

What is The Relationship Between Genesis 1:1 and Exodus 20:11?
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The Bible is a one-of-a-kind book. It is comprised of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament has thirty-nine books and the New Testament has twenty-seven books. These books and the passages that they contain must be rightly divided or correctly interpreted to be able to confidently say, “This is what God means by what God says.”

The task of exegesis or hermeneutics always begins with the Scriptures. Respecting the nature of Scripture is paramount. The Scriptures are inspired (God-breathed), holy (pure, without error and so true), infallible, authoritative, clear as to their import (understandable, knowable), profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:15-17). From the very nature of Scripture, we confidently affirm that Scripture does not contradict itself (one author does not contradict himself or another author used by God to reveal His will). Thus, we affirm the intertextuality of Scripture. One passage of Scripture may help us in our understanding of another passage of Scripture.

Understanding the nature of Scripture is essential to correct interpretation of Scripture. The task before us in this article is to ascertain the correct interpretation of Genesis 1:1 and Exodus 20:11 and how the two passages relate to each other and also how they relate to other passages of Scripture that touch on the topic of creation. Do the two passages harmonize or do they contradict each other? Are they synchronous or are they disjunctive?

In an article that appeared in *Sufficient Evidence* published by the Warren Christian Apologetics Center (Fall, 2020), Mac Deaver takes the position that no one can know how old the earth is and so the age of the earth is a matter of indifference regarding one’s personal faith. This proposition must be put to the test of truth. (Mac Deaver also posted this article on his website: biblicalnotes.com, “Could God Create (*ex nihilo*) on the First Day?”). The present article follows the latter posting.

Genesis 1:1 states, “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth” (KJV). The English sentence contains a prepositional phrase, *in the beginning*. This phrase is an adverbial phrase modifying the verb *created (bara)*. It relates to the *time* that God created. The word *God* (Elohim) is a noun which is also the subject of the sentence. The words, “the heaven and the earth” constitute the direct objects of the verb created. Time comes into being instantaneously, and simultaneously with the creation of space and matter (physical entities). This creation never existed before and so was *ex nihilo*. It was also a miracle wrought by the power of God and, to be specific, divine fiat (Ps. 33:7-8). Time was not created separately from the creation of these physical entities. The *beginning* is an absolute beginning and indicates the first (day) of God’s creative acts.

An interesting observation of Mac Deaver’s article published in *Sufficient Evidence* is that he never gives a complete biblical exegesis of Gen. 1:1 in either English or Hebrew. Nor does he give an exegesis of Ex. 20:11. Deaver does not begin with Scripture. This is a fatal flaw of any interpreter. If he does not begin with Scripture, where does he begin? He begins with presuppositions! Then, he attempts to prove his presuppositions with logic. For instance, Deaver affirms that there is a “conceptual change and a pause” between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2 (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, p. 10). However, he never proves this from the text.

