

# THE EARTH “BECAME” A CHAOS

The Word of God opens with these words (Genesis 1:1-2):

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void.....” (KJV)

The Concordant Version (a very literal translation) reads:

“Created by the Alueim (plural) were the heavens and the earth.  
Yet the earth **became** a chaos and vacant.....”

## “BECAME”

Here we find the *causative* form of the verb “be”. Most translations ignore the causative and act as if there were no verb in the Hebrew. The simple form of the verb of existence need not be expressed; its absence would plainly imply “was” (The earth “was” without form...).

But the presence of the causative form of the verb tells us the earth was *caused* to be a chaos and vacant. This is the same as in Genesis 1:3 where the causative verb is also found, and is translated “*Let there be* light”, and not “The light was”.

## CONSISTENT WITH OTHER PASSAGES

Consider Isaiah 45:18

“He did not create it a chaos.”

And consider 2 Peter 3:5-6

“...there were heavens of old, and an earth cohering out of water and through water, by the word of God; through which the then world, being deluged by water, perished.”

This could possibly refer to the flood in Noah’s day, but would this really be considered “heavens of old” and “an earth cohering out of water and through water”? It actually sounds more the chaos conditions that existed at the time of Genesis 1:9

“Flow together shall the water from under the heavens to one place, and appear shall the dry land.”

## THE “DISRUPTION”

Most modern English translations refer to the “foundation of the world”. But the Greek is “*katabole*”, which should be translated “disruption”, not foundation.

kata (down) bole (casting)

“Bole” (cast) suggests a forcible motion:

“hewn down and *cast* into the fire” (Matthew 3:10)

The Greek stem “kata bal” is used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament which existed in the days of Jesus) to translate nine different Hebrew words, all having the idea of “cast”, “break down”, “ruin”, etc.

Now let us look at the passages which refer to this “disruption” (not foundation):

John 17:24-25 Jesus speaking: “for Thou lovest Me before the *disruption* of the world.”

KJV: “*foundation* of the world”

NIV: “*creation* of the world”

Eph 1:3-4 “He chooses us in Him before the *disruption* of the world.”

KJV: “*foundation* of the world”

NIV: “*creation* of the world”

1 Peter 1:19-21 "...the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the *disruption* of the world..."

KJV: "*foundation* of the world"

NIV: "*creation* of the world"

We find the verb form of "katabole" in Hebrews 6:1

"...we should be brought on to maturity, (not again *disrupting* the foundation of repentance from dead works..."

KJV: "not *laying again* the foundation"

NIV: "not *laying again* the foundation"

This is a very interesting verse, since both *disruption* and *foundation* are found in the same verse. Here *foundation* comes from the Greek "themelios" (place-care), which is clearly different from *disruption* (Yet most modern English translators will use "foundation" for the Greek "katabole" in the aforementioned verses.

The inconsistency of most translators is revealed by 2 Corinthians 4:9 where even our English translators see "kataballo" as a form of disruption:

"...*cast down*, but not destroyed" (KJV)

"...*struck down*, but not destroyed" (NIV)

How can the same Greek word mean both "foundation" or "creation" and "cast down". Don't these English translations appear to be exact opposites; and from the same Greek word?

### **THE IMPLICATION OF ALL THIS...**

If we choose to enter into the creationism/evolution debate using the Bible as our standard, we must consider that the earth could be much older than 6,000 years, and that this is still consistent with what the Bible says (when properly translated). The earth could have been created long before, and then in Genesis 1:2 we see that it *became* chaos. The original created earth has been through a *disruption*, when it *became* chaos.

Before we take a stand based on what the Bible says, we must be sure what it really does say. There is a need for a close study of God's Word, using a good literal translation, not one that is simply easy to read, or that our own personal history has led us to accept as our favorite. The Concordant Literal New Testament and Concordant Version of the Old Testament may be the only English translation which was scientifically made, striving for consistency in the translation and avoiding the bias of the translators.

### **SOME SCHOLARS MAY DISAGREE**

Some scholars will defend the translation, "The earth was without form and void". As I read the various viewpoints, I have developed a much greater respect for the study and research of the Concordant Publishing Concern, as I have observed the great concern for delivering a very faithful, literal, word for word rendering of God's Word. The magazine "Unsearchable Riches" has been published now for over 90 years, and each issue presents the study and consideration behind each word in the translation.

But even if you disagree, the fact is that there *are* differing viewpoints, and we *must* accept that there is at least the possibility that the Hebrew is intended to convey "the earth *became* a chaos and vacant", and there could therefore have been a gap, either short or long in duration, between Genesis 1:1 and 1:3

### **FOR MORE DETAILED STUDY....**

See "Unsearchable Riches" magazine, published by Concordant Publishing Concern, January 1957 (Volume 48 Number 1) and May 1957 (Volume 48 Number 3).

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