

# INTRODUCTION & ORIENTATION

## What are we doing here?

### What are studying here?

- We are studying what is commonly referred to as “The Gap”—a gap of time between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2 which contains some very important happenings in biblical history.
- In “the gap” we can see God's original, perfect creation (created in Genesis 1.1).
- In “the gap” we can see the fall of Lucifer, now known as the devil and Satan.
- In “the gap” we can see the resulting catastrophe of a universal flood (a flood of waters that filled the entire universe).

### Why are we doing this?

1. Why an English Bible study in a Spanish-speaking country (Costa Rica)?
  - First of all because I want to (it's personal).
    - ✓ I've been living and ministering in Latin America now for 13 years, and I miss my English Bible. I'm looking forward to getting back into it, even if it's a little bit.
    - ✓ So this Bible study is basically an “extra”—it's the result of my personal Bible studies in my King James Bible.
  - Second of all ,we have several native English speakers in our congregation.
    - ✓ Granted, there aren't that many, but there they are. I'm the pastor and I'd like to feed the sheep the best I can.
  - Third, there are a lot of folks that would like an opportunity to “practice” their English.
    - ✓ We have a lot of people we know that speak English as a second language and this is a great opportunity for them to “practice” with a native English speaker (me).
  - That is basically why we are having an English Bible study (and, frankly, it's just a “pilot program”—we're just test driving this idea to see where it goes).
2. Why start out with something as “deep” and “controversial” as The Gap?
  - Remember what I said before: This study is basically my personal time in my English Bible. It's stuff I want to study out personally.
  - I am tired of being *lied* about, *slandered*, and *vilified* by so-called scientists and “scholars.”
    - ✓ For example: Creation Science Evangelism sent out an e-mail with one of their articles in it as some kind of promotion for their materials. Listen to what they said about guys like me that believe in The Gap:

#### **Are there billions of years between verses one and two?**

For thousands of years, nearly all Christians believed that the earth was about six thousand years old as revealed in God's Word. But by the early 1800s the literal interpretation of Genesis fell under fire. Initially popularized by Scottish theologian Thomas Chalmers and later by the Scofield Reference Bible, [1] **the gap theory became a convenient method by which theologians compromise Holy Scripture with Darwin's evolution theory.**

The Bible teaches “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth” and continues by saying “the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (Genesis 1:1-2). [2] **Proponents of the gap theory suggest there is a gap between those two verses that accounts for Satan's rebellion, dinosaurs, a geological record, and billions of years of evolution.**

[3] **That “gap,” however, is nothing more than an attempt to harmonize God's perfect Word with man's imperfect thoughts.** In fact, it is

irreconcilable with the rest of Scripture. The words “without form, and void” in Genesis 1:2 come from the Hebrew phrase “tohu waw bohu,” which means “unformed and unfilled.” This indicates the earth was not yet formed or filled.

Further discrepancies between Scripture and the gap theory are seen when looking at the law God gave Moses. As God etched the Ten Commandments in stone, He said, “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Exodus 20:11). God unmistakably says that everything was made in six days. This would include angels, heaven, earth, and mankind—everything.

The gap theory also disagrees with New Testament Scripture. The Bible is clear that “by man came death” (1 Corinthians 15:21-22) and “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin” (Romans 5:12). These passages undeniably teach that the first sin came by Adam and that there was no death before sin. Therefore, it is incompatible to teach that a civilization existed before Adam, because it would place death before sin—a direct contradiction to Scripture.