Now, let's consider Genesis 1:1-2 from the Hebrew text. Justin Rogers gives a thorough analysis of Genesis 1:1-3 from the Hebrew in *Reason and Revelation* published by Apologetics Press ("Is The Gap Theory Linguistically Possible?", December, 2015). Here are some of the highlights of that analysis. First, Rogers indicates the danger of attempting to modify what the Scriptures teach utilizing science. Scripture should inform science he affirms (p. 134). Consider the difference in the nature of Scripture and science. Scripture is objective, infallible truth. Science holds that nothing can be known in the absolute sense. Does this difference have a bearing on the question about the age of the earth? Absolutely! Second, Rogers dismantles the arguments of Gap Theorists. Many Gap theorists (John Clayton for example and Roy Deaver as per Mac Deaver's own affirmation) argue that the Hebrew word *bara* translated *created* in Genesis 1:1 means "out of nothing" while the Hebrew word *asah* means "to restore" at a later time. Rogers goes to some length to show that the Hebrew words *bara* and *asah* can be used interchangeably (Rogers, *Gap Theory*, pp. 136-137). Mac Deaver writes, "Thirty years later (1992) my father (Roy C. Deaver) published his commentary, *ROMANS- God's Plan For Man's Righteousness*, and in it he wrote, "How much 'time' (as men view time) elapsed between the original creation and the renovation (the work of the six days) no one can say with certainty" (p. 167)". Rogers shows that this rigid distinction is linguistically impossible. Rogers shows that Gap theorists err when they affirm that the Hebrew word *waw* (Gen. 1:2, *waw* is translated as "and") is disjunctive and implies a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Mac Deaver in his article states that there is a conceptual pause (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, p. 10), but he never proves such from the grammar of Gen. 1:1-3. He affirms this more than once. Rogers shows that the Hebrew word *waw* is disjunctive, but this means, "the *waw* sets up a parenthetical remark which functions to explain the preceding information" (p. 140). Consequently, the Hebrew *waw* does not imply a gap of millions or billions of years. Rogers states, "Remember that Genesis 1:1 is a declarative statement: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Since the narrative will not focus on the creation of the heavens, but on the Earth, the next verse opens with the final word from the previous one (u-hā-ārets). By utilizing the disjunctive *waw* along with the noun "Earth," the Hebrew serves to focus attention on the creation of the Earth: "Now, **as for the earth**, it was formless and void." This statement is clearly based on the final word of the previous verse as the narrative unpacks exactly how the creation of the Earth took place." (Rogers, p. 140). The *waw* is explanatory and transitional grammatically and not an indication of a conceptual pause that might include millions or billions of years. Next, Rogers deals with the mistranslation of the Hebrew word *hāy-tāh* (English word *was* in Gen. 1:2). Gap theorists attempt to translate the word "became" or "had become." They assert that the *barah* stage of creation "became" or "had become" a desolate waste and thus a re-creation was necessary (Rogers, p. 140). Rogers affirms that the copula *hāy-tāh* is not, therefore functioning in Genesis 1:2 in its true verbal sense as "became," but in the copular sense as "was." When it functions as a copula it simply links the subject with the object without implying any true verbal quality (Rogers, p. 140). Rogers affirms the uniformity of Hebrew grammarians on this point and that this is reflected in virtually every decent translation (Rogers, p. 140). Finally, Rogers explains the use of the Hebrew terms *tō-hū*, and *bō-hū* (*without form and void* respectively). Gap theorists assert that these terms indicate a depreciation of original Creation. Rogers denies this. He affirms that the terms refer to the amorphous nature of the Earth before God provided His creative structure to it (Rogers, p. 141).

Rogers uses Isa. 45:18 which shows what the Earth was not intended to be (“not in vain”) but, a *suitable* habitat for mankind (Rogers, p. 141). Rogers concludes his in-depth study of the Hebrew grammar: “There is nothing in the Hebrew text of Genesis 1 to demand a gap of time” (Rogers, p. 141). Further, he states, “So we are left to trust the Gap theorists that they are qualified to speak where the Bible is silent, and to understand in the Hebrew text what no Hebrew scholars actually affirm, and what no qualified translators have ever put forth. So is the Gap theory linguistically viable? No.” (Rogers, p. 141). Mac Deaver’s father, Roy Deaver, upheld the Gap theory in his commentary on Romans as Mac stated in the article under review. Since Mac Deaver states this in the beginning of his article, it seems that his article is a defense of those, similar to his own father, that affirmed the Gap theory. Consider that Roy Deaver put the creation of the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1) under the heading of “Day One” in the lecture he delivered titled, “The Story of Creation” in the book *A Homiletical Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, pp. 26-27). Mac repudiates this position in his article in *Sufficient Evidence* when he separates the “beginning” (Gen. 1:1) from the “first” day (Gen. 1:3-5).

If there is no gap between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2, then, there is simply no period of time that would allow for either cosmological evolution or geological evolution. Guy N. Woods was adamantly opposed to the Day-Age theory (*Questions and Answers Open Forum*, “How Long Were the Days of Genesis 1?”, pp. 16-18). Woods affirms that the day-age theory is a consequence of the evolutionary theory (Woods, p. 17). He mentions that conservative geologists such as George McReady Price have long since shown it (the day-age theory) to be false (Woods, p. 17). Yet, the Warren Christian Apologetics Center published a book by Nobie Stone titled, *Genesis 1 and Lessons From Space*, in which Stone affirmed the day-age theory and the publishers never refuted this false doctrine. Why didn’t Mac Deaver address the false teaching of Nobie Stone? Why would Mac Deaver write for *Sufficient Evidence* when Charles Pugh III continues to use Nobie Stone as a writer for *Sufficient Evidence* and is about to publish another book by Nobie Stone? Deaver affirms that the “days” of Genesis 1 were 24 hour periods (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, p. 15-16). This places him in direct conflict with Nobie Stone. Charles Pugh III has now published both views. Both cannot be true.

