

REFLECTIONS ON THE CREATION/EVOLUTION DEBATE

In the last few years there has been a firestorm brewing in some of the elite universities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in first world countries. It seems like some of the teachers in the science departments under the pretense of academic freedom have felt at liberty to teach that evolution is a more viable explanation of origins than is the traditional Biblical view that creation occurred in six literal days about six thousand years ago.

Of course, such a position makes it necessary for these teachers to reject (or reinterpret and accommodate) the clear and straightforward Biblical testimony that creation occurred in six literal, consecutive, contiguous twenty-four hour days. And of course they must also reject (because it is impossible to reinterpret it!) the clear and unambiguous testimony of the Spirit of Prophecy.

This tragic turn of events has decimated the faith of some of our young people and has led many of our constituent members to withdraw their financial and moral support from these universities. Some of our members have appealed to the higher levels of church administration to remove those who are unwilling to teach in harmony with the long-standing Seventh-day Adventist view of creation.

It must be made clear that these teachers have the personal and conscientious right to believe that the theory of evolution is a more viable option than creation. They even have the right to teach the viability of the evolutionary hypothesis in universities where such ideas are accepted as fact. But, because Seventh-day Adventist universities are confessional in nature, these teachers should not be retained in the science departments (or any other department for that matter!) of our universities. Our universities exist to prepare our young people to fulfill the mission of the church by taking the first angel's message to the world. Such a message and mission, which exhorts the world to worship the Creator, (Revelation 14:6, 7) is absolutely incompatible and irreconcilable with the evolutionary hypothesis.

Our universities are supported by significant tithe allocations from the local conferences unions and General Conference. Though these allocations are distributed to the universities through the channels of the different levels of organization, the tithe is contributed by the church members at the grassroots of the local church and therefore church members must have a voice and vote on what is taught in them. The question is: What can be done about this threat to the integrity of our mission and message?

First of all I would like to suggest that there are several possible reasons that those in positions of authority could potentially give to **not act** decisively:

- Worst case scenario: Deep down those who occupy positions of authority agree with those who are teaching the theory of evolution in our universities but are afraid to come

out into the open and say so for fear of losing their job (I hope and pray that this is not the case!).

- Friendships with those who teach the theory of evolution would make it difficult to take the necessary painful disciplinary action.
- In the process of applying disciplinary action, the church may lose many of the brightest minds in our educational and medical institutions.
- It is difficult to make waves and to swim against the current. Wouldn't it be easier to take the path of least resistance? Why not just let things slide in the hopes that all will work out well in the end? It is not an easy thing to win enemies by taking decisive action.
- There is always the fear that those who are disciplined would file a lawsuit that will cost the church precious money
- There might be fear that the media would pick up the story and run with it thus marring the image of the church. After all, how many in the world today actually believe that the world was created in six literal days about six thousand years ago? Wouldn't the media laugh us to scorn and make our church look obscurantist?
- There would be too much red tape and too many layers of organization to work through. It would be easier to just pass the buck and let the other guy deal with it.

None of these options are acceptable. The very message and mission of the church is at stake. We cannot take the easy way out. It is true that it would cause a great deal of pain to deal with it. But the pain of not dealing with it now would be even greater later. Surgery can be painful but when the cancer is removed the result is healing and an alleviation of the pain.

This is no time for a lukewarm, tame and measured response. This crisis must be confronted decisively just like the pantheistic crisis of 1903. Ellen White described the painful and decisive action that needed to be taken back then when many of the intelligentsia in the church were fascinated and captivated by John Harvey Kellogg's pantheistic ideas. In an impressive dream Ellen White described what needed to be done:

"An authoritative voice cried out, "Meet it!" There was not a moment's hesitation. It was a time for instant action. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. The passengers were violently shaken by the force of the collisions, but no lives were lost. The vessel was injured, but not beyond repair. She rebounded from the contact, trembling from stem to stern, like a living creature. Then she moved forward on her way. Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 205

The present crisis is every bit as serious as the one in 1903. In both cases the point of contention was an undermining of the Biblical story of creation, albeit from different angles. But both heresies would deal a death blow to the origins, identity, message and mission of the Remnant Church. Ellen White places evolution in some very interesting company:

"The warnings of the word of God regarding the perils surrounding the Christian church belong to us today. As in the days of the apostles, men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of **higher criticism, evolution, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism**, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths. To many the Bible is as a lamp without oil, because they have turned their minds into channels of speculative belief that bring misunderstanding and confusion. The work of **higher criticism**, in dissecting, conjecturing, reconstructing, is destroying faith in the Bible as a

divine revelation. It is robbing God's word of power to control, uplift, and inspire human lives.”
Acts of the Apostles, p. 474

In both evolution and pantheism the wisdom, almighty power, goodness and love of God are undermined. Said Ellen White concerning pantheism:

‘Pantheistic theories are not sustained by the Word of God. The light of His truth shows that these theories are soul-destroying agencies. Darkness is their element, sensuality their sphere. They gratify the natural heart, and give license to inclination. Separation from God is the result of accepting them. . . .’ Evangelism, p. 601

Ellen White described the type of leaders that were needed in such a crisis:

“The greatest want of the world is the want of men-- men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.” Education, p. 57

Sadly, those who hold a ‘high view’ of creation are sometimes looked down upon by the intelligentsia as ‘lunatic fringe,’ ‘obscurantist’ ‘antiquated’ ‘Bible thumping Fundamentalists’ and ‘just plain ignorant’. My answer has always been that those who uphold the ‘high view’ are in good company. Noah was certainly looked upon as a ‘lunatic fringe’. When He preached God’s message he was called by all sorts of uncomplimentary names by the scientists and philosophers of the world but when the flood came Noah was proved right and the wise men perished!

Ellen White makes the following incisive comments about the attitude of the scientists and philosophers before the flood:

“But the days before the Flood steal silently on as a thief in the night. Noah is now making his last effort in warnings, entreaty, and appeal to the rejecters of God's message. With tearful eye, trembling lip, and quivering voice he makes his last entreaty for them to believe and secure a refuge in the ark. But they turn from him with **impatience** and **contempt** that he should be so egotistical as to suppose his family are the only ones right in the vast population of the earth. They have no patience with his warnings, with his strange work of building an immense boat on dry ground. Noah, they said, **was insane**.”
Manuscript Releases, volume 10, p. 374

“They [the great men before the flood] talked of science and of the laws controlling nature. Then they **held a carnival** over the words of Noah, calling him a **crazy fanatic**.”
The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 1, p. 1090

“The preacher of righteousness was proclaimed to be an **ignorant fanatic**, who had **no knowledge** of the laws of nature. The wise men of that time argued that it was an impossibility for water to rise high enough to deluge the world. They **reasoned from scientific principles**, that the world could not be destroyed, and that no attention should be paid to the predictions of Noah. This philosophy, or science falsely so called, exalted

the law above the Lawgiver, and things created above the Creator.” The Review and Herald, September 25, 1888

‘They used the probation so graciously granted them in **ridiculing** Noah. They **caricatured** him and **criticized** him. They **laughed at him** for his peculiar earnestness and intense feeling in regard to the judgments which he declared God would surely fulfill. **They talked of science** and of the laws controlling nature. Then they **held a carnival** over the words of Noah, calling him a **crazy fanatic**.” Conflict and Courage, p. 33

Obviously, Noah was not a scientist or a philosopher; he was a preacher, and a fundamentalist one at that! How could Noah be right and the overwhelming majority of the world be wrong? What is it that strengthened Noah for his mission?

“**How simple and childlike amid the unbelief of the world, was the faith of Noah.** His faith was the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. His faith was perfected by his works. He gave to the world an example in **believing just what God had said**. He commenced under the directions of God to construct the ark, an immense boat, on dry ground. Multitudes came from every direction to see this strange sight, the ark, and to hear the earnest, fervent words of this singular man who **seemed to believe every word he uttered. His message was to him a reality**. A power attended the words of Noah, for it was the voice of God to man through his servant. Some were deeply convicted and would have heeded the words of warning, but there were so many to jest and ridicule the message of entreaty and warning to repentance that they partook of the same spirit, resisted the invitations of mercy, refused to reform, and were soon among the boldest and most defiant scoffers; for none are as reckless, and will go to such lengths in sin as those who have once had light, who have been convicted and resisted the Spirit of God. Amid popular contempt and ridicule, amid universal wickedness and disobedience, Noah distinguishes himself by his **holy integrity and unwavering obedience**. He is singular indeed. He was one in the world, but not one of the world. Noah made himself the object of **contempt and ridicule** by his **steadfast adherence to the words of God. He obeyed God without a questioning doubt..**” ST, December 20, 1877