- ✓ I numbered the parts I'd like to comment on, so let's take them one by one.
- ✓ [1] That's slander! Slander is a malicious, *false*, and defamatory statement. (It's actually “libel” since it's written; slander is spoken... but it's all the same thing.) I do *not* believe Darwin's evolution and I do *not* teach The Gap as a convenient method to compromise Holy Scripture in light of evolution.
- ✓ [2] I do *not* teach The Gap in an effort to reconcile the *billions* of years of earth's history with the Bible record. Frankly, I teach that The Gap was around 2,000 years long, give or take a few years on either end.
- ✓ These first two statements are simply a *personal* attack on those of us who believe The Gap. It's a *lie*. It's *slander* (or libel). It's simply an attempt to *vilify* us as “theistic evolutionists” in order to *avoid dealing with the facts we present*.
- ✓ [3] The Gap (as I teach it; as it is presented in the Bible) is in no way shape or form an attempt to harmonize God's perfect Word with man's imperfect thoughts, and I'll show you it's not in this study.
- So we are going to take some time together, open our Bibles and see just what *Scripture* has to say about all of this. We are going to put all of our ducks in a row and see if what these “scientists” and “scholars” say is really true.
- And that, frankly, is why we need to start this study by looking at something the Bible calls the “Doctrine of the Nicolaitans.”

## I. The Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

A. The word “Nicolaitans” appears twice in the King James Bible: Revelation 2.6 and 2.15. God says on both occasions that He *hates* this doctrine, and He commends those that hate it also.

But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.  
[Rev 2.6]

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. [Rev 2.15]

B. The word is transliterated in your Bible and not translated.

1. That means it's a Greek word written in English letters so we can pronounce it close to what it would sound like in Greek (“baptism” is a common example of a transliterated word; translated it would be “immerse”).
2. If “Nicolaitans” were translated, it would be a different word altogether (and hence we can see a little bit of why God left the word transliterated; He wants to teach us something).

- C. If you look up “Nicolaitans” in your Strong's Concordance (#3531) you'll find that it's a compound word made up of two other words.
1. “Nikos”: This word means “triumph, victory, conquest, and *to conquer*.”
  2. “Laos”: This word means “people” or “common people (the masses)”. We have a word very similar to this one: “Laity” (the common people versus the clergy).
  3. So the compound word “Nicolaitan” means “to conquer the people,” or more specifically “to conquer the laity—the common people.” And that is what this “doctrine” is all about.
- D. The doctrine of the Nicolaitans is simple: It's a division between “clergy and laity,” between “scholars and common people.”
1. You see this often in traditional organized religion. The “clergy” have the training so they rule over the “laity.”
    - a. This was so prevalent in the Middle (Dark) Ages that the laity was not even allowed to have a Bible in their own language, let alone in their possession.
    - b. God says He *hates* this doctrine. It's what the Reformation was all about: Returning God's Word to the common man—to the laity.
  2. And yet within the ranks of Christianity today we see a new form of Nicolaitan arising to try to “conquer” the common man. It's called “scholarship.”
    - a. The “scholars” have the training, not you. So *they* are right and *you* are wrong.
    - b. And if you *dare* question them, they flash their credentials (PhD, Greek, Hebrew, etc.) and remind *you* that *you* are *stupid* because *you* don't have the credentials *they* have.
    - c. It's pure intimidation, nothing more and nothing less.
    - d. The person who has to run to “the Greek” or “the Hebrew” is the person who doesn't know his Bible well enough to defend his position in his own language.
      - i. So what does he do when he gets into a tight spot and can't support his claims?
      - ii. He pulls out “the Greek” or his “PhD” and tries to intimidate you intellectually so that you'll think *he* is right and you are wrong.
      - iii. That's the “clergy conquering the laity”—it's the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.
    - e. The person who has to hide behind his academic education is the person who has little or no biblical basis for what he is teaching.
- E. The doctrine of the Nicolaitans is what became known later as “gnosticism.”
1. “Gnosticism” come from a word meaning “to know” or “knowledge.”
  2. The basic idea is that the more *knowledge* you have (PhD, Greek, Hebrew), the closer you are to God. So, here's how it goes in the area of The Gap and “creation science”...
    - a. “Dr.” So-and-so has a PhD so *he must be right*. Right? Wrong!
    - b. What if Dr. So-and-so doesn't know his Bible?
- F. Look for this (the doctrine of the Nicolaitans) in the writings and responses given to biblical teachings on The Gap.
1. When their arguments don't hold up against what the Bible *says*, they resort to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans:
    - a. “*I* know what's going on and you don't because *I* have more academic education than you! *You* are stupid because you don't have the education I do!”
    - b. It's pure intellectual intimidation, so don't let them get away with it.