Deaver introduces Exodus 20:11 and asks, “Where do the six days of creation as per Exodus 20:11 begin? Do the days begin at Genesis 1:1 or do they begin in Genesis 1:3? This is the essential question in settling the dispute as to whether or not the Bible provides information whereby we can know the approximate age of the earth.” (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, p. 13). Once again, Deaver never gives a grammatical analysis of Exodus 20:11. Why? Instead, he begins to reason using a series of questions and charts. The chart on page 16, includes the following categories: Before the First 24 hours; Within The first 24 hours; and Following the First 24 hours. Deaver remarks that God’s first creative act as recounted by Moses (Genesis 1:1) needs to be identified or classified in order to get at the truth with regard to whether or not Exodus 20:11 includes Genesis 1:1 in its six day reference. The first true or false question asked by Deaver is: God initially created before the first 24 hours began. Deaver marked this statement true. It is actually false. The preposition *before* indicates that time had not yet begun. God did not create before time! This is the point at which Deaver contradicts himself. Earlier on page 15, he affirmed that time comes into existence simultaneously with the creation of space and matter. This is the correct, but missing category in Deaver’s logical approach. The second true or false statement given by Deaver is: God initially created within the first 24 hours

or after the first 24 hours began. The preposition “within” indicates that time would have already existed. The preposition “after” also indicates that time would already have existed. This statement is false. The third true or false statement given by Deaver is: God created following the first 24 hours. This statement is false. Deaver’s conclusion from his incorrect reasoning is that “before time, God started his initial creative work” (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, p. 17). The correct, biblical view, is that God created time instantaneously and simultaneously with the creation of space and matter. Deaver commits a fallacy involving categories by omitting the only true and correct category. Let’s add the correct category: True or false: God created time simultaneously with the creation of space and matter. The answer is *true*. When did God create the heaven and the earth? Answer: “in the beginning” (the beginning of time or day one (Gen. 1:1-5 and Exodus 20:11)).

Let’s turn to the biblical exegesis of the first part of Exodus 20:11. The English analysis of this passage is very straightforward. “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.” The phrase “For in six days” is an adverbial prepositional phrase modifying the verb “made.” It denotes the time aspect of the creative work of God, i.e. six days. “The LORD” is a reference to Yahweh. “Made” (*asah*) is the verb in the sentence. “Heaven and earth, the sea, and all” are four direct objects of the verb “made.” Notice that each of these four direct objects were completed **within the time specified, i.e. six days**. “That in them is” is a relative clause modifying the direct object “all.” The import is: “everything that was created by God in the heaven, the earth, and the sea. The specifics are given by Moses in Genesis 1. The question that must be asked and never was asked by Mac Deaver is: “How do you separate the heaven and the earth from the time statement of six days given in this verse?” The passage would have to be completely twisted, wrested, and destroyed by *aisegesis* (reading something outside of the passage into the passage itself). Does Mac Deaver do this? Certainly. He comes to a false conclusion through fallacious reasoning *that God created before time* as noted earlier. Then, he inserts this conclusion into Exodus 20:11 in order to separate out “the heaven and the earth” from the six days specified by Moses. This is quite a feat of dissection and an example of wresting the Scripture to one’s own destruction. The conclusion Deaver draws is just the opposite of what Moses said! Why do biblical creationists believe that the heaven and the earth were created on day one? Because Moses said so and if Moses said it, God said it. God was present when He created all things and He tells us what He did. Exodus 20:11 is a clear and plain passage of Scripture that illuminates the time element involved in creating the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is. **Any doctrine that contradicts a plain passage of Scripture is a false doctrine.** Deaver’s doctrine *that God created before time*, contradicts what Moses wrote and thus what God said. Exodus 20:11 harmonizes beautifully with the correct interpretation of Genesis 1:1-5. The creation of the “heaven and the earth” occurred during the six days of the creation week. Moses states that it occurred “in the beginning” and so on day one of the creation week. Deaver’s interpretation destroys the harmony between the two passages and introduces discordance and so contradiction. We can confidently affirm that the heaven and the earth were created by God on day one along with light as revealed in Genesis 1:1-5 and Exodus 20:11.

