

Hermeneutics 2 Lesson 4

The Gap Principle

1 Peter 1:10-11

Theme: During this class we will look at the Gap Principle.

Introduction: We will deal with what this principle is, how it is used, and how it is misused by some. This principle draws us into a specific look at the time to which Scripture speaks. It recognizes that there are periods of time, which God is either silent or He passes over. Many individuals have a problem with the silences of God but we should not struggle over the things and times that God does not speak too. Remember the Bible says in **Deuteronomy 29:29**, "*The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*"

We should not try to stretch this principle to the point that we are filling in the blank spaces for ourselves. This principle is very helpful, especially when dealing with prophecy. It helps us in a simple and natural way understand Scripture. When we view these certain passages with this in mind it helps us to understand certain events of Scripture and clears up things that are confusing and answers certain questions that skeptics raise. This is particularly true when a part of a verse or passage has already happened and part of it has not.

Most every Bible scholar and student accepts the Gap Principle with one exception that we will see.

I. The meaning of the Gap Principle.

- A. That principle by which God, in the Jewish Scriptures, _____ certain _____ of time, leaping over centuries without comment, is known as the Gap Principle.
- B. That principle of Divine revelation whereby God in the Jewish Scriptures ignores certain periods of time, _____ over centuries _____ comment.
- C. It is that principle of Divine Revelation wherein God _____ certain periods of time, leaping over centuries without comment. _____ revelation makes clear the gap period. While the context principle is recognized by most Bible students this one is unrecognized by many.

II. The proper use of the Gap Principle.

- A. Isaiah 61:1-2 – with Luke 4:16-20
- B. 1 Peter 1:10-11 – with Isaiah Ch. 53 and Zechariah Ch. 14
 - John Philipps give this explanation of the prophets and the Gap Principle.
“Nearly all prophecy relates to one of four great mountain peaks of fulfillment.

Many prophecies in the Old Testament focus on *Christ's first advent*. His birth, life and ministry, sufferings and death, resurrection, ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost are all foreseen. A number of Bible prophecies relate to *the end-time events in Christendom* culminating in the rapture of the church and the general apostasy of Christendom itself. Other prophecies have to do with *Christ's final return to earth*. They speak of the coming of the Beast, of the Devil's messiah, and of the universal power he will have. They speak of the great tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, and the judgment of the nations. Other prophecies concern themselves with the *Millennium*, with the eventual establishment of Christ's literal kingdom on earth, and with the ultimate climax in the setting up of an eternal kingdom in new heavens and a new earth. Interpreting Bible prophecy will be simplified if these four chief areas of fulfillment are kept in mind."

C. Daniel 8:8-10

D. Daniel 9:20-27

E. Isaiah 9:6-7

F. Hosea 1:4,11

G. Revelation 12:5-6

III. The improper use of the Gap Principle.

A. Genesis 1:1-2

B. There is a disagreement as to the interpretation of this passage.

C. Those who disagree with this theory.

The Gap Theory Debate

Arguments For the Gap Theory

The verb in Genesis 1:2 should be translated "*became*".

The words "*without form and void*" always indicate

judgment.

There is a difference between the word "created" (*bara*)

and "made" (*asah*).

In Genesis 1:2, the word "**darkness**" carries the meaning

of judgment.

Genesis 1:28—The word "**replenish**" shows re-creation

of God's original creation.

Jeremiah 4:23—This verse is quoted in a context of divine

judgment, and so it is said that Genesis 1:2 also reflects

such a judgment.

Isaiah 24:1—Divine judgment created a cataclysmic change

Arguments Against This Theory

The Hebrew word *hayetha* is almost always translated "*was*". It is translated "was" 258 out of 264 times in the Pentateuch.

These words can many times refer to lifelessness

and empty space.

These words are used

interchangeably. For

example: 1. Genesis 1:15—God made (*asah*) the beast of the earth.

2. Genesis 1:21—God created (*bara*) the great sea monsters. 3.

Genesis 1:26—"Let us make

(*asah*) man. 4. Genesis 1:27—God created (*bara*) man.

The word "**darkness**" means

simply the absence

of light and is at times spoken of as good. (Psalm 104:20)

It indicates the world was once filled. The word

"**replenish**" is the Hebrew word *male* which almost always means

"to fill or be filled", with only a very few questionable exceptions.

(Psalm 107:9)

This verse has nothing to do with Genesis except

the similar words. It is a prophecy of a coming

judgment on the land of Israel, not a history of past judgment on the

earth. This will be fulfilled in the Tribulation period.

This is a prophecy of the coming judgment upon the land and

people of Israel, not on a

hypothetical race of people before Adam.