2. This is why they lie about us, slander us, and vilify us. It's because they cannot defend their position with the Bible, so they resort to intimidation tactics with their “knowledge” (gnosticism).

G. I, frankly, refuse to play the Nicolaitan game.

1. In the Scripture (the Bible) we have everything we need to be perfected—to me made like Christ in thought, word, and deed.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. [2Tim 3.15-17]

2. Through the “knowledge of Him” (the knowledge of God gained through the reading and study of Scripture) we have all we need for life and godliness. We lack nothing if we have the Spirit of God and the Scripture.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power **hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him** that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. [2Pet 1.2-4]

3. We don't need PhD's and an academic education to get all God has for us. All we need is Scripture (the words of God) and the Spirit. He will teach us all things as we compare “spiritual things with spiritual” (i.e. Scripture with Scripture).

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. [1Cor 2.13]

H. Let's talk about one more problematic area in this debate about the Gap...

## II. Honesty, Integrity, and the Double Standard of Many Modern Scholars

A. One standard should be applied to every one of us in every situation, but that's not often the case with The Gap and “creation scientists.”

B. For example, here is something from one of their publications:

God did not write his Word in a tricky language. To compromise the simplicity of authority of the Scripture is to accommodate the world's current philosophy. If the gap theory were true, the average person must not be capable of reading the Bible and understanding it without some guru or priest telling them what it really means.

C. Yet when they are faced with the simplicity of Scripture in Genesis 1.28 and 9.1, they quickly pull out a different standard and say we need a language “guru” to understand the plain English word “replenish.”

1. I'm sorry, “re-plenish” is very easy to understand, and has always been so.
2. “Re” means to do again and “plenish” means to make plenty.

D. But, we'll deal with this issue of “replenishing” the earth later. What we need to see here is the double standard that is often applied by scholars.

E. I refuse to play this game, too. If one standard is good enough for one, it's good enough for all.

F. However, let's understand this about the comments made about “tricky” language and Scripture being easily understood by the average person.

1. Sometimes God conceals things from people.

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings is to search out a matter. [Prov 25.2]

- a. There are some things in Scripture that God has *hidden* from people (mostly from the proud, arrogant people that think their intelligence or academic achievements earns them brownie points with God).
- b. God expects us to *search these things out*; He expects us to study the Scripture.

2. Some things in the Bible are just plain hard to understand.

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; **in which are some things hard to be understood**, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. [2Pet 3.15-16]

- a. I'm sorry, but the “average reader” of Scripture is going to come across a lot in his Bible that he won't understand without a little effort on his part to study it out.
- b. And if we are not careful, diligent, and humble as we deal with these things that are hard to be understood, we'll likely end up wresting them (twisting them) out of context.

3. That's why God has established men to teach other men the Bible.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. [2Tim 2.2]

- a. Not everything in Scripture is just sitting there on the surface waiting for the average reader to skim over it and *understand* it by himself.
- b. That's not how God designed this thing. He placed men in the structure in order to pass on knowledge from one generation to the next.

G. So during our study of The Gap, let's strive for honesty and integrity while we avoid playing around with double standards.

### III. The Other “Gaps” in Scripture

A. In Genesis 1.1 and 1.2 we are talking about a gap of time between two verses.

1. *Many* people give testimonies of “seeing” that Gap before actually understanding it (i.e. seeing a perfect and complete creation in verse 1 and then something drastically different in verse 2).
2. Others say they never really saw it until someone pointed it out to them.
3. Still others say they don't see it at all, that if God would have put a “gap” there, He would have *said* it (and not “hid” it like it supposedly is with the “Gap Theory”).
  - a. But this last statement is not necessarily true.
  - b. By comparing Scripture with Scripture we can see that there is at least one other gap of time in history and in the Bible.
    - i. It's a gap that appears between consecutive verses, just like in Genesis 1.1 and 1.2.
    - ii. As you read the passage, you go from one verse to the next without any change of context (there is no indication in the text or the context that between the two verses there is a *large* gap of time).

iii. It's also a *large* gap of time that occurs between *phrases* of the same *sentence* within the same *verse*.

