

existence shortly after God began to create, rather than to imply the existence of any pre-existing matter. The ^{is a} basic ^{fact} ~~of~~ ^{that} God's creative activity ^{is} ~~is~~ antecedent to all earthly existence is the vital teaching of Genesis 1:1.

3. The meaning of Gen. 1:2, There are two possible interpretations of this verse. The usual one takes it as a description of the condition of the simpler elements of the universe after God began to create but before they had assumed anything like their present form. The other view, ^{which has already been mentioned above,} ~~refers to above~~ holds that this verse tells of a change that occurred ^{an original} after a complete creation as a result of the fall of Satan and a resulting ^{of} great cataclysm ^{that was similar to} which required drastic measures ^{if} to re-introduce ^{order} order into the world. ⁽¹⁾ ^{(2) should be brought back}

⁽⁴⁾ There is nothing in the Hebrew syntax ~~of~~ to exclude this "restitution theory" but neither does it require it. The few verses in Isaiah and Ezekiel that are sometimes alleged in its defense are ^{rather} ~~probably really~~ interpreted as referring to something entirely different and in any case would be a very weak exegetical foundation upon which to ^{build} ~~rest~~ so great a theory. Yet the fact remains that Gen. 3 introduces Satan as a fallen being and his fall must have occurred before the creative events described in Gen. 1 and 2. ^a Whether it occurred on this earth and led to a great cataclysm, or whether it occurred on another planet, or perhaps even before the creation of matter, is one of the mysteries that the Bible does not explain.

4. The Creative Days. The remainder of Genesis ^{is} ~~is~~ describes six days in which creative acts occurred. The first of these, and ^{possibly} ~~possibly~~ the second also, could be understood as describing the creation of the universe as a whole without exclusive ~~reference to~~ reference to this planet. The following days would seem to be entirely restricted to this planet and it may be that all six are describing God's creative work in connection with this ~~world~~ world rather than discussing the universe as a whole.