How did Noah answer the scientific and philosophical arguments of the great men of the world? The simple fact is that he could not answer them. Noah could not refute their arguments. If he had tried it would have turned into a tit for tat. Every argument he answered would have been followed by a new objection. Noah simply believed God and preached His Word in its simplicity:

“Thus it was that the wise men of this world talked of science and the fixed laws of nature, and declared that there could be no variation in these laws, and that this message of Noah could not possibly be true. The talented men of Noah's time set themselves in league against God's will and purpose and scorned the message and the messenger that He had sent. . . . **Noah could not controvert their philosophies, or refute the claims of science so called; but he could proclaim the word of God; for he knew it contained the infinite wisdom of the Creator**, and, as he sounded it everywhere, it lost none of its

force and reality because men of the world treated him with ridicule and contempt.”
Reflecting Christ, p. 323

It is my hope and constant prayer that God will give wisdom to those who labor on all levels of church organization from the individual in the pew to the General Conference officers to take definite steps to correct this situation. As stewards of the oracles of God it is our most solemn privilege and responsibility to do so.

What can I do as a pastor on the local level? As a pastor of Fresno Central Seventh-day Adventist Church it is my responsibility and solemn duty to instruct my members about the foundational beliefs of the church, including a settled belief in the story of creation as it appears in the first two chapters Genesis. This I have made a commitment to do though the heavens fall.

As the pastor of my flock it is also my duty and responsibility to warn parents not to send their children to Seventh-day Adventist schools that will undermine their faith in the Word of God. For those who think that this is a sign of disloyalty to the church, I can but answer that I have an inspired precedent to do so. In 1906 when the church was in the midst of the pantheistic crisis and strange doctrines were being taught at Battle Creek College, Ellen White gave the following counsel to parents who were contemplating sending their kids there:

“The warning is given in the Word, "Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." We now repeat, **Parents, keep your children away from Battle Creek.** Some of our medical missionary workers are becoming leavened with infidelity. Specious heresy has been taking hold of minds, and its threads have been woven into the pattern of the figure. Who is responsible for giving young men and women an education that has left a seducing influence upon their minds? **One father writes that of his two children who were sent to Battle Creek, one is now an infidel and the other has given up the truth.**” Manuscript Releases, volume 20, p. 66

And as the speaker/director of Secrets Unsealed it is also my responsibility to use every means possible (publications, CD's, DVD's, newsletters, seminars etc.) to uphold before the church and the world the distinctive world view of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This I am committed to do till the very end.

In my next newsletter article I will deal with the providential origin of our denominational name and how it is a standing rebuke against pantheism, intelligent design, progressive creationism, punctuated equilibrium and the theory of evolution.

And in the following newsletter articles I will deal with the issue of creation and evolution, not primarily from a scientific perspective, but rather from a Biblical/theological frame of reference so stay tuned.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING CREATION WEEK

Question: What great event led Lucifer to feel jealous of Jesus?

Answer: Revelation 12:7-9 explains that the original war in heaven was between Lucifer Jesus. Ellen White makes the following enlightening comment about the event that led to this war in heaven:

*“Satan was once an honored angel in heaven, next to Christ. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing great intelligence. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. But when **God said to His Son, "Let us make man in our image," Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred. He desired to receive the highest honors in heaven next to God.**” Early Writings, p. 145*

Question: Who was the Architect of Creation and who was the Master Builder?

Answer: Some Bible texts affirm that the Father was the Creator (Revelation 4:11) while others indicate that it was the Son (Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:26, 27; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-18). There is no contradiction between the two groups of texts. God the Father devised the plan in conjunction with His Son and then Jesus implemented it. This is why Hebrews 1:2 explains that the Father created the worlds through the Son. So to speak, the Father was the Architect and Jesus was the Master Builder:

*“Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed **to execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance was due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants.**” Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 36*

Question: What was the condition of the terrestrial globe at the beginning of creation week?

Answer: Genesis 1:1, 2 indicates that at the beginning of creation week the terrestrial globe was without form (that is, in a disorderly and chaotic state which could not sustain life) and void (that is, desolate and empty) and in darkness. How long was the earth in this state before the beginning of Creation week? The Bible clearly indicates that God immediately proceeded to order and fill it.

Some people have seen a gap of millions of years between Genesis 1:1, 2 (the creation of the terrestrial globe) and Genesis 1:3 (the beginning of creation week). But the fourth

commandment shatters such an idea. In Exodus 20:11 we are told that God made the heavens and the earth and everything in them in six days.

