

Unfortunately, it is not necessary in the Hebrew to use this preposition to indicate that "hayetha" means "to change." Without the preposition, "hayetha" covers the entire area, whether dynamic or static. The preposition merely indicates that it must be taken in the dynamic sense but is not necessary in order to indicate this fact.

To the average English reader knowing nothing of foreign languages, this statement which I have just made seems quite artificial. It does not seem natural that a language should use one word in so large an area. One is tempted to say "What a queer language that Hebrew must be!" Yet on investigation, one finds that English has an exactly similar phenomenon, although found in a different connection. I refer to the preposition "in." What does this preposition mean?

The preposition "in" in the English language indicates either the situation at an interior or the coming to such a situation. It thus may be used in a static or a dynamic sense. Thus we may say "He sat in the room" or we may say "He came in the room." The word "in" may^{thus} be used in either of the two senses. If we wish to indicate with absolute clarity that the word is used in the dynamic sense, we use the preposition "to." We say "He walked into the room" or "He fell into the lake." However, we could equally well say "He fell in the lake" and it would not mean that he was already in the lake and fell there but might mean that from dry land he fell into the lake. So our English word "in" has the area of meaning including both the static and dynamic and we may use the preposition 'to' indicate that it is dynamic but we do not have to do so. This is exactly similar to the Hebrew word "hayetha."

This proves, then, that as far as Genesis 1:2 is concerned, it does not show with certainty whether the description there is a part of the creative process or of a great crisis and cataclysm which occurred. For evidence on this we have to look to other sources or to other parts of Scripture.

This also is a very clear example of the difficulty of translating from one language to another. It can safely be said that our English Authorized Version was as fine a translation as has ever been made of any book. Probably no translation of the Bible into any other language is as good a translation as this translation into English.