verb "to cleave" can have completely opposite meanings. Mr. Webster gives the first definition as the v. i. (intransitive verb): to stick; to adhere; to hold to.

He then gives two examples:

1. My bones *cleave* to my skin. Ps. 102
2. Let my tongue *cleave* to the roof on my mouth. Ps 137

Next, he gives the second definition as the v. t. (transitive verb): to part or divide by force; to split or rive; to open or sever the cohering parts of a body, by cutting or by the application of force; with examples: as to *cleave* wood; to *cleave* a rock; to *cleave* the flood. Ps. 74

Now let us take up the word "replenish" again. The first definition in the Webster's dictionary is the transitive verb definition. It means, "to fill, to stock with numbers or abundance". The second definition in the 1828 dictionary is the intransitive verb definition. It means, "to recover former fullness". Now, we have to go to our verse in the Bible and see if it is used in its transitive or intransitive form. Specifically, we have to see if it has a direct object or not. Genesis 9:1 says, "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth". The subject is the "understood 'you'," and the word "earth" is the direct object of the verb "replenish". Let's diagram it.

Be \ fruitful
(You) / multiply
 \ replenish | earth
 \ the

The verb "replenish" has a direct object. It's the word, "earth". So, we have to take the definition of the word "replenish" that uses a direct object or the transitive form definition. This is the meaning "to fill" not "to refill". Therefore, God was not telling Noah to refill the earth but to fill it. Please notice that this is not my interpretation of the verse, nor is it what I think the verse says. When we use the rules of English grammar, this is what the meaning has to be. Rules of English grammar are just as strong as rules of mathematics. I cannot choose what I want "two plus two" to equal. We must follow the rules. In Genesis

1:28 Adam is also told, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”. He was not being told, “to refill” the earth to any kind of previous condition because this sentence has a direct object, taking the transitive form which means, “to fill”. I don't care who says what else it may mean. If they say anything else, they have to violate the rules of English grammar that I just showed you. To drive the last nail in the coffin, Mr. Webster, himself, references Gen. 1:28 in his transitive verb definition, “to fill”.

The meaning of the word “replenish” is not the only problem with the Gap Theory. Let's go back to the text of Genesis 1, itself. We read, “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth”. There are two phrases in this verse that we need to watch very carefully. The first phrase is “In the beginning.” If the Gap Theory is correct, “the beginning” was a period of time many, many, many years before Genesis 1:2. If the Gap Theory is not correct, and there are only six days of creation, “in the beginning” is within the six-day period of the creation. We need to let other scriptures tell us when this time “in the beginning” occurred. Let's turn to Matthew 19:4. This is the passage where the Pharisees are tempting Christ about divorce. Starting in verse 4 it says, “And he answered and said unto them, “Have ye not read, that he which made them at **the beginning** made them male and female, and said, “For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?”.” In these verses we see that at the same time that Christ said that he made the male and female, He said this was “**the beginning**”. This is also the passage that Eph. 5 refers to when it quotes “twain shall be one flesh”. The beginning, therefore, because of what these verses say, could not be separated from the creation of Adam and Eve by any space of time. We know they were created on day six, and Christ said that this was in the time He called “the beginning”. “The beginning” could not have been way back in some distant past, but the six-day creation week **was** “the beginning”. This gives a major problem to the Gap Theory, because there can be **no** gap.

Let's go back to Genesis chapter one. The second phrase that we need to study is “the heaven”. Take a look at the phrase “the heaven”. The first thing that God did was to create one heaven and one earth. The heaven was not made plural until God divided “the heaven” and thus making “the heavens.” You certainly know the three heavens that are in Genesis chapter one. In fact, the Apostle Paul told us some things about the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2). But in verse one, no **heavens** have been created yet. Now let's turn over to II Peter 3. Verse 3 says, “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished...”. Now, all good Gap theory believers know that this verse is talking about the pre-Adamic flood that destroyed everything that was here before the “recreation” of Genesis 1:2. Let's look back at the verse. Notice that the phrase “the beginning” is in verse 4, and the phrase “the heavens” is in verse 5. So these two things are there together, both “the beginning” and “the heavens (plural)”. We already saw that Christ said that Adam and Eve were made at “the beginning”. We also know that

“the heavens” were not created until after the first day of the creation week. If there was some gap of time between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2, there would only be “the heaven” during that expanse of time, because “the heavens” were not created until Genesis 1:6 and later. There were no “the heavens” plural before Genesis 1:2. So, II Peter 3 cannot be making any reference to any kind of flood before Genesis 1:2. The wording absolutely will not allow this.