In Genesis 1:2 the word ‘deep’ translates the Hebrew word *tehom*. In places where the Hebrew Bible uses *tehom*, the Septuagint uses the word *abyssos*. This is the same word that is mistranslated in Revelation 20:1 as ‘bottomless pit’.

The seven last plagues (Revelation 16:1-21) and the Second Coming of Jesus (Revelation 19:11-21) transpire immediately before the beginning of the millennium and they will return the earth to the condition it was in before the beginning of creation week, without form and void and in darkness (Jeremiah 4:23)

Question: Did God carefully lay out a plan before He began the work of creation?

Answer: Remember that God had to solve two main problems: Disorder and emptiness. The first three days of creation week God put things in order (prepared it to sustain life) and the last three days he filled it. There is no room here for the idea that God used the method of ‘trial and error’ (survival of the fittest or natural selection) to accomplish the work of creation. Such a view denigrates the wisdom, power and goodness of God.

There is a certain progression during creation week from lesser to greater, from simple to complex from inanimate to animate.

- The first day God made light to **energize** His creation
- The second day God made the atmosphere so that living things could **breathe**
- The third day God made dry land where animals and humans were to live and He also made food to **eat**

- The fourth day God **filled** the heavens with heavenly bodies
- The fifth day God **filled** the heavens with birds and the waters with fish
- The sixth day he **filled** the earth with land animals and with man

- The seventh day reminds us that God is the **source of creation**

Question: How long ago did creation week take place?

Answer: *“And many who profess to believe the Bible are at a loss to account for wonderful things which are found in the earth, with the view that creation week was **only seven literal days** and that the world is now only **about six thousand years old.**”* Signs of the Times, March 20, 1879

Question: Did God create the entire universe on creation week or did he only create this earth and its immediate neighborhood?

Answer: According to Job 38:7 when God created this world the angels and the inhabitants of other worlds sang and celebrated His work. This provides persuasive evidence that the inhabitants of the heavens (the angels) and the other worlds already existed at creation.

*“The Son of God **had wrought the Father's will** in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance was due. Christ was **still to exercise** divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants.”* Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 36

*“God's government included not only the **inhabitants of Heaven**, but of **all the worlds** that he had created; and Satan thought that if he could carry the **angels** of Heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also the **other worlds**.”* The Great Controversy p. 497

It will be noticed that Ellen White describes two categories of beings in the universe before creation week:

*“He [Lucifer] began to insinuate doubts concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that though laws might be necessary for the **inhabitants of the worlds, angels**, being more exalted, needed no such restraint, for their own wisdom was a sufficient guide.”*

*“God's government included not only the **inhabitants of heaven**, but of **all the worlds** that He had created; and Lucifer had concluded that if he could carry the angels of heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also all the worlds.”* Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 41

Questions: Where do we find the only authentic history of the origins of planet earth? What dangers lurk when we trust in science, so called, over and above the inspired creation story of Genesis 1? According to Hebrews 11:3 which is the only way we can know for certain that the story of Genesis 1 is trustworthy?

Answers: *“We are **dependent on the Bible** for a knowledge of the early history of our world, of the creation of man and of his fall. **Remove the Word of God**, and what can we expect but to be left to fables and conjectures, and to that enfeebling of the intellect which is the sure result of entertaining error. We need the **authentic** history of the origin of the earth, of the fall of Lucifer, and of the introduction of sin into the world. **Without the Bible**, we should be bewildered by false theories. The mind would be subjected to the tyranny of superstition and falsehood. But, having in our possession an **authentic** history of the beginning of the world, we need not hamper ourselves with human conjectures and unreliable theories.”* Review and Herald, November 10, 1904

According to Hebrews 11:3 the only way that we can know for certain that God created this world is by faith. Regarding those who disbelieve the creation story as found in

Genesis, Ellen White explains: “These persons have lost the simplicity of faith.” Christian Education, p. 193

Question: Did God employ pre-existent matter to create the earth?

Answer: Psalm 33:6-9 and Hebrews 11:3 clearly indicate that God created the world *ex-nihilo*, that is, from nothing. Ellen White concurs with this:

*“The theory that God did not create matter when He brought the world into existence is without foundation. In the formation of our world, **God was not indebted to pre-existing matter.** On the contrary, all things, material or spiritual, stood up before the Lord Jehovah **at His voice** and were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the host of them, the earth and all things therein, are not only the work of His hand; they came into existence **by the breath of His mouth.**”* The Faith I Live By, p. 24

Question: Did the sun already exist before the fourth day of creation week?

Answer: There is clear evidence in Genesis one that the sun was already in existence on the first day. This is proved true by the fact that the expression ‘it was the evening and the morning’ is used for each of the first three days. Mark 1:32 clearly indicates that the “evening” is marked by the setting of the sun.

*“When the Lord declares that He made the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, He means the day of twenty-four hours, which He has **marked off by the rising and setting of the sun.**”* Testimonies to Ministers, p. 135

Question: Were the days of creation literal, consecutive, contiguous 24 hour days or long periods of time?

Answer: There are Biblical reasons to believe that the days of creation were literal, consecutive and contiguous:

- Genesis 1:4, 5: The daily cycle contained a day and a night, an evening and morning. It would be absurd to say that each day (except the seventh) had an ‘evening and morning’ if the days of creation were millions of years in length.
- Exodus 20:11: The Sabbath commandment offers definitive proof that the days of creation week were literal. Think about it. God instructed man to work six days and rest the seventh just like He had worked six and rested on the seventh. How could God tell man to work six days as He had worked six days if the days were millions of years long?

Notice how Ellen G. White brings this point to view:

“But the assumption that the events of the first week required thousands upon thousands of years, strikes directly at the foundation of the fourth commandment. It represents the Creator as commanding men to observe the week of literal days in commemoration of vast, indefinite periods. This is unlike his method of dealing with his creatures. It makes indefinite and obscure that which he has made very plain. It is infidelity in its most insidious and hence most dangerous form; its real character is so disguised that it is held and taught by many who profess to believe the Bible.” Counsels on Education, pp. 190, 191

- The expression “and it was so” used several times in Genesis one indicates immediacy and rapidity (see Psalm 33:6-9). To say that that God used evolution (where death existed for millions of years before creation week) as His chosen method of creation impugns His omnipotence and His goodness.
- It is a fact that in the Old Testament, every single time that the word “day” appears in the singular with a numeral adjective it means a 24 hour day. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- How could the plants which were created the third day survive millions of years of darkness?

“I was then carried back to the creation, and was shown that the first week, in which God performed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day, was just like every other week. The great God, in his days of creation and day of rest, measured off the first cycle as a sample for successive weeks till the close of time.” Spirit of Prophecy, volume 1, p. 85

“When the Lord declares that He made the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, He means the day of twenty-four hours, which He has marked off by the rising and setting of the sun.” Testimonies to Ministers, p. 135

Question: Why is a belief in seven literal days of vital importance?

Answer: Exodus 20:11 provides the rationale for the observance of the Sabbath. Ask yourself the question: Why would Satan want us to believe that the world came into existence through a cruel and extended process which took millions of years?

The answer is not hard to find. The Sabbath ever reminds us that God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Satan wants us to forget the Creator and therefore he does his utmost to efface the reminder from the minds of men. This is why the first angel’s message is of such vital importance in these last days. It calls upon men to worship the creator and the sign of the Creator is the Sabbath.

“But the infidel supposition, that the events of the first week required seven vast, indefinite periods for their accomplishment, strikes directly at the foundation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. It makes indefinite and obscure that which God has made very plain. It is the worst kind of infidelity; for with many who profess to believe the record of creation, it is infidelity in disguise. It charges God with commanding men to observe the week of seven literal days in commemoration of seven indefinite periods, which is unlike his dealings with mortals, and is an impeachment of his wisdom.” Signs of the Times, March 20, 1879

Question: Why do many who profess to believe in the Bible record of creation accommodate the message of the Bible to fit with contemporary scientific theories?

Answer: “And many who profess to believe the Bible are at a loss to account for wonderful things which are found in the earth with the view that creation week was only seven literal days and that the world is now only about six thousand years old. These, to free themselves from difficulties thrown in their way by infidel geologists, adopt the view that the six days of creation were six vast, indefinite periods, and the day of God's rest was another indefinite period; making senseless the fourth commandment of God's holy law. Some eagerly receive this position; for it destroys the force of the fourth commandment, and they feel a freedom from its claims upon them.” Signs of the Times, March 20, 1879

Question: What does Ellen White have to say about professed believers who teach that the world is much older than six thousand years?

Answer: “Geologists claim to find evidence from the earth itself that it is very much older than the Mosaic record teaches. Bones of men and animals, as well as instruments of warfare, petrified trees, etc., much larger than any that now exist, or that have existed for thousands of years, have been discovered, and from this it is inferred that the earth was populated long before the time brought to view in the record of creation, and by a race of beings vastly superior in size to any men now living. Such reasoning has led many professed Bible believers to adopt the position that the days of creation were vast, indefinite periods.

But apart from Bible history, geology can prove nothing. Those who reason so confidently upon its discoveries, have no adequate conception of the size of men, animals, and trees before the flood, or of the great changes which then took place. Relics found in the earth do give evidence of conditions differing in many respects from the present; but the time when these conditions existed can be learned only from the Inspired Record. In the history of the flood, inspiration has explained that which geology alone could never fathom. In the days of Noah, men, animals, and trees, many times larger than now exist, were buried, and thus preserved as an evidence to later generations that the antediluvians perished by a flood. God designed that the discovery of these things should establish faith in inspired history; but men, with their vain reasoning, fall into the same

error as did the people before the flood,--the things which God gave them as a benefit, they turn into a curse by making a wrong use of them.” Christian Education, pp. 191, 192

Question: What will be the end result of scientists who doubt the reliability of the Old and New Testaments on origins?

*Answer: “God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world, in both science and art; but when professedly scientific men treat upon these subjects from a merely human point of view, they will assuredly come to wrong conclusions. It may be innocent to speculate beyond what God's word has revealed, if our theories do not contradict facts found in the Scriptures; but those who leave the word of God, and seek to account for his created works upon scientific principles, are drifting, without chart or compass, upon an unknown ocean. The greatest minds, if not guided by the word of God in their research, become bewildered in their attempts to trace the relations of science and revelation. Because the Creator and his works are so far beyond their comprehension that they are unable to explain them by natural laws, they regard Bible history as unreliable. Those who **doubt the reliability** of the records of the Old and New Testaments will be led to go a **step farther**, and **doubt the existence of God**; and then, having lost their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the **rocks of infidelity**.”* Counsels on Education, p. 193

Questions: Did God bless and sanctify the Sabbath as the day began or when it ended? Did God command Adam and Eve to keep the Sabbath holy before He made it holy? Did God command Adam and Eve to follow His example before He had set the example?

Answers: “After resting upon the seventh day, God sanctified it, or set it apart, as a day of rest for man. Following the example of the Creator, man was to rest upon this sacred day, that as he should look upon the heavens and the earth, he might reflect upon God's great work of creation; and that as he should behold the evidences of God's wisdom and goodness, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker.” Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 47

“Because He had rested upon the Sabbath, "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,"--set it apart to a holy use. He gave it to Adam as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God's power and His love.” The Desire of Ages, p. 281 [notice that God gives the Sabbath to Adam after He made it and set it apart]

*“The first six days of each week are given to man in which to labor, because God employed the same period of the first week in the work of creation. The seventh day God has reserved as a day of rest, in commemoration of **his rest** during the same period of time after he had performed the work of creation in six days.”* Signs of the Times, March 20, 1879

Questions: At what moment were Adam and Eve commanded to keep the fourth commandment? Did man do any of the work

during the first six days of creation week? Does the Genesis story tell us that man rested on the seventh day? Did Adam and Eve rest from six days of labor on that first Sabbath?

Answers: Genesis one underlines more than thirty times that God was the subject of creation. **He** worked six days and **He** rested on the seventh. This indicates that the first week of history is what we might call ‘God’s Week.’

Adam and Eve could not have rested after six days labor because they had not worked six days. If they had not worked six days the fourth commandment could not apply to them at that time. The fact is that the fourth commandment applies to Adam and Eve beginning with the second week of this earth’s history. In short:

God worked six days and God rested on the seventh. Then God commanded man to work the next six and rest on the seventh in a continual cycle until the end of time.

Question: Can we be certain that the Sabbath we keep today is the same Sabbath that God established at creation?

Answer: *“Like the Sabbath, the week originated at creation, and it has been preserved and brought down to us through Bible history. God himself measured off the first week as a sample for successive weeks to the close of time. Like every other, it consisted of seven literal days. Six days were employed in the work of creation; upon the seventh, God rested, and he then blessed this day, and set it apart as a day of rest for man.”* Counsels on Education, p. 190

Question: Is the weekly ‘coming’ of the seventh-day Sabbath demarcated by the moon or by the sun?

Answer: *“God rested on the seventh day, and set it apart for man to observe in honor of His creation of the heavens and the earth in six literal days. He blessed and sanctified and made holy the day of rest. When men are so careful to search and dig to see in regard to the precise period of time, we are to say, God made His Sabbath for a round world; and when the seventh day comes to us in that round world, **controlled by the sun that rules the day**, it is the time in all countries and lands to observe the Sabbath. In the countries where there is no sunset for months, and again no sunrise for months, the period of time will be **calculated by records kept**. . . .”* Selected Messages, volume 3, p. 317

I would like to make a few remarks about Genesis 1:14. It is true that God made the moon to demarcate the seasons but before we take a leap of logic from this to feast keeping we must ask several questions: Leviticus 23:4 is read back into Genesis 1:14 saying that the “seasons” of Genesis 1:14 are an indication that the feast existed at the beginning. Both the sun was created to demarcate days (weekly cycle), the moon was

created to demarcate months and the sun was made to demarcate years. But what about the seasons or set times? Which set times existed already before sin entered the world?

Is it true that there were no seasons marked off by the moon at creation? Unfortunately when we think of the word 'seasons' today we usually think of spring, summer, fall and winter but this is not the primary meaning of this word. As you have well pointed out, the word 'seasons' in Hebrew is *mo'ed*. According to the best Hebrew lexicographers the word means 'an appointed time' and according to Genesis 1:14 the moon was created to demarcate appointed times. The word is used for example in Jeremiah 18:7 to describe the migratory habits of birds.

The question that begs to be asked is this: What 'season' determined by the moon did God appoint for man to observe in the Garden of Eden before sin? I believe that the answer to this question is found in Isaiah 66:22, 23 where we are told that the redeemed will come to worship the Lord on two specific occasions in the earth made new. First they will come from one new moon to another (or from month to month). Will they come to celebrate the feasts? Absolutely not! Revelation 22:2 explains the reason why God's people will come to worship the Lord at the appointed time which is marked off by the new moon. You see this text explains that the tree of life will give its fruit every month. Thus we will come at the appointed time every month to eat from the tree of life.

It appears that even in the Garden of Eden before the existence of sin, God established the moon to demarcate the specific time when Adam and Eve were to come and eat from the tree of life and this time was marked off by the moon. Ellen White has stated in more than one place that Adam and Eve needed to **continue eating** from the tree of life in order to continue living. And so will it be in the earth made new.

Secondly we will come on a weekly basis to worship the Lord on the Sabbath. Thus one observance is marked off by the moon and the other is marked off by the sun.

On another line, is it just possible that God, foreseeing the entrance of sin into the world, made the moon to also later demarcate the specific times at which Israel was to celebrate the feasts to look forward to the great events in the plan of salvation? I believe so.

Is there any Biblical evidence that God intended man to keep the feasts from creation until sin entered the world? I find no evidence whatsoever that Adam and Eve were commanded to keep the feasts in the Garden of Eden.

Is there any evidence that the feasts were observed before they were given to Israel? Even after the entrance of sin into the world there is no evidence of feast observance until God gave them to Israel in the days of Moses. As you remember, the feasts not only pointed forward to events in the plan of salvation but also pointed backward to events that took place in the history of Israel.

Contrary to the feasts that were instituted long after the entrance of sin into the world, the Sabbath was made at Creation and Adam and Eve were commanded to keep it before sin!

Are the seasons determined by a solar calendar or a lunar one? The observance of the seventh-day Sabbath cannot be equated with the observance of the feast days. For one thing, the feasts are determined by the moon while the days of creation including the Sabbath were determined by the sun as can be seen by the repeated expression “it was the evening and the morning” at the conclusion of each day. Ellen White is explicit that the days were marked off by the sun, not the moon:

“When the Lord declares that He made the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, He means the day of twenty-four hours, which He has marked off by the rising and setting of the sun.” Testimonies to Ministers, p. 135

In other words, the months are demarcated by the moon and the Sabbath is demarcated by the sun.

With regards to your question about why the Reformers rejected the Sabbath we can say for certain that it was because in their view Sunday was too firmly entrenched in church tradition and it would have been almost impossible to shift back to the Sabbath. There certainly is no historical evidence that I know of to indicate that they felt that if they kept the Sabbath they would also have to keep the feasts.

With respect to your comment about Leviticus 23:1-3 we must carefully read the text in its context. You will notice that in verse 1 the feasts are introduced. Then in verse 2 the Sabbath is introduced. Then in verse 3 the theme of the feasts is picked up once again. That there is a clear distinction between the feasts and the Sabbath can be seen in Leviticus 23:37, 38:

“These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything upon his day: **Beside the sabbaths of the LORD**, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD.”

Questions: Has God created any more worlds since creation week? Does the fact that God has not created anything since creation week help us comprehend why the Sabbath in Genesis 2:2, 3 had no evening and morning? Does John 5:17 contradict the fact that God has not created anything since earth’s first week?

Answers: Genesis 2:1 and Hebrews 4:3 make it clear that God finished His creative work at the end of creation week. In other words, God is still resting from His creative works. This explains the reason why the seventh day had no evening and morning for God. But God still upholds and sustains that which He created. When John 5:17 states that He and

the Father were still working He was referring to His providence that constantly works to uphold and sustain His creation (see Colossians 1:15-18).

“Although the Lord has ceased His work in creating, He is constantly employed upholding and using as His servants the things which He has made.” Manuscript 4, 1882, in The Seventh Day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 6, p. 1062

“God has finished His creative work, but His energy is still exerted in upholding the objects of His creation.” Signs of the Times, March 20, 1884

“As regards this earth, Scripture declares the work of creation to have been completed. The works were finished from the foundation of the world.” Hebrews 4:3. *But the power of God is still exercised in **upholding** the objects of His creation. It is not because the mechanism once set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats, and breath follows breath. Every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the care of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. From the smallest insect to man, every living creature is daily dependent upon His **providence**.”* Education, pp. 130, 131

*“The Lord is constantly employed in **upholding** and **using** as His servants the things that He has made. Said Christ: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”* John 5:17.” 8T 260, 261

Questions: What was God’s rest like on that first Sabbath? Did God rest alone on the Sabbath? What great event is being described In Job 38:1-6? How did the sons of God and the stars of heaven react in celebration of this event? (The answer is in verse 7)

*Answers: “The Sabbath was hallowed at the creation. As ordained for man, it had its origin when “the morning stars **sang together**, and all the sons of God **shouted for joy**.”* Job 38:7. ***Peace brooded** over the world; for earth was in **harmony** with heaven. “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good;” and He rested in the joy of **His** completed work [Adam and Eve could not have rested in this sense because they had not worked].* Gen. 1:31.” The Desire of Ages, p. 281

*“God looked with **satisfaction** upon the work of His hands. All was perfect, worthy of its divine Author, and He rested, not as one weary, but as **well pleased** with the fruits of His wisdom and goodness and the manifestations of His glory.”* Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 47

*“In the beginning the Father and the Son had rested upon the Sabbath after Their work of creation. When “the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them” (Gen. 2:1), the Creator and all heavenly beings **rejoiced in contemplation** of the glorious*

scene. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:7.

"I was shown that the law of God would stand fast forever, and exist in the new earth to all eternity. At the creation, when the foundations of the earth were laid, the sons of God looked with admiration upon the work of the Creator and all the heavenly host shouted for joy. It was then that the foundation of the Sabbath was laid. At the close of the six days of creation, God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made; and He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work. The Sabbath was instituted in Eden before the fall and was observed by Adam and Eve and all the heavenly host. God rested on the seventh day, and blessed and hallowed it. I saw that the Sabbath never will be done away; but that the redeemed saints and all the angelic host will observe it in honor of the great Creator to all eternity." Early Writings, p. 217

Inferences erroneously drawn from facts observed in nature have, however, led to supposed conflict between science and revelation; and in the effort to restore harmony, interpretations of Scripture have been adopted that undermine and destroy the force of the word of God. Geology has been thought to contradict the literal interpretation of the Mosaic record of the creation. Millions of years, it is claimed, were required for the evolution of the earth from chaos; and in order to accommodate the Bible to this supposed revelation of science, the days of creation are assumed to have been vast, indefinite periods, covering thousands or even millions of years.

Such a conclusion is wholly uncalled for. The Bible record is in harmony with itself and with the teaching of nature. Of the first day employed in the work of creation is given the record, "The evening and the morning were the first day." Genesis 1:5. And the same in substance is said of each of the first six days of creation week. Each of these periods Inspiration declares to have been a day consisting of evening and morning, like every other day since that time. In regard to the work of creation itself the divine testimony is, "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Psalm 33:9. With Him who could thus call into existence unnumbered worlds, how long a time would be required for the evolution of the earth from chaos? In order to account for His works, must we do violence to His word? Education, pp. 128, 129