

I. Chaos After the Original Creation



II. Chaos at the Beginning of Creation



III. Chaos Before the Original Creation



BIBLICAL VIEW OF CREATION

Genesis 1:1-3

Restitution Theory

- Genesis 1:1: an account of the original perfect creation
- Genesis 1:2: the chaotic state of the world after God's judgement due to Satan's sin
- Genesis 1:3ff: an account of the recreation out of the chaotic state

Translation:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; and the earth *became* formless and void...”

Often called the “Gap Theory”

BIBLICAL VIEW OF CREATION

GENESIS 1:1-3: EVALUATION

Restitution Theory

1. Strengths

- Understands verse 2 to be a state contrary to creation
- Theological: explains the fall of Satan and the spiritual realm

2. Objections

- Verse 2 is not sequential but circumstantial (wrong use of the Hebrew *waw*)
- Use of the verb *hyh* (“became”) is very unlikely and unsubstantiated
- The use of *tohu wa-bohu* is overstated (does not necessarily mean judgment)
- Must speculate on details that are nowhere revealed in Scripture (Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28)

BIBLICAL VIEW OF CREATION

“Genesis 1:1-3”

Initial Chaos Theory

- Genesis 1:1: A statement of God’s *ex nihilo* creation of the raw materials of the universe (i.e. time, space, matter, energy)
- Genesis 1:2: A description of the newly created earth in its yet unformed state (i.e. describes what God created in v1; initial stage of creation)
- Genesis 1:3ff: the account of the continuing creative work of God—shaping and ordering the unformed material

Translation:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And (now as to) the earth (it) was formless and void...

BIBLICAL VIEW OF CREATION

GENESIS 1:1-3: EVALUATION

Initial Disorder Theory

1. Strengths

- Recognizes verse 1 as an independent clause
- Recognizes verse 2 as a circumstantial clause connected with verse 3
- Correctly understands the verb *hyh* (“was”)
- Theological: explains creation in *ex nihilo* terms (nothing but God existed before verse 1)
- Supported by many popular commentators and Bible teachers

BIBLICAL VIEW OF CREATION

Initial Disorder Theory

2. Objections

- Demands a completely different meaning to the phrase “*the heavens and the earth*” than anywhere else in Scripture
 - It cannot mean everything
 - Heavens are created twice (v1 & v8)
- Understands *tohu wa-bohu* as the initial stage of creation instead of a state contrary to creation (contradiction: “...God created...And the earth was uncreated...”)
- Contradicts Isaiah 45:18 by making verse 2 the product of God’s creation
- Does not fit the literary structure of chapter 1
 - Fails to recognize the distinct pattern from verse 3ff (makes verse one part of day one)
 - Creative acts are by divine command unlike verse one