4. The point is this: If there are other gaps of time in other places of the Bible (gaps similar to the one proposed in Genesis 1.1-2), then the *possibility* of a gap between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2 exists. It's a phenomenon that we see in other places in Scripture, not only in Genesis 1.

B. (Dan 9.24-27, esp. vv26-27) There is a large gap of time between verses 26 and 27 of Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks.

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. [Dan 9.26-27]

1. (v24-26) The first 69 weeks (weeks of years) leave us at the crucifixion of the Messiah.
2. (v27) The last week (Daniels famous 70<sup>th</sup> week) is the Tribulation Period that has *yet* to take place.
3. Therefore, between verse 26 (the crucifixion and the resurrection) and verse 27 (the Tribulation Period) there is a *gap* of about 2,000 years.
  - a. However, to read this passage by itself (as an "average reader"), you would *never* think there was a gap between those two verses.
  - b. As a matter of fact, verse 27 begins with the conjunction "and" showing continuance of context! Yet we know that there is a gap there; it's called The Church Age.

C. We see the same gap represented by a comma in Isaiah 61.1-3.

1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. [Isa 61.1-3]

1. In Luke 4, Jesus Christ cites this passage at the beginning of His public ministry and applies it to Himself, but He stops at the comma in verse two of Isaiah 61.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. [Luke 4.17-19]

2. In Isaiah 61.1-2a we see the first coming of the Messiah. In Isaiah 61.2b-3 we see the His second coming. The comma in verse two represents a *gap* of 2,000 years!

D. Do you know what else is true about this 2,000-year gap we see in Daniel and Isaiah?

1. God *hid* it from men for centuries! He didn't reveal the gap of the Church Age until Paul.

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that **by revelation he made known unto me the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which **in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men**, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit... [Eph 3.1-7]

2. As a matter of fact, the language of Scripture was so “tricky” that even the “gurus” of the Old Testament couldn't figure it out.

Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. **Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently**, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: **Searching what, or what manner of time** the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. [1Pet 1.9-11]

3. Yet for us today it's clear as a bell.

## CONCLUSIÓN:

### **So what does all of this show us?**

1. (1Pet 1.9-11; 2Pet 3.15-16) Some things in the Bible are just plain hard to understand until God gives us the understanding of what we're reading.
2. (2Tim 2.2; Eph 3.1-7) Oftentimes He will use *men* to give us that understanding.
3. (Dan 9.26-27; Isa 61.1-3) There *are* large gaps of time in Scripture, sometimes between verses that seem to have a continuous context and sometimes between phrases of the same sentence in the same verse.

### **Our conclusion:**

- There does exist the possibility of a gap of time between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2 because it's a phenomenon that we see in other portions of Scripture.
- You cannot just blindly deny that *NO* gaps exist like the one in question because... well, they do.

### **So in this study, here is what we are going to try to do...**

- Here is how we are going to try to handle this... because, in all honesty, it's big. There is a lot of information and a lot of arguments on both sides of this thing. So here is how we are going to approach The Gap...
1. I am going to lay out my position first. I am going to teach you what I believe the Bible says about The Gap between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2. If in the context of my teaching on The Gap we can deal with the arguments of the opposition, we will.
  2. At the end of our study, I will try my best to present the arguments of the opposition that we did not see in the context of our study. Obviously I'll do my best to explain them and then defend my position in light of Scripture.

**Just a couple more things: Rules.**

- **Rule #1:** I will not take the time to answer a question that will be dealt with later, in the context of our study.
  - ✓ I will take note of your concern and try my best to address it in detail later, but I will not take time “now” to teach something that will be dealt with in detail later.
- **Rule #2:** I am going to be using the King James Bible because it is the Bible I believe and trust.
  - ✓ Any other English Bible that you can get today (the “modern versions”) comes from a totally different family of texts (the “Catholic” or “Alexandrian” family).
  - ✓ I do not trust them, and if you have one you'll quickly understand why I don't trust them when you see the differences between “new” Bibles and the King James.