I have been reading from the Scofield Bible. In Genesis chapter 1, he has various comments about the creation week, which he calls “the recreation”. His third note from verse two refers us to Jeremiah 4: 23-26, Isaiah 24:1, and 45:18 which he says, “clearly indicate that earth had undergone a cataclysmic change as a result of a divine judgment”. There are major problems with using these references to the pre-Adamic earth. Isaiah 24:6 says not all the people were killed which means that there are few men who lived through that disaster. So what did Adam and Eve do with those people? Maybe that's where Cain got his wife!!! Isaiah 45:18 refers to “the heavens”. The reference in Jeremiah 4:23 again has the phrase “the heavens”. We have already seen the problem with using any verse that refers to “the heavens” for proof of the Gap Theory. Jer.4:25 says that there were no men, and all the birds were fled. May we state some theology here? I Corinthians 15:45 says that Adam was the first man. If these verses we've just referenced are to the pre-Adamic earth; then Adam was not the first man. But you may say he was the first man in this creation. If you say that, look at what you just did! You just committed the sin that we would never allow cultists to make. May I say to you that you just added to the Holy Scriptures? If we have to insert words whether they are on the printed page or in our minds when we read Scripture, then we have added to the Scriptures. We know what the book of Revelation says about this practice. We must let the Scriptures say what they say; we cannot endorse subtraction or addition from them by any of our people any more than we can endorse anyone else to practice this kind of bad scholarship.

Romans 5:12 says, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered in to the world, and death by sin; and so death past upon all men, for that all have sinned”. This verse is clearly makes reference to Adam because he's mentioned in verse 14 two times. If men lived before Adam, and people lived and died, then death did not come from Adam as a resulted of his sin. This would throw off the whole plan of redemption, because Christ is said to be the last Adam. Death came by Adam, and life came by Jesus Christ. Nothing died before Adam sinned. I Cor. 15:21 says, “For since by a man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive”. Did you notice he did not say in this creation? That is neither implied nor inferred. There was no man before Adam. The problems in this Gap Theory are getting thicker and thicker. But we're not done, yet.

On page 4 of my Scofield Bible on the third note, there's a comment about seeds being left in the ground from the primitive order. I compare that thought to a similar statement on page 24 of Clarence Larkin's work “Dispensational Truth.” Clarence Larkin says, “Though the seeds of its vegetable life remain entombed in its bosom ready to spring into resurrection life on “the third day”...”. Mr. Scofield has his third note coming from verse

11 from the word "bring forth". He says,

“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. It was animal life which perished, the traces of which remain as fossils. Relegate fossils to the primitive creation, and no conflict of science with the Genesis cosmogony remains”.

He says that seeds from the plants remained in the ground, and they lived through the flood that destroyed the pre-Adamic earth. All that God had to do was to tell the earth to **bring forth** the plant life. Why this is an amazing thing? All God had to do was to tell the earth to bring forth, and all the vegetation sprang back to life. Did you notice that God did the same thing in verse 20? He told the waters to **bring forth** the creatures in the sea and the fish to fly in the air. Why that must mean that the sea creatures and the fish that lived before and were destroyed must have left their “sea-creature seeds” and their “bird-creature seeds” in the waters. So then all God had to do to the waters was to tell them to **bring forth**, also. My, what amazing revelations we can receive from the Scriptures when we apply some simple misguided ideas. But look! God did the same thing with the earth. There must have been living creatures and cattle, creeping things, and all kinds of beasts in the pre-Adamic world. There must have been, because they left their “land-creature seeds” in the earth, too. All God had to do was to tell the earth to **bring forth** the living creatures. My word, how wonderfully fun Bible study can be. My friends, what we have just witnessed, I call "intellectual dishonesty". Whenever we study the Bible, we must be consistent when we apply principles or meanings of words. Mr. Larkin and Mr. Scofield have both referred to this term “**bring forth**”. They have both applied it to plant life, but neither of them has applied it to animal life. Just because we're Bible believers, we do not have a special license to break these kinds of laws and rules of logic and common English grammar. We get very upset when Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses do these kinds of things to build their doctrines. We have a very keen eye to spot their inconsistencies, but this does not make it right for us, just because of who we are.

In Mr. Scofield's note above, he made a reference to fossils in the primitive creation. He also mentions a possible conflict with science and the book of Genesis. Both Mr. Scofield and Mr. Larkin, it seems, were trying to justify the scientific teaching of their time and the Bible. They both lived during the time that the fear of the theory of evolution was beginning to make its mark on society. There was no creation science available to help them to defend Biblical teachings on creation. According to what we're seeing, they must have gone to their Bibles and tried to retrofit evolutionary science into the Bible. It is very interesting that up to that time, no one had discovered this “gap” application of these verses that have been referenced. We now know because of the studies that have been done by creation scientists in many different creation organizations that fossils would have had no problem forming during Noah's flood. We know also, now that the act of petrification does not require thousands and thousands of years. It can occur within a hundred years. With the wonderful work of these creation organizations, there's no problem with reconciling science and the Bible. We as Christians don't need to start

changing what we believe just because someone in the world comes up with some information or theory that they think is true. Remember, we need to “let God be true and every man a liar (Rom. 3:4)”.

