

Creation, Again



SABBATH—MARCH 23

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Revelation 21:1–5; Genesis 3:19; 1 Corinthians 15:52–58; Genesis 6:11–13; Isaiah 11:6–9; John 14:1–3.

MEMORY VERSE: “But we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth. Godliness will make its home there. All of this is in keeping with God’s promise” (2 Peter 3:13, NIV).

IN 2 PETER 3:10–13, PETER DESCRIBES WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE OLD HEAVEN AND THE OLD EARTH IN THE FUTURE. Both will be destroyed.

But that is not the end of the story. This is because a new heaven and a new earth will be created in their place.

Look at the difference between the old and the new. Sin has control of the old earth. Righteousness (holiness) fills in the new. Death rules in the old one, life rules in the new earth.

As we understand in these promises, too, God’s work as Creator did not end with the first Creation of the earth. And it does not end with the work that He does in us by making us new people in Christ either. No, His work continues. The same Lord who created the world once through the great power of His word, will create it again, and with His same great power too.

Without this last act of creation, all the past acts would come to nothing. This is because the new heavens and the new earth are the fulfilled (completed) goals of God’s promises to us.

SUNDAY—MARCH 24**A NEW BEGINNING
(Revelation 21:1–5)**

Science and the Bible do share something that is the same. Both believe that this earth is not going to last forever. For science, the same cold and mindless forces of chance that brought the earth to life are the same cold and mindless forces of chance that are going to destroy it. The Bible, too, teaches that this earth will be destroyed. But science thinks that the earth will be destroyed forever. The Bible teaches that the earth will have a brand new and wonderful start. And it teaches that this new beginning of the earth will last forever.

Read Revelation 21:1–5. What picture of the future is given here? What wonderful promises are waiting for us? Why is this something that only God can do for us?

No question, one of the best promises of our new life is that death and suffering will be forever gone. It is clear that God does not think of death and suffering as positive. They were not in the Creation that God pronounced “very good” (Genesis 1:31). They are “strangers.”

They were never meant to be part of the original Creation. And they will not be part of the new creation. Jesus came to destroy these things. And we will never have to experience them again.

The new creation brings a new beginning. This wretched (miserable), old history with sin will be over. The results are in. And they are clear: sin brings death and suffering. God’s law is the law of life.

God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning. And He will create a new heaven and a new earth. With them we are all offered a new beginning. Only God, only the Creator, can do this for us. And it all comes to us through the work of Jesus for us. Without the plan of salvation, we would have no hope for anything except this life. What a sad, hopeless thought.

Why are these promises of a new life so important to us? What would our faith be without them?



One of the best promises of the earth made new is that death and suffering will be forever gone.

MONDAY—MARCH 25**FROM DUST TO LIFE
(Genesis 3:19)**

Read Genesis 2:7 and 3:19. From what was Adam made? What was the result of his sin?

God created Adam from the dust. And he became a living person. As long as he kept his relationship with God, his life would continue. When Adam sinned, he became separated from God. As a result, Adam died and returned to dust.

Read Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2. What will happen to those who sleep in the dust?

The promise of the return to life gives hope for the Christian. Job explains this hope, saying, “After my skin has been destroyed, in my body I’ll [I will] still see God” (Job 19:26, NIV). This shows that for the faithful, death is only a short time. And the God who made Adam from the dust and breathed life into him has not forgotten how to create humans from dust. The resurrection (return to life) will be an act of creation in the same way that Adam was created.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:52–58. What is taught here that is so closely connected to the Genesis Creation story?

The resurrection of the righteous at the second coming of Jesus is going to happen quickly. As with the first Creation of humankind, God will do everything. All this is very opposed to the theory of evolution.¹ After all, God is not going to use millions of years of evolution to re-create us. Instead, He will do so very quickly. So, if He can re-create us quickly, then He certainly could have created us without evolution in the first round. As with everything else in the Bible, the hope of the resurrection follows Bible proof far more than it does evolution.