Scripture interprets Scripture! Consider the following passages of Scripture. “It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and

earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed” (Exodus 31:17). The natural meaning of this verse is that God created the heaven and the earth and everything in them in six days. The Hebrew word for “made” is *asah*. Remember, the Hebrew word for “create” in Genesis 1:1 was “barah.” The “heaven and the earth” are still the direct objects of the verbs in both passages.

Consider John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Guy N. Woods comments, “The “beginning” is the same as that alluded to by Moses in the first grand and sublime affirmation of the scriptures. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1). The beginning of time and the beginning of creation were contemporaneous. Time began with creation” (*A Commentary on the Gospel According to John*, p. 21). Consequently, time does not begin before creation.

In Matt. 19:4 and Mark 10:6, Jesus affirms that Adam and Eve were created at the beginning. “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 to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?” (Matt. 19:4). Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day (Genesis 1:24-31; 2:1-25). How could the sixth day be placed by Jesus “at the beginning” if the “beginning” is defined as Mac Deaver defines it? Mac affirms that it is possible that the *beginning* of Gen. 1:1 could be separated by a conceptual pause that may have lasted billions of years? (Roy Deaver’s Gap Theory). Mark 10:6, “But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.” This passage is further confirmation of the consistency between Gen. 1:1 and Exodus 20:11 and the Lord’s own statement.

In Romans 1:20, the Holy Spirit states by Paul’s pen, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” God’s power and glory are revealed through the creation of the world which has been observed by man since the beginning of its creation.

In II Pet. 3:4, Peter by inspiration declares, “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.” The history of man and his ability to observe the created world is placed “from the beginning of the creation.” The beginning of creation is the beginning of time itself.

In Mark 13:19, “For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.” “From the beginning of the creation” is “from the beginning of time.” The entire universe and everything in it was created in six days and this includes man who was created on the sixth day. “Affliction” is an experience of people and, consequently, people are placed by the Lord “at the beginning of time.”

In John 8:44, God’s Word declares, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” Jesus indicates that the devil was active “from the beginning.” Is it not “from the beginning” that we see him active in tempting Eve? (Genesis 3).

The word “beginning” is the operative word in these passages which connect the meaning with Genesis 1:1 and the beginning of time. As Woods said, “the beginning of time

and the beginning of creation were contemporaneous. When time begins, we have day one. If not, then, we have two different “first” days. This is impossible.

Another observation that demonstrates the intertextuality of Scripture is that Exodus 20:11 is referenced at least three times in the New Testament—Acts 4:24; 14:15; and Rev. 10:6. “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is” (Acts 4:24). “And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things: We also are men of like passions with you, and preach. Unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein” (Acts 14:15). “And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer” (Rev. 10:6). Now, Moses said that God created the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that in them is in six days (Exodus 20:11, 31:17). The New Testament writers reference a very important Old Testament text to prove that God created all things. The same affirmation is made of the Word (Jesus Christ) in John 1:1-3 and Col. 1:16. The Word was “in the beginning” with God. This was the beginning of time. And, Jesus Christ was instrumental (the indirect agent) in creating all things. The beginning of time is the same as “day one” in Gen. 1:3-5. Mac Deaver affirms that “the beginning” of Gen. 1:1 is not the same as “day one” of Gen. 1:3-5 and that “the heavens and the earth” were not created during the “six days” of Exodus 20:11. Deaver affirms two first days! He contradicts Moses (and so the Holy Spirit) in Exodus 20:11. He destroys the clarity of Scripture. He destroys the intertextuality of Scripture.

This study presents the clarity of Scripture and the fact that Scripture can be used to interpret Scripture in which we have an infallible interpretation. The correct study and interpretation of God’s Word results in truth. False interpretations result in heresy.

The Warren Christian Apologetics Center under the director, Charles Pugh III, is doing great harm to members of the body of Christ by publishing material that is false, by using false religionists (unbelievers) in their books and programs, and by dividing New Testament Christians.