Mr. Scofield's second note on page 4 makes reference to verse 5. He makes reference to the statement “evening” and “morning”. Again Mr. Scofield is being influenced by incorrect science by trying to stretch the time to allow for what science says had to take longer than six days. He's allowing for what's called the “day-age theory”. In this theory it is supposed that the evening and the morning were not literal times, and that the six days were not literal days. These days are just figurative, long periods of time that would allow for animals and plants to go through their changing processes to become higher forms of life. May I remind you that this is the first book of the Bible, and that if we cannot depend on God to have the same thoughts and words that we do, then how can we possibly hope to understand any of the rest of the Bible? God was talking to Moses and was using words that Moses could understand. I'm sure that Moses, a very educated man, could have understood if God would have used terms for longer periods of time. We all have made statements to others about how simply the Bible was written, and how easy the Bible is to understand. I know that there are parables in the Bible, and that there is figurative language in some places, but the only time that we say that language is figurative is when we are absolutely pressed that a literal meaning will not work. The literal meaning of a six-day creation is no problem with God. In fact, in Exodus chapter 20, God tells us that man is to work for six days and rest one day, and He uses the creation week for this pattern. In verse 11 He says, "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." This tells us very simply and very explicitly that God made everything in His creation in six days. Please notice “and **all** that in them is”. And what does “all” mean? We don't need to try to help God out or try to change the scriptures to satisfy the world's thinking.

Now let's take a look at Mr. Larkin's studies. On page 25, Mr. Larkin goes into a great explanation about how that the first day of creation God does not create the light. He says that the sun and moon were made in the pre-Adamic creation and that there was a cloud that covered the earth. He says that God did not use the word “create”, which is true. God said, “Let there be light”. Mr. Larkin says, “This was not sunlight, for the clouds did not break away and permit the Sun to shine on the earth” until the fourth day. I agree that it was not the light from the sun and moon because they weren't created until the fourth day. This light did not have to come from the sun and moon. God can make light, and He can make darkness. Remember in the book of Exodus when the darkness was upon the land of Egypt and light was in land of Goshen. God can make handful light. Light was in the holy of holies in the tabernacle and in the temple, but it did not have to have a physical source. If God wants some light somewhere, He can just tell it to be, and it will be. Again Mr. Larkin is not consistent in his scholarship, because in verse 6, God says, “*Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters*”. This **was** a creative act, because verse 7 says, “And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament;

and it was so". So, we absolutely see that when God says, "Let there be...". He is creating something. Mr. Larkin even quotes these verses on page 26, but is not consistent in his explanation. Excuse me, but I have a real problem with somebody who applies a certain explanation in one place and then is not consistent to apply the same explanation throughout scripture. Surely Mr. Larkin saw the verses, but maybe didn't.

Let's take another look at something else he did on page 27. When it comes to day four, Mr. Larkin says, "The appearance of the sun and moon on the fourth day was not a new creation. They had existed in connection with the pre-Adamite earth and had not been destroyed when it was made waste. The words translated "made" in the 16th verse is not the same word as is translated "created" in verse one, and does not imply a "creative" act". He says that this Hebrew word is not used for a creative act, but again his scholarship is not consistent, because that on page 28, when he talks about day six he quotes verse 25 which says, "And God made (created) the beasts of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good". In each of these verses, verse 16 and verse 25, the same Hebrew word is used for "made". That can be proved in your Strong's Exhaustive Concordance by looking up the word "made" on page 640. It is word #6213 in both verses. I don't think we have any trouble understanding in verse 25 that those beasts were created at that time. I don't think they were hiding behind some kind of a cloud, or some bushes, or anything thing else. They where created there and then. Mr. Larkin agrees with this to the extent that he inserts the word "created" in parentheses, but I guess that doesn't constitute changing our Bible. I guess?!! This is another illustration of inconsistent scholarship. We **must** be consistent in our Bible study.

It seems that Mr. Larkin has an axe to grind. I think by this time he has ground off so much that all he has left is a handle, and axe handles will not chop down trees. Iron does sharpen iron, and I hope this study is sharpening your iron.

If this study has given you some things to think and pray about, may I say to you that if you do embrace the Bible truth of a literal six day creation that you will then be able to do as the Apostle Paul did in the book of Acts when he referenced the truths of creation when he preached to the Gentiles. I challenge you to find those references. When the other apostles preached to the Jews, they started with Moses and the Law, but when Paul preached to the Gentiles, like most of us do, he started with creation. This might help you in your witnessing. Maybe this will be the key that will open up a lot of locks for you. That is my prayer.

If anyone has any input or questions, please feel free to contact me.

Pastor Stan Seigler