Since science cannot explain resurrection, what does this tell us about the limits of science?



The promise of the return to life gives hope for the Christian.

TUESDAY—MARCH 26**RESTORATION² OF HUMAN
CONTROL**

1. evolution—a theory (unproven idea) that the differences between modern plants and animals exist because of changes that happened by a natural process over a very long time.

2. restoration—the returning of things to their original (perfect) condition.

Compare³ Genesis 1:28 with John 12:31. What was the condition of Adam and Eve in the newly created world? Who took over power and became the ruler of this world?

Adam was given the responsibility to be ruler of the world. But when he sinned, Adam's control became weaker. Satan now used his power in the creation. This caused the sin and problems that we see everywhere in the world today.

But after the Cross, Jesus won back the earth from Satan's control (read Matthew 28:18; Revelation 12:10; and John 12:31). Satan still does his evil work and damage on earth. But we can take comfort in knowing that Satan's days are limited. Christ's victory on the cross guarantees that.

Read 2 Timothy 2:11, 12 and Revelation 5:10. What truths can we learn from these verses? Read also 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3.

Those who are saved will be given authority as kings and priests. When we think of kingship (being a king), we think of some kind of authority. In the same way, when we think of priests, we know they are responsible for keeping communication open between God and people, perhaps even those from other, created worlds. They are the ones who have never known the experience of sin and the terrible problems that it brings.

“All the treasures of the universe will be open for God's saved people to study. Living forever, they [the people] now fly to far-off worlds. They are the worlds that watched with sorrow the war on earth and celebrated with songs of gladness at the news of each saved soul. With great delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen [sinless] beings.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy [War]*, page 677. What do you think it means to “enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings”? What could we learn from unfallen beings? And what could they learn from us?



Those who are saved will become kings and priests.

WEDNESDAY—MARCH 27

**MORE RESTORATION
(Genesis 6:11–13)**

In the world that we know, animals capture, kill, and eat other animals. The wording “food chain” is a

3. compare—show how two or more things are the same or different.

well-known part of the lives of most people. We would have a hard time imagining a world without it. But in the beginning, all land animals ate green plants (Genesis 1:30). No animals fed on other animals. Genesis 1:30 does not say anything about the food of the sea animals. But we probably could use the same principles (important rules) for sea animals. This must be true because God could look upon the entire creation and say it was “very good.”

Read Genesis 6:11–13 and Genesis 9:2–4. By the time of the Flood, what changes had happened in nature? What negative things happened in the relationship between people and animals after the Flood?

What had started as a peaceful kingdom (Eden) became filled with sin, problems, and evil. These are the results of sin. The world that once was “very good” became so bad that it needed to be destroyed.

After the Flood, the animals became afraid of people. This included animals of land, air, and sea. This is very different from the earth that God first created. It appears that the control of humans over the animals was weakened at this time.

Read Isaiah 65:25 and Isaiah 11:6–9. How are the relationships among the living things in our present world different from those promised by God for the future?

Through the beauty of this poetic

language, Isaiah shows us that there will be no war or rebellion (fighting) in the new world. Sin and rebellion filled the pre-Flood world so much that it needed to be destroyed. But they will both be absent from the new world. It will be a world of peace and cooperation. This will happen even though we are so used to sin and evil in the world that it is hard for us to imagine anything different.

As we can understand, the gospel is so much about restoration. God alone can do the final restoration. But what choices can we make that can help to bring about some needed restoration now?



The promise of the return to life gives hope for the Christian.

THURSDAY—MARCH 28

**THE RESTORATION OF
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
(John 14:1–3)**

“Before sin came into the world, Adam enjoyed talking with his Maker

face-to-face.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 7. But after the Fall, that close relationship was changed in many ways.

Read Genesis 3:24; Exodus 33:20; and Deuteronomy 5:24–26. What did sin do to the close relationship between people and God?

Sin had broken the relationship between God and humans. God sent Adam and Eve away from His presence for their own protection. This was because humans could no longer see God’s face and continue to live.

But the Lord took the first step in offering the plan of salvation. Through this plan, the broken relationship could be healed, even at a terrible cost to Himself (Jesus).

Read John 14:1–3 and Revelation 22:3–5. What promise did Jesus give to His disciples just before He went to the cross? What will be the result?

God and people are to be reunited (joined as one) and at peace. They will meet face-to-face. The earth will be without any curse. All that has been lost will be restored. The saved will be given a new place, a new life, a new kingdom, a new peace with the rest of the creation, and a new relationship with God. The original purpose behind the creation of humans will now be fulfilled (completed). God, the people, and the creation will be at peace. And that

peace will last forever.

Even now, before heaven and earth are made new again, how can we learn to enjoy a close connection with God? What choices do we make that influence our relationship with God?

FRIDAY—MARCH 29

ADDITIONAL STUDY: “And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious [perfect] information about God and about Christ. As we know more, so love, respect for God, and happiness will grow. The more men learn of God, the greater they will admire His character [who God is]. As Jesus explains to them more about salvation and the great controversy [war] with Satan, the hearts of the saved will be filled with more love and awe [respect for God]. With great joy they sweep [play] the harps of gold. Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices join together in the great song of praise. . . .

“The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. Unity [oneness] and peace fill the creation. From Jesus, who created all flow life and light and gladness throughout the whole space. From the most tiny atom to the greatest world, all things, living and nonliving, in their unhidden beauty and perfect joy, announce that God is love.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 678.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

① Collect as many verses as you can, including several from the book of Revelation, about what the restored (new) earth will be like. Discuss in class what these verses are saying. What parts of the restored earth will you enjoy the most? What parts are hardest to understand?

② How is the doctrine (teaching) of Creation, as shown in Genesis 1 and 2, related to the doctrine of the re-creation of the heavens and the earth? How are we supposed to understand

this re-creation if evolution were true?

③ Read Romans 8:18 and 2 Corinthians 4:16, 17. What is Paul saying here? How can we get comfort from these words for ourselves?

④ Think deeply about the gospel as “restoration.” What does the word suggest? What is restored? How is it restored? And what part do we have in it?

⑤ What does the promise of a new heaven and a new earth show us about the character (who God is) of God?

IN THE BEGINNING

Science and

Scripture Confirm Creation



How we understand our origins affects virtually everything else we believe as Adventist Christians.

Sometimes it seems that evolutionists surround us. Every science article, each museum display, even pop culture, casually reference imaginary creatures crawling out of the ooze hundreds of millions of years ago. Some Christians are actually starting to abandon literal readings of Genesis for theories that they perceive are more easily synthesized with the claims of science.

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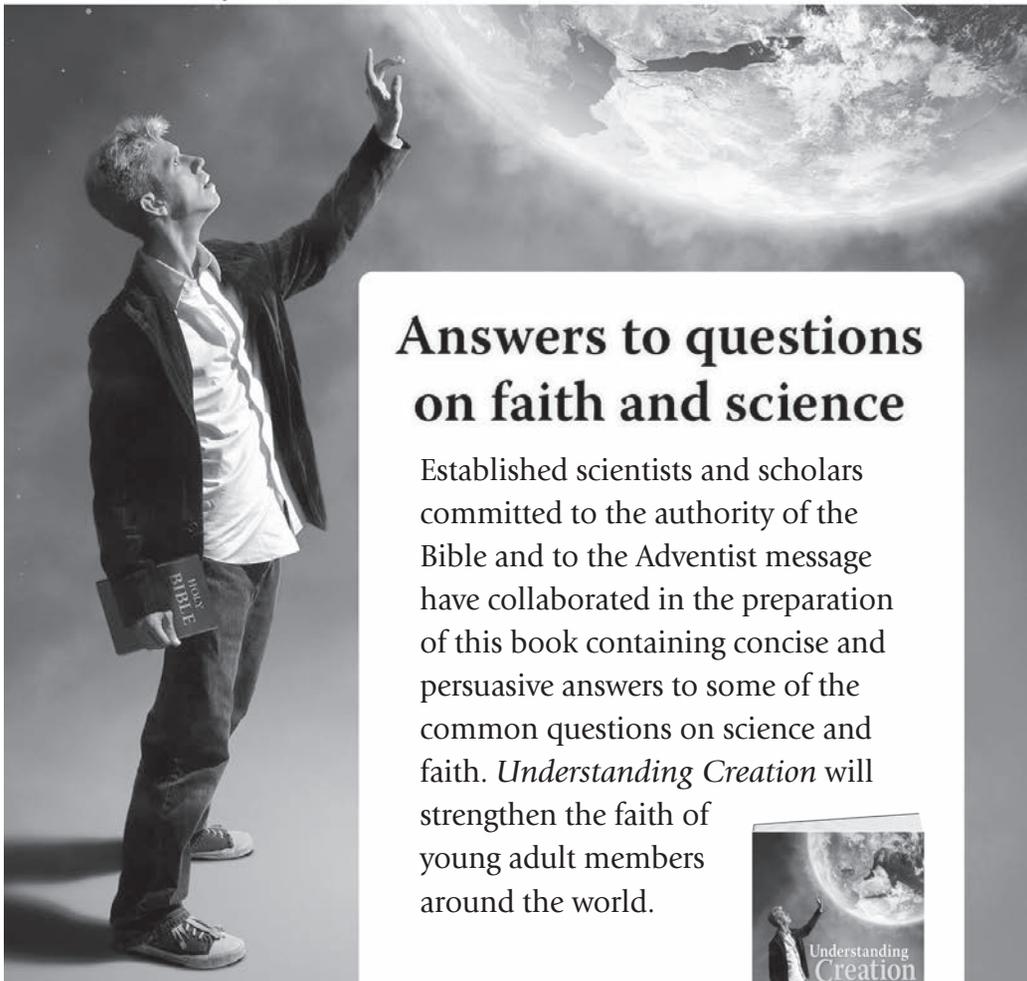
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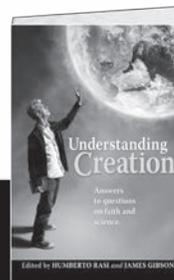
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Edited by L. JAMES GIBSON *and* HUMBERTO M. RASI



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CREATION *and* EVOLUTION

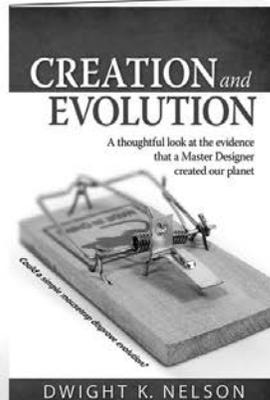
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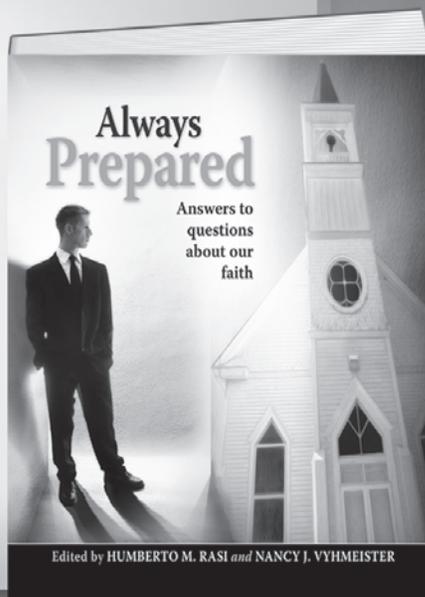
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Edited by **HUMBERTO M. RASI** and **NANCY J. VYHMEISTER**

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