

APOLOGETICS 9 – DEFENDING CREATION – PART 1

GENESIS 1:1-2 – GAP THEORY AND DAY-AGE THEORY

INTRODUCTION

Apologetics - ἀπολογία apologia

The definition of Christian Apologetics is “the information that enables a believer to provide a defense for why a doctrine is believed.”

1 Peter 3:15 – But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

Over the last two lessons, we have discussed the true age of the Earth. We have demonstrated that the biblical chronology has the Earth at less than 10,000 years old. We also looked at the dating methods of naturalistic atheists and refuted their claims of data that proves an old age of the Earth. In the last lesson, we did an overview of eight pieces of evidence that point to a young Earth.

However, within Christendom, many believers still capitulate to faulty scientific methods and false conclusions based on their inconsistent data. To accommodate the false old-Earth model, they have adopted one of two theories: the Gap Theory and the Day-Age Theory.

GAP THEORY

This theory proposes that there is a time gap between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Early forms of the theory began in the 1500s but were popularized in the 1800s. During this time, naturalism and Darwin’s idiocracy gained popularity. In conjunction with Darwin, Charles Lyell formed his popular insistence on an old earth and slow processes in 1833 in an obvious attempt to substantiate faulty secular interpretations of scientific data.

The Gap Theory is not simply a span of time between two verses but rather a judgment placed into that time. The second name of the theory is called “Ruin-Reconstruction.” During this gap, we have the development of the geological ages, fossil, and oil and coal deposits. Some propose a pre-Adamic race that fell and led to the destruction and judgment of the Earth before Genesis 1:2. This is a ridiculous thought. Other theories came out of this theory, including “The True Origins of the Gentile Races” and “The Origin of the Seven Wonders of the World.”

Other theories include a gap but not “The Gap Theory.” Some propose that God created time, space, and matter, then at a later time, finished creation from verse 2 onward. They do not propose physical life before verse 2, and the purpose is the angelic creation and the fall of Satan. Those who propose this I would not call a heretic; I would disagree and still make the point that the language does support it; it is a theory based upon human thought and conjecture.

As old-earth theories began to gain popularity, Christendom had no real “scientific” response and began to look for ways to place an old-Earth idea into the Bible. They began to use the phrase “the earth was formless and void” as terms for destruction and judgment.

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Textual Analysis (tohu wa-bohu):

Formless is “תֹהוּ תוהו” *tōhû*,” a noun that means formlessness and emptiness (Deuteronomy 32:10). There are many other uses of this word in Isaiah, where the word takes on a figurative use. The word for *void* is “בֹהוּ בֹהו” *bōhû*,” which means emptiness, void, lacking order.

(tohu wa-bohu) – Jeremiah 4:19-28 (*23) – It is important to understand that this is a description; the words do not indicate how it became formless and void. The words do not imply being destroyed or judgment, but being empty and void can be the result of judgment.

Many have seen this, even proponents of the Gap Theory, and then begun to discuss the verb. The verb *was* is “הָיָה הָיָה” *hāyāh*” and is the Hebrew “to be” verb. Verse 3: “Let there be light.” Many have tried to translate this “be” as “it became” formless and void. The verb stem here is in the Qal Perfect. This simply means that it is a simple action in the past and a completed action. The Septuagint LXX translates this as “existing as.”

The literal understanding means that the earth was unformed and unfilled. Was it that way at the initial speaking into creation or did it become that way? The text does not have additional details to tell us that it “became formless and void through judgment.” Therefore, we conclude that the text is indicating that it simply was unformed and unfilled at the onset. In the six days to follow, God “formed” and “filled.” The situation is identified in verse 2; then, in verses 3-31, God provides the solution. Each day, God is either forming or filling the earth (creation).

DAY-AGE THEORY

This theory begins with the same error as the Gap Theory. Proponents insist that there is sound and reliable evidence that the universe is billions of years old. This is a summary of what they believe:

1. They agree with astronomical interpretations of the big-bang origin of the universe that occurred about 13–15 billion years ago.
2. The days of creation were periods of millions and billions of years.
3. Over millions of years, God created new species as others kept going extinct.
4. Death, bloodshed, and disease existed before Adam and Eve.
5. Manlike creatures that looked and behaved much like us (and painted on cave walls) existed before Adam and Eve but did not have a spirit that was made in the image of God, and thus, had no hope of salvation.
6. The Genesis flood was a local event.

Now, they do state that they completely believe every word of the Bible. And that the observations in creation will not contradict the Bible. How do they defend billions of years in the Bible? They claim that the word “yom - day” does not indicate a 24-hour period but an eon (a long, indefinite period of time) full of millions or billions of years. Day one is “eon” one.

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Other than the details provided over the last two lessons, demonstrating that the dating methods used to conclude the universe and the Earth are billions of years old are unreliable at best, and most are absolutely false, we must also look at the text to evaluate the claims made by those who insist upon the Day-Age Theory.

The definition of “yom” can have two different base meanings, including a day or a period of time (defined or undefined). However, many observations indicate that these are literally 24-hour days in Genesis 1-2.

1. “yom” always refers to a normal literal day when it is used as a singular noun in the Pentateuch.
2. When yôm is used with “ereb” (evening or sunset) and “boqer” (morning or sunrise), there is no other possible meaning other than a literal 24-hour period.
3. When “yom” is qualified with a cardinal and ordinal number, it always means a 24-hour day.
4. The plain reading of the text indicates that God intended to communicate a clear, literal 24-hour period.
5. Exodus 20:11 uses this reference to establish the Sabbath and refers to a literal six 24-hour period of creation.

Scientifically, there is also a problem with the Day-Age Theory.

1. The sequence of events in creation does not line up with what old-Earth advocates conclude about how the universe and the Earth came into being.
 - a. Water before land
 - b. Earth before the sun, moon, and stars
2. Lack of symbiosis
 - a. Plants need sunlight, but the sunlight was created an eon after vegetation.
 - b. Plants need carbon dioxide, but vegetation was created 3 eons before animals.

THEOLOGICAL CONCERNS

Finally, there is a very problematic theology that Day-Age Theory and Gap Theory present. Proponents believe that the fossil record indicates millions of years and mankind, in the form of Adam and Eve, has only been for 10,000-100,000 years (varies among Day-Age Theorists). They believed that millions of animals lived and died before Adam and Eve. They believe that there was death, bloodshed, and disease before sin. They also believe that there were primitive man-like creatures (Neanderthal, Denisovan, Homo Erectus), but they did not have a human soul before God intervened with Adam and Eve.

Genesis 3:17; Romans 5:12, 8:20-22 – Creation itself was cursed through man. To say that there was death before sin means that God introduced or permitted death before Adam and that death was part